

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
February 14, 2018

CAMERON CHAMP



GENESIS OPEN

MARK WILLIAMS: We would like to welcome Cameron Champ into the interview room at the Genesis Open. Cameron, you were the recipient of the Charles Sifford Memorial exemption.

CAMERON CHAMP: Yes, sir.

MARK WILLIAMS: That must be quite an honor for you. Just talk about how special that is for you to have received that award.

CAMERON CHAMP: Yeah, it's extremely special. I've seen Mr. Sifford's legacy for how he changed the game for obviously African-Americans back in his day, especially like for my grandfather. Like if it wasn't for Sifford, you never know, I might have played golf, I might not. But I just feel like it's had a huge influence in my life since obviously my grandfather was the one that started me in the game. Just had the passion, love for the game when I was a young kid, and that's just kind of how I, I guess, I've fallen in love with it as well and it's led me to here. It's led me to great experiences, meeting great people, sitting here with y'all having this interview. It's just a great game, and Mr. Sifford just kind of just, I guess I would say just kind of planned -- not planned it out, but just set a path for African-Americans like him and my grandfather. I'm just extremely blessed to have the honor to play in his name this week. I'm just really looking forward to it.

I also thank Tiger Woods and the Tiger Woods Foundation and Genesis obviously for giving me this great opportunity to play this week. I'm just really looking forward to teeing it up tomorrow.

MARK WILLIAMS: Can you share with us where you were when you got the news and how it was conveyed to you and what your reaction was?

CAMERON CHAMP: I was in -- I believe I was in a Web event, my second Web event. We knew it was coming close, and obviously when I got the exemption, I was extremely happy obviously just to play in his name. Like you said, it's an extreme honor just for everything that he's done for the game. Just really looking forward to it.

MARK WILLIAMS: So you kind of came on the scene for a lot of the golfer writers, et cetera, at the U.S. Open last year at Erin Hills. Your prodigious length and distance that you hit it gained a lot of respect from other players and the media. Just talk about that experience at the U.S. Open and what you learned from that week.

CAMERON CHAMP: I think at the U.S. Open I just learned a lot, just kind of what I needed

to work on more. That week obviously I drove it very well. I think my mid iron game could have been a lot better. I know the last two days that's kind of what I struggled with, just made too many mistakes from anywhere from 150 to 170, just kind of hitting errant shots when it's not as difficult as it is.

And then just the experience alone just feeling those emotions and nerves I've never felt before on the first tee. I think I handled myself pretty well for the most part. I think on Sunday I was probably a little more nervous than I expected just realizing where I was and how well I was playing. But yeah, I think that's kind of what led me on during the summer in my great play leading up to the Walker Cup and turning pro.

MARK WILLIAMS: I was going to ask you before we take some questions, how's the transition been for you? You played a few amateur events on the Tour, but you turned pro and played at the OHL Classic in Mexico at Mayakoba, that was your debut. Since then you've gained Web.com status and I played a couple events. What's that transition been like with the travel and everything else that goes with it?

CAMERON CHAMP: Yeah, I think just adjusting and learning my own schedule, what works well for me to perform my best, and then just going out and playing. I think I sometimes can expect too much out of myself, which then makes it hard to score, makes more, you know, bad shots or bad quality iron shots happen just when I'm overthinking things too much. So it's just adjusting and learning, like I said, what works best for me to succeed and just trying to free myself up and not put any added pressure on myself.

MARK WILLIAMS: If we have any questions for Cameron, we'll get you a microphone and ask away. In the meantime, I would ask you, you've had a chance to play Riviera yesterday?

CAMERON CHAMP: Yes.

MARK WILLIAMS: What's your impression of the golf course and anything that might favor you around here?

CAMERON CHAMP: The golf course is amazing. I played here in the U.S. Am. Obviously slightly a little different conditions, but I think the course favors me well obviously off the tee. It's one of my strengths. But again, you still have to put the ball in the hole, you still have to hit quality iron shots. I think this course sets up very well for me to succeed and I'm comfortable. I'm obviously back in California, I have some family members here, so I'm very comfortable. Obviously you've still got to execute. So I set my game plan out and now it's just time to execute it and see where I stand.

Q. Cameron, making your fourth PGA TOUR start after turning pro, what are your expectations playing this week playing with some of the best players in the world?

CAMERON CHAMP: It's going to be the same as any tournament really. Obviously I have

high expectations but I'm not going to force anything. I know myself, when I start forcing things, it doesn't work out too well most of the time. If I stick with my game plan no matter if I'm 3 under through nine or three over through nine, I'm just going to stick to it. That's kind of what I learned about myself over the years, just see how I fare. I'm just going to try to free myself as much as possible.

MARK WILLIAMS: Anything further? If everybody's satisfied, I think we'll wrap it up. I appreciate you coming in, Cameron, and spending the time with us.

CAMERON CHAMP: Thank you.