

ROUND 3 INTERVIEW
February 17, 2018

CAMERON SMITH (-8)



GENESIS OPEN

Q. The second lowest round of the day, 6-under 65, but you've now gone 38 holes bogey free. This is a tough course. What does it take to be able to do that?

CAMERON SMITH: I mean, I think I can just rely on my short game around here. My short game's been really good, putting really good inside 10 feet. Just the ability to get it up and down around here I think has really helped me.

Q. You've put yourself in the mix, in contention into Sunday. You're a PGA TOUR winner but you did it in a team format in New Orleans. How different is it to be in the heat on Sunday by yourself?

CAMERON SMITH: I mean, it's not the first time I've really been in the heat. I'll look back on those experiences and hopefully have a good one tomorrow, stick to the game plan, not really do much different and hope it all works out.

Q. (No microphone.)

CAMERON SMITH: Just being able to get it up and down and really grind into those 10- and 12-footers for par.

Q. When we look at top 30 here a year ago, I mean, what are kind of the feelings heading into this week knowing the golf course, you've been here before and done pretty well at?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, love the golf course. Typically really haven't played that well around here, but love the layout, really suits my eye. A few Aussies have done well here, so hopefully I can just put it all together tomorrow and try to get it done.

Q. Nice birdie putt here at 15.

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, that one broke a fair bit. It was only about eight or nine feet, probably a foot, foot and a half break there, yeah.

Q. And this at 17, the par 5.

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, this was just a perfect number really, just a perfect lob wedge a little bit downwind and spun back there nicely. I didn't get to see how close that had actually come.

Q. We mentioned the Aussies, I don't want to pile the pressure on as you look forward and try to back up this 65 for tomorrow, but the Aussies typically have done really well around here. Adam Scott's picked up a victory, Aaron Baddeley, Robert Allenby, Elk as well of course, PGA Championship in 1995. What is it about the Aussies at this place?

CAMERON SMITH: Looks very similar to home actually. I think the bunkering, I've grown up on kikuyu so love the grass. It's probably just the same sort of mix and style of holes we get at home.

Q. You're a very laid back kind of guy, kind of cool, even keeled, are you going to keep those nerves in check for tomorrow?

CAMERON SMITH: Hopefully, that's the plan. Yeah, I've never really stressed too much about anything.

Q. Good playing today, 6-under par 65, but going back-to-back days without a bogey at Riviera, that's impressive.

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, can really put that down I think to my short game. Obviously missed a few shots out there, you can get yourself into some pretty gnarly spots, but yeah just making those 8-, 10-, 12-footers for par has really helped me out.

Q. I was talking to former PGA TOUR player Paul Gow, a countryman. Is this golf course similar to some of the Sandbelt courses in Australia?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, I think it's very similar to, yeah, the courses down in Melbourne. The bunkering and just the general style and mix of holes. And then the grass, like I've grown up on kikuyu so very familiar with the grass, that's nice.

Q. Almost a year ago you've won your first PGA TOUR event. How have you changed as a player, what have you learned since last April?

CAMERON SMITH: Jeez, I don't know. Probably just I went away there a little bit after the win, tried -- just trying too hard and just went back to my normal self, got my coach over and just got things rolling again. I think just not stressing out. As simple as it sounds and as cliché as it sounds, just hole by hole, shot by shot. So just really putting things back into gear and my game feels really good.

Q. Cam, just an assessment of your round today?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, pretty solid really. Kept everything in order. Felt like I hit it maybe a touch better today but very similar to yesterday.

Q. You mentioned your short game's been keeping you in it. You've gone bogey free

the last couple rounds, that must have been the key, right?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, just the ability to get it up and down around here. Very familiar with the grass, grew up on kikuyu, and then the ability to make those 8- and 10-footers for par I think has really helped out.

Q. Are you going into tomorrow thinking about Mexico or are you going into tomorrow thinking about winning?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, absolutely, I don't come to a golf tournament to run second or third. I try my best in every tournament, and yeah, so I'll go out there tomorrow and stick to my guns and see what happens.

Q. What happened in Australia the last year that set you up (inaudible) down to these last couple holes, obviously you got over some adversity is there?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, absolutely, to kind of get the monkey off the back there in Australia for a win was pretty good for my confidence, and just knowing that I can get it done I think was a huge help. So I'll look back on that tomorrow.

Q. How about the confidence of playing on this kind of grass where you grew up and the difference that makes from a lot of guys who maybe haven't?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, I grew up on kikuyu, so very familiar. I feel very good around the greens, I feel like I can play any shot off that like myself, guys, they grew up on stuff. Yeah, I just love it, I think it's really cool.

Q. How much of an extra bonus is it to have such a long bogey-free run on a course like this that's playing as difficult as it is?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, it's a big bonus. Not to have one round let alone two bogey-free around here is pretty good. Obviously a U.S. Open course, very tough if you miss it in some bad spots. Yeah, that's pretty cool.

Q. Cameron has not made a bogey in his last 38 holes here on a very difficult golf course. What have you captured on your last few days to put up these great numbers?

CAMERON SMITH: I think that really just comes down to my short game. Obviously I've hit a few average shots out there, put myself in some bad spots, but being able to get up and down from some pretty bad spots has been good for me.

Q. Each tournament is different obviously, but you won in the fall in your native country of Australia. Does that give you a little more attitude and confidence heading into the final round tomorrow?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, absolutely, I'll definitely draw back on that tomorrow. Kind of getting the monkey off the back there in Australia being the first solo win. Obviously having the win last year with Jones was nice, but to do it by myself was huge.

Q. Finally, what are you committed to tomorrow to hopefully get some hardware?

CAMERON SMITH: Just sticking to my guns, sticking to my game plan and then just hitting some -- just really cliché stuff really, just one shot at a time, just making the putts that I've made the last couple days and hopefully I can go and get it done.