

ADAM STEPHENS

Q. Adam, nice way to start the Australian Open, especially with a brilliant par save there on the last.

ADAM STEPHENS: Yeah, that was a very tricky lie on the last hole and I was really just trying to get out of there with a 4. Lucky to get out of there with a 3, which was nice.

Q. And can you talk to us about your preparations coming into this week?

ADAM STEPHENS: You know, I know the course fairly well. I've got a couple of mates here are members, my caddie was a member here. I think just try and keep your bogeys down for the week, just like keep doing your birdies and you're going to be up there.

Q. What was the last event that you played?

ADAM STEPHENS: We played the New South Wales Open last week, missed the cut by 1, which was a bit disappointing, but this is good preparation coming into these events.

Q. Did you feel like something was coming today?

ADAM STEPHENS: I just try not to do anything dumb on the course and just try to keep the bogeys down. If you just like manage yourself, I think that's like what a lot of top guys do, they just manage themselves well. I didn't hit the ball great, but I think I hit -- I hit off at 6:45 and hit a little chunky 4-iron down the middle and made a good par and just kind of kept it relaxed out there.

Q. You were the first group off. What time did you get up this morning?

ADAM STEPHENS: Yeah, I was up about 4:30 and then snoozed a couple of times.

Q. Where are you coming from, where's home for you?

ADAM STEPHENS: Mate, just live on the Gold Coast. Originally from the Blue Mountains. Moved up to the Goldie a couple years ago and just a member of Sanctuary Cove Golf Club.

Q. The Blue Mountains, how long until you moved away?

ADAM STEPHENS: About 26 moved up, yeah. I've been traveling around for the last seven, eight years.

Q. What you did out there on the course, what you had spoken about, you maintained your focus, you dropped into the traps a few times, you managed to save par, save par. Is there anything that you've been using, any mental --

ADAM STEPHENS: Mate, not really. It's of course the Australian Open and you're not going to win it on the first day. Can shoot yourself out of it, so I just tried to play percentage.

Q. What's your status? Do you have status on the Australasian Tour?

ADAM STEPHENS: Yeah, just on the Aussie Tour here.

Q. Obviously you won the South Pacific Open a few years ago. What have you learned in the last three, four years?

ADAM STEPHENS: Mate, just be patient and birdies are going to come. I played the Queensland Open the other week and had 18 birdies, but I ended up -- like I had a nice bogey-free round in the first round, but you're still like mentally there. Then hit a bunch of dumb, bad swings.

Q. Have you been working, mate, made on the Gold Coast?

ADAM STEPHENS: Mate, just an Uber driver, but just to get mortgage going and a bit of income in.

Q. Were you driving before you came down for the New South Wales Open?

ADAM STEPHENS: I've had the last couple weeks off so just trying to keep the body fresh. You get sore backs.

Q. You meet all sorts of people when you drive an Uber?

ADAM STEPHENS: You know what, like it's been great, you meet really good people. Haven't had any bad people, which is good, yeah.

Q. What are you living on the Goldie, in a unit, an apartment or house?

ADAM STEPHENS: Mate, I've just got a two- bedroom unit just in Hope Island area. I just got my missus there and I've just got a person renting the other room out recently, which is nice.

Q. Is that always a constant struggle for guys like yourself, the funding, the finances?

ADAM STEPHENS: Mate, to be honest, I didn't go to Japan this year because I had no money. That's the reality of it over here in Australia. I went there last year and I got to final stage, almost bankrupt me. So you've just got to have a crack and back your ability really.

If you keep thinking you can do it, then just like keep on doing it, yeah.

Q. First round of the Australian Open --

ADAM STEPHENS: My mate told me yesterday, he goes, yeah, 251 to 1 the first round leader. I said that sounds all right, I'd much rather have you put money on me. It's just the first round, another round of golf, mate, that's how you've got to treat it. It's nice to be leading, which is great, but I may not be leading at the end of it, but yeah.

Q. Did you glance up at the leaderboard?

ADAM STEPHENS: I think I was like halfway, I had a quick look and I was there, like on 7 or 8 I had a really good pitch in there and I just saw I was there.

Q. I can't remember on the back nine where it was, but Cam Smith's' gallery was walking past yours and there were about eight guys behind you. I'm not being disrespectful --

ADAM STEPHENS: Oh, mate, what, like three holes race, yeah looking at the guys there, those guys, you know. I'm not really too phased about it, mate. I think I played with Cam Smith a couple years ago in the PGA, I came ninth there in the PGA that week, I had a nice week, but...

Q. When did you first pick up your clubs, mate?

ADAM STEPHENS: I had a go when I was about 11 and then didn't like it and came back when I was about 13.

Q. What didn't you like about it?

ADAM STEPHENS: I don't know. I got the bug, the golf bug.

Q. Did you play other sports as a kid?

ADAM STEPHENS: Mate, yeah, I was a really good 100-metre runner, I used to run 11 seconds 100 metres back in the day, and swimmer, tennis, all those.

Q. What school?

ADAM STEPHENS: Went to Kelvin Grove up in Queensland when I was 17, that's like a golf school there. Then I went to, the other one's called Hills International where Jason Day went there as well.

Q. What about primary school, mate?

ADAM STEPHENS: Just in the Blue Mountains, yeah. Just Leura public and Blue Mountains grammar.