

FINAL ROUND INTERVIEW
2 December 2018



CAMERON SMITH (-16)

OLIVIA McMILLAN: Cam, what an incredible day. It's all I'm sure been a bit of a blur for you, but can you tell us how you're feeling?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, pretty good. Yeah, it was a bit of a struggle today, but this makes it more worth it when you get it done. Yeah, pretty good. Sorry, I don't have much for you there.

OLIVIA McMILLAN: On the green out there you did a huge thanks to both your caddie and your friends and family for really pulling you through today. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

CAMERON SMITH: Well, I didn't really have the greatest start and, you know, the family and friends and everything were still behind me egging me on. Pinna is always positive no matter if we're 2 over through five or if we're 8 under through five, he's still, "Let's keep going." Yeah, he kept me in there today. You know, he told me that if we got nine good looks at it from the back nine that we'll be fine. Yeah, just kept high hopes basically, which is good.

Q. (No microphone.)

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, I wasn't really feeling nervous. Hit a bit of a crappy tee shot on 1. Probably got a little bit unlucky to end up where it was, but that's golf. I've been pretty fortunate all week with kicks and bounces and stuff. To get one bad one like that, it's bound to happen.

From there on basically I thought I hit really good shots. I hit a really good shot into 3, a really good shot into 2, a really good shot into 3, a good shot into 4, and nothing was -- you know, they were all -- it was just so windy, it was hard to judge how far the ball was going to go. The wind direction was a little bit different today, which was a little bit mind boggling type thing. Yeah, just took it on the chin and tried to stay positive and that was it.

Q. That second shot on 12, driver off the deck, was that "we need to go now," sort of pushing on to --

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, pretty much. Leish was a couple ahead at that point and I thought we need to make a big move. I hit a good shot just left of the green and put a bit of pressure on Leish and he still made birdie. I mean, that's just the type of player he is, he's just so good. I got to watch it all last week and again this week, so he's a pleasure to watch.

Q. And then Pinna was saying full inaudible) swings here, is that the tendency when you get under the gun a little bit just to maybe not give it everything or is that (inaudible)?

CAMERON SMITH: No, just we say we stick to our guns pretty good no matter the situation. So if it's a three-quarter swing, it's a three-quarter swing; if it's a full swing, it's a full swing. That was just how I like to hit them. Yeah, we did a really good job actually all week of communicating that stuff and really committing to a shot and our line into the greens.

Q. Cam, can you explain what happened on the 15th where your ball ended up on the left and what the ruling was?

CAMERON SMITH: So my ball on 15, the drive hit the grate and we were over in the left rough and I couldn't see anything on my ball. So I asked Scotty to come over and just to see if the ball was affected by hitting the grate and it wasn't, which is fine.

And then yeah, just needed to miss it right of that green for that pin and hit it a little bit too far right. Hit the board and it was the obstruction rule. I don't know what the rule is. So yeah, Scotty helped me out there. You could go one way or the other, and it was clear to me that the better angle to the pin -- not necessarily the better lie because it was all kind of the same stuff anyway, I definitely wanted to be on that side.

Q. Can I ask you, you won the PGA last year and how eager were you to defend this week? It's a fun week, but now how intense were you?

CAMERON SMITH: I think probably a couple weeks ago at the Aussie Open, being the highest ranked Aussie there probably put a little bit too much pressure on myself to play well and got off to a bit of a bad start. Played well over the weekend and salvaged a top-10, I think.

This week is just so, I don't know, I don't do much after the rounds, I just go and hang out with the family and friends on the beach. You know, I still -- when I was at the golf course I was still into it 100 percent, it's definitely not I wasn't just here to play, I wanted to win, but I think the stuff off the course definitely helped this week.

Q. It's pretty hard to win two golf (inaudible) in two years, last year as well. Three up and 2 down after five holes, you probably weren't expecting that?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, I was expecting Leish to come out and give it a good crack today. You know, I didn't -- like I was saying before, I didn't think I did much wrong, the bounces weren't going my way, a few kind of misclubbed that weren't really misclubs, it was just hard to judge the wind. You know, I knew he was going to do it, he's too good of a player not to do it. I knew he was going to come out and play that front nine strong. Yeah, just stuck to it and we didn't really change anything up other than driver off the deck on 12.

Probably would have usually laid up, but yeah, thought we needed to do something.

Q. Cameron, when you look back 12 months, you obviously made quite a big rise in your professional game since then over the last 12 months since you last saw this tournament. How much (inaudible)?

CAMERON SMITH: I don't know. Probably, I don't know, I don't know how I would put it. I've definitely improved a lot over the last year. I've put in a lot of hard work and I've just stuck to my kind of process, goals, stuff I have to do during the week, sticking to a schedule in my off weeks, which is something that I probably -- I never did. So I think all that stuff, and then just getting stronger in the gym. I mean, I'm hitting the ball probably 10 metres further off the tee this year and it's just allowed me to be a little bit more aggressive into the greens. You know, have a couple less clubs in. It's paid off. I haven't really done anything different, I've just done everything that I do better.

Q. I know you talked about the 15th there before. I was going to ask about the chip shot from that 16th tee. From your perspective, under the gun and the tournament's on the line, where do you rate that shot to give yourself basically a realistic chance at birdie?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, well, Leish was in there with a good shot at birdie as well, so I basically just wanted to get it inside him. I mean, it was off the fairway, it was back into the wind, so there was no reason for me not to be aggressive. Yeah, just hit a good shot.

Q. Cam, four months ago (inaudible.) Did you expect that to at least propel you to a win on the PGA TOUR this year and is that (inaudible) now that you hope to use this and become a regular PGA TOUR member?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, that's what you want to do. It's probably something that it's one of my goals that I didn't tick off this year was missing out on that win over there. You know, I still played great over here. I put myself in position to win and didn't quite pull it off a couple times, and that's just going to happen with competing against the best guys in the world.

Yeah, so it's definitely a huge confidence boost for me. I went over to that west coast there and started off the year really strong and I'm sure I'll do the same thing this year.

Q. (Inaudible) what were you expecting to see more --

CAMERON SMITH: Tee shot on 15. Oh, yeah, I thought it was going to miss the water but probably go even left of the traps or into the traps.

Q. You told me after (inaudible.) Can you tell me, what's it like barbecuing over in the United States? Do you get one flown over there or can you just walk into a hardware shop and buy one? Tell us what's going on.

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, basically you just walk in -- we're getting a builder guy to like build it in nicely and stuff. We've already got a barbecue, but just want to make it a bit better. It's a bit scrappy.

Q. Cam, (inaudible) to host the PGA in 2020 how would you feel about it given that you had such success here?

OLIVIA McMILLAN: Is your home club Wantima?

CAMERON SMITH: My home club's Wantima. I'm a member at Royal Pines and played a lot of golf out there. Yeah, I mean, I obviously love it down here, I would love for it to stay here for the next 25 years, but it is what it is. You know, Richmond's is a great golf club as well, a challenging test much the same really as here. Yeah, I wouldn't mind it. I've played a lot of golf around there, so I know.

Q. Cam, you mentioned you're swinging a little bit better. What about off the course, I guess being the poster boy this summer and your rise in the Australian world rankings, do you feel more comfortable now in that realm being at the centre?

CAMERON SMITH: It definitely has been a little bit different coming home this year, a little bit more attention on myself, making a commitment to other -- other commitments as well. I think I've done a pretty good job of it. I haven't let it stress me out, although it has been not really annoying, but it's just something that I'm not used to. I think I did -- over the past few weeks, especially last week was a big week for Leish and I, yeah, I think I've done a pretty good job of it.

Q. Just your thoughts on Jake getting his European Tour card?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, that's awesome. I grew up with Jakey, played on a lot of state teams with Jakey, practiced endless hours when we were 15, 16, 17 years old. It's good to see him going real good. I've always seen him as a really good player and, you know, he stuck to what he knows and he's pulling it off, which is good for him.

Q. (No microphone.)

CAMERON SMITH: So my mate, Jason Young, earlier this year got diagnosed with -- he had a tumor in his brain and he's been through a couple stints of chemo and things like that. He's hanging in there.

Q. Just in terms of world ranking, projections suggest you're (inaudible) or thereabouts as a result of this week. Do you have any goals for next year as to where you would like (inaudible) or just take it case by case?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah, I like to not necessarily look at the outcome of things, I like to just -- something that I've always done a good job of is just the process goals, like ticking off

the things every week and kind of let the outcome sort out itself. I would love to get into the top-20 by the end of this year, it's definitely the next goal. I think that's the next big step for myself is to get myself in there and get myself in a lot of situations where I can win golf tournaments and that's what I want to do.

Q. I just thought when you were talking about Jake there before, (inaudible) these guys that have been pivotal for you guys, you two. Now that you've got two (inaudible,) how much tribute do you pay to them to turn you and Jake into --

CAMERON SMITH: I think all of Golf Queensland, Golf Australia, they do such a good job now of developing guys from a really young age, especially the guys in Queensland. They know when to say stuff and they don't try and -- they don't try and force things, they just try to let you do your own thing. And then if there's something that needs to be said, they'll do it. I think that's something Grant and Tony do really well is kind of letting you do your own thing but making sure it's the right thing.

Q. Just one more. Leish obviously did a pretty (inaudible), very disappointed. The mate in you, does it kind of feel for him a little bit that you snatched one out in some sense, one he really wanted?

CAMERON SMITH: Yeah. Yeah, I did feel for Leish. It's always hard going up against a mate and trying to win a golf tournament. I've been in this situation before and I've had it happen to me as well. Yeah, it's a weird one, but I'm sure we'll have a beer over Christmas or, you know, when I see him next and we'll be back to being mates.

OLIVIA McMILLAN: All right. Final questions? No? Cam, once again finally congratulations.

CAMERON SMITH: Thank you.