

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW
19 December 2019



LUCAS HERBERT

Q. You must be pretty happy?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, good start. After sort of either missed the cut or top-10 here, so it's got to go all the way, doesn't it? Now I'm bound to make a top-10. Yeah, I struggled last year. It was good to start the way I have, especially I haven't played a lot of golf lately. Yeah, real good numbers.

Q. Where are you most happy with your game?

LUCAS HERBERT: Like what part of my game?

Q. Yeah.

LUCAS HERBERT: My iron play was pretty good. I thought that's improved a lot in the last few weeks, which has been something we're wanting to work on for probably 12 months now, so that was really good. Just good flight in the wind out here. Was a little bit breezy on the back nine and then it was all just solid, I didn't really throw any shots away with any silly doubles or anything like that, so that was kind of my big case, really. If I stop throwing stupid shots away, I tend to go all right.

Q. You mentioned a couple days ago that your hands have been an issue and in the Open it was troubling you a little bit. Can you tell us what was going on there and how it is right now?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, so it's probably seven weeks today since I did it, so it's kind of at the point now with a ligament injury that it should start -- should start sort of calming down and not hurting as much.

Yeah, it's been a lot better. I can still just feel it a little bit at times. There was one shot into the eighth today that I felt it a bit and it was bit sore, but I think at the Open I was kind of flinching and trying to not hurt my hand whereas I'm not really doing that now. I'm happy to -- whether it's like a wedge that you've got to take a pretty steep divot with, I'm actually okay with doing that, whereas I wasn't two weeks ago. Yeah, hand's really good, can't complain there. It's good to be healthy again and able to play.

Q. Eagle at 3?

LUCAS HERBERT: Twelve.

Q. Twelve, sorry. What did you hit in there?

LUCAS HERBERT: It was a 6-iron. I was actually in between clubs. I kind of just wanted to get it middle of the green and I kind of pulled it and hit it a bit hard and it got all the way back there. Yeah, take the good breaks when you get them.

Q. When you get momentum like that early and then you drop a couple after it, how do you sort of get yourself back on track? Is it last couple of holes didn't set you back at all or do you sort of recalibrate pretty quickly?

LUCAS HERBERT: It's actually an interesting day. Like usually I kind of set little targets for myself to get through numbers-wise, but I really didn't today, I kind of just let everything go and just enjoyed being out there. The course is in great shape, so I was just enjoying some nice weather, walking around a great golf course with one of my best mates on the bag. Yeah, that was more consuming my mind rather than score. It actually -- you know, I didn't really feel like I got off to a great start because I wasn't really concentrating on that, and then I didn't feel like I fell too far backwards because I wasn't really -- I wasn't really concentrating (inaudible.)

Q. Said at the Greg Norman Medal the other night you had a rough year in Europe this year. What have you learned from that that's going to help 2020 be a better campaign for you?

LUCAS HERBERT: I mean, it's just little bits and pieces. I don't think my scheduling was too good last year and I was away for like two 10-week trips, which is not much fun, especially at the time of life I was in.

So this year, changed that up a bit. I'm going to try and have bigger breaks in between events so I can get home and maybe only play like three or four in a row. You know, just little stuff like trying to enjoy -- trying to enjoy being out there and trying to get the balance right between, you know, going out and maybe having a few drinks one night and then you're obviously concentrating, whether it be the next day or the next week, in getting back on to the focus of golf. You can't just be golf, golf, golf 24/7, you've actually got to concentrate when you need to and you've got to switch off when you need to. Yeah, that's probably the big takeaways for me.

Q. You have your mate on the bag because Tom's been a caddie for you this year. Tell us who's on your bag this week and is he a chance of keeping the gig?

LUCAS HERBERT: No. Actually, I've just hired someone for next year Friday of last week, but he couldn't make it this week so it's kind of just a fill-in for the week. But Marcus caddied for me when I finished 11th in the Aussie Masters in 2014, so got some good chemistry there, had some good results together before. And he's, I mean, just a mate carrying a bag, he's doing a great job, always standing in the right place and never sort of annoying me, which is great.

Q. Is that part of that work-life balance you talked about just before? Finding that playing golf and a bit of fun off the course, is that a good example today of having a bit of balance?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, look, I think guys that are employing a caddie that's just a mate, I think they're doing themselves a disservice, but I think there's definitely some merit in getting your friends out to some events through the year.

Yeah, like we'll probably go shopping this afternoon or we'll go go-carting or something like that together. It's like it just keeps, yeah, keeps everything fresh. It helps you enjoy the golf, especially when you get out on the course a lot more. Yeah, we just chat about all sorts of stuff, which is good fun.

Q. Just on the European Tour side of things, how important do you feel is having a good start to the season rather than looking over your shoulder with a few weeks to go?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, obviously starting in Abu Dhabi for me, other than this week, you know, you sort of left four or five events early on to let the guys sort of get out in front of you and you almost feel like you're behind the eight ball a bit if you don't get a good start. So I would definitely like to put some points on the board this week, try and finish high up. Yeah, get the season off to a good start, try and set myself up to play some bigger events in the middle of the year and hopefully late in the season and take a bit of the pressure off. Because, yeah, it's not really much fun when you get to July and you feel like you've not really made much of a dent in the race to trying to get to the finals.