

18 October 2012

First Round

ASHLEY HALL

KATHIE SHEARER: A fantastic start. Did you feel it was coming? Have you been playing well lately?

ASHLEY HALL: I have been playing pretty good. I didn't play so good in China last week, but I had a really good result at the Dunhill. The week before. So it's been there and we've been getting off to a late start at tournaments and just need an opportunity.

THE MODERATOR: Are you from --

ASHLEY HALL: No, my wife is from Western Australia and I'm in Melbourne.

Q. (How has your season been so far)?

ASHLEY HALL: It's been, I would have said the year's been a little bit down. I haven't played so good but The Open made it a good year, just playing and qualifying, and I was actually playing pretty good at The Open.

I was playing fantastic. And I felt I played pretty good, and just got really unlucky and didn't make the weekend, which was unfortunate. But I wouldn't trade it for the world. It was just amazing playing a major, and I'd do anything to get back there really.

Q. Inaudible.

ASHLEY HALL: Just everyone you see on TV, I thought that I was used to it, and I feel that I am now. I don't stargaze anymore and I feel like I should be here and I should really be contending.

Q. (What was the difference that week)?

ASHLEY HALL: Just solid golf really. I find it's a course that you've just got to plod your way around and take advantage of a couple of short holes. And I just basically didn't really make a mistake, and I just always kept it in play and that's I think what I've improved a lot in the last year or so. I'm just a hell of a lot more consistent.

Q. Inaudible.

ASHLEY HALL: I didn't have much -- with OneAsia, we have probably ten events. I played one in September. I tried to fill it in with some Pro-Ams, which they weren't going so well. And to be perfectly honest, I was almost not going to be playing during the summer this year for financial reasons.

I did well enough last week that we are all good, and yeah, now it all adds up, I'm going to U.S. Q-School now, during Masters week, I have to do Second Stage. I can't wait to get over there now that I'm showing some form and hopefully playing the U.S. Tour next year.

Q. (If you advance, will you make it back for the Open)?

ASHLEY HALL: Yes, even if I make the final stage, the dates work really good this year and I'll be back sort of Monday, Tuesday of the Australian Open.

Q. Inaudible.

ASHLEY HALL: It's very -- golf is very good if you're going well. It's amazing if you're going well, as we all see on the U.S. Tour, and it's fantastic. Before you even pick it up, you're possibly a millionaire, I don't know; I'd like to know. Yeah, that side of it's awesome.

The other side of golf is what we are doing I suppose, and hopefully we are all hopeful that it can get better in Australia and that they can play a lot more and then he can be better off. I would love nothing more than to play 20 events in Australia and not have to go overseas, that would be fantastic.

Q. (On possibly on not playing in the summer).

ASHLEY HALL: I didn't know, and it was upsetting that I didn't know what I was going to do. I was trying to find ways to -- inaudible -- and I've never had to do that before. I've got a young boy now who has just turned one and a little house, like everyone else has got. We had not got a cheque in ages and my wife was not working and it was just getting hard. It's expensive traveling week-to-week. So it's good now, so I'm not bothered about it.

Q. When you get to that stage where --

ASHLEY HALL: I suppose like the Dufners and the Schwartzels of this week that get well looked after. But that's the reward of working hard and playing good. That's what we all want to do and where to be. It would be lovely to be paid to play in a tournament here and then you're still paid money.

Q. Inaudible.

ASHLEY HALL: Yeah, there are some people that help me out which is really nice -- indiscernible -- have been fantastic to me ever since I turned professional. So yeah, I like to stick by the people that are good to me and make good in return. Yeah, it's all right.

Q. (What is your plan for tomorrow)?

ASHLEY HALL: I am going to do exactly the same as what I did today, play fairly conservative and keep bigger numbers off the card. I haven't been doing that a lot lately. I've got some good advice over the years that you've just got to keep in it until Saturday, late Saturday, and then on Sunday, you just see where you're at and maybe change your game plan accordingly on Sunday if you're a few behind or if you're a few in front, you keep doing the same thing.

It's very, very mental I think, dealing with that, because everybody out there, out here is good enough to win.

Q. Inaudible.

ASHLEY HALL: Well, now that I've played now for six years professionally, this was a lot more real because of the house and Cooper. But it's nothing new. I have been there a few times and most Australian professionals have been there and I've been talking to a few who are there at the moment like I was.

It's just on the actual golf course -- I'll talk to my wife about it. When I'm playing, I'm thinking about playing golf. It's just when I'm not playing golf, yeah, you start to think a little bit.

Q. Inaudible.

ASHLEY HALL: Yeah, I had a big Open in 2009 and a big PGA in 2007.

It's very important to win and it's been on my mind, because 2009 is now quite a while ago, and that was -- January of 2009, so it's been quite a while. But now I'm feeling -- and I've been in media centers and that a few more time, so now

I'm doing better in bigger tournaments. These are the next steps.

Q. (Long birdie putts today)?

ASHLEY HALL: Oh, wasn't that long. Probably, I think I holed maybe about a 20-footer on 10. But every other birdie putt, and I didn't even leave myself that much work for par. Everything else was within ten foot.

Q. And where was --

ASHLEY HALL: OneAsia. I joined -- with playing OneAsia and playing at The Open, I actually joined The European Tour as an affiliate member. So my group result a couple weeks ago means that if I actually finish in the higher, top three or so, I might be able to finish high enough in the European Tour to finish in top 150 and then get going for next year, which that's my goal for this week, anyway.

Q. (On timing of going to Q-School).

ASHLEY HALL: Mainly because the U.S. this year is the last-ever year you can qualify for the main PGA TOUR. From next year onward, you're only qualifying for the Nationwide or Web.com or whatever it is now.

As soon as I found that out, I wanted to try. I would have gotten an exemption to Stage 2 in the U.S. and the European Tour, so I thought because of the last year in the U.S., I thought I might as well try. I've never tried the U.S. before.

KATHIE SHEARER: Thank you for coming in, Ashley. Hope we see you the next couple of days.

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