

The Evian Championship

Wednesday September 14, 2016

Brooke Henderson

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: It's my pleasure to welcome in the Rolex Rankings No. 3 player Brooke Henderson into the interview room here at the Evian Championship. Welcome back to Evian. Let's talk about returning here, just one appearance here at Evian. Last year was a tied for 25th finish. What will you take away from you playing last year, what you did, and what will you apply hopefully this week that will help you a little bit?

BROOKE HENDERSON: Yeah, you know, I had so much fun here last year. It was my 18th birthday on the Thursday, and I walked up 18, and when I finished they presented me with a cake. It was so cool. It was kind of like the dream 18th birthday, celebrating in France and playing the Evian Championship.

I definitely have a ton of great memories, and getting to know the course the first time I think was really important. I made the cut, and then on Sunday I was able to shoot minus 5 to kind of climb up the leaderboard, and that was really important, getting to know the greens a little bit better, where the slopes are, even in the fairways knowing where the slopes are is really important.

The last few days, coming here again, I felt much more familiar, and hopefully I'll see better results the next few days.

THE MODERATOR: Now let's talk about how you're feeling. I just looked on the stats page, you're leading the Tour in rounds played this year: 89. That's a lot of rounds. How are you feeling, because you finally got a week off last week. What did you do to rest up?

BROOKE HENDERSON: Yeah, playing two weeks in Canada, and the second week was only five hours away from home, so I was home Sunday night and was able to spend time with family and friends and rest a little bit, be able to practice and prepare for this week.

It was a lot of fun, spending some time at my cottage. We went canoeing one day, and just seeing family and friends that I haven't really had a chance to see much this year was really important to me.

THE MODERATOR: We're calling you the Iron Lady playing so many rounds. Were you feeling a little fatigued going from the Olympics to Canada?

BROOKE HENDERSON: Yeah, they were extremely busy weeks for me, but it went really well. The Olympics was a lot of fun, an experience that my sister and I will never forget. It was an opportunity of a lifetime for sure, and then coming back to Canada with all the fans, it was just incredible. Calgary, I don't think I've ever had that many people watch me play before, and I wasn't even leading. I turned to Brit at one point, and I said, imagine if I was leading like how many people there would be, so hopefully that will be next year.

THE MODERATOR: So you're coming here obviously with that major title at KPMG under your belt. You're a player that plays with a lot of confidence. You come into every week hopefully being in contention to win, but how much did that win at Sahalee do for you knowing that you can close out beating Lydia in a playoff, as well?

BROOKE HENDERSON: Yeah, for sure that was a massive week for me. Confidence-wise, World Ranking wise, it moved me up. Just overall, like you said, being able to close it out in the way that I did, my three wins on Tour have come totally different ways, and I think that that's a really cool feeling, and knowing it doesn't have to be perfect, and you just have to find something and kind of grind it out and good things happen. Sahalee was definitely a turning point in my career and in my life, and hopefully I'll have another opportunity this week to play well and hopefully close it out.

Q. We know you like those tree-lined courses and you get some good vibes there. What are your impressions of this course and you feel like it sets up well for you?

BROOKE HENDERSON: Yeah, like I said, being able to play last year and then coming into this year, it's much more familiar. I feel a lot better on the course, and there are a couple tee shots that are very narrow, tree-lined, which I like, and then just I think the person that plays well here is -- you have to ball strike extremely well. Off the tee you need to hit fairways because the rough is pretty long, and on the greens you need to know where it place it because of all the slopes. But I think somebody that is confident enough to take on those lines and knows exactly where to hit for certain pin positions, I think that's the person that

plays well this week.

Brit has been taking a lot of notes, and I've been trying to work on the confidence so that I can take those lines, and at the end of the day, I think this course requires somebody that has all factors of their game, all assets, I guess, of their game working, and hopefully that'll be me or at least I'll finish on the top of the leaderboard.

Q. You hear about the weather, that they're predicting rain, so what do you think?

BROOKE HENDERSON: Yeah, it's been so beautiful here the last few days. It's been really hot, too. I wasn't expecting it. But everybody will have to play through the rain and the weather. Hopefully it's not too bad. Maybe it will just make the course a little bit softer and hopefully a little bit more scorable.

Q. How did you celebrate your 19th birthday?

BROOKE HENDERSON: It was last Saturday, so I actually flew to France, so that's like another dream come true right there. But no, it was a lot of fun. I had it with my family. I practiced, hung out with one of my best friends, and then got on the plane and flew here, so it was really cool.

Q. The age of the players in the women's rankings is getting lower and lower. How can you explain that?

BROOKE HENDERSON: Yeah, you know, definitely the last three years you see a lot of younger women play really well on the LPGA Tour, and I'd like to say I'm one of those women. Even the junior and amateur rankings, junior and amateur fields, they're getting younger. I think there's more access maybe to coaches or more knowledge coming to younger girls, and I also think that they're kind of fearless. I like to think that I was that way. I think over the next few years, just because of the movement from junior and amateur, you'll continue to see it get younger and younger out on the LPGA Tour.

THE MODERATOR: I'd like to ask one more follow-up of the Rolex Annika Major Award. Obviously anybody who's won a major is up for you. You're in contention, kind of right there. What would that award mean to you? I know you have a long career ahead of you, a lot of awards to be won, but to be the most outstanding performer in majors only in your technically second year on Tour, what would that mean to you?

BROOKE HENDERSON: That would be amazing, and it's definitely kind of been on the back of my mind. I'm not in the greatest of positions right now, but a solid week this week, hopefully I can be a little bit closer and have a chance.

But yeah, you know, it would really be an amazing award to win any year, but hopefully it will be this year.

Q. Brooke, you've talked about how the amateurs are fearless and that you used to be that way, but when did you first feel fear on a golf course?

BROOKE HENDERSON: I don't know. I think everybody kind of feels it at some point, but it's the person that can kind of put it in the back of their mind or not agree with it, I think, can kind of just move on from that fear and not let it distract you or make you hit a bad shot. I think that's the person that you see at the top of the leaderboard every single week, and some courses are going to cause some people to have fear more than others. They suit up better. For me, I like tree-lined courses so my fear is more minimal. More like when you get to the links style at the British Open, I might have a little more fear that week. That's just the way it happens. But I think the person that can push through that is the person that wins.

Q. As a professional can you remember your first week when you thought, oh, my God, something was scaring you like a first links or whatever?

BROOKE HENDERSON: Yeah, I mean, I think it happens at different points for everybody. I don't think you can ever go through any golf course without at some point feeling a little bit. But like I said, you've just got to kind of push through it and be confident. Maybe at Turnberry last year when the wind started blowing multiple miles per hour, maybe I felt a little bit then, but I think it just happens at different points.

THE MODERATOR: I was scared and I wasn't even playing.

Q. Which one is the key hole of this course, and how do you play it?

BROOKE HENDERSON: I think there's a lot of key holes out here. I think definitely 16, the par-3, you need to really be precise and hit a good shot, and as long as you're on the green, you have a pretty good chance of making par or better. But even once you hit the green, you know, you have to make sure you hit it into a certain bowl or certain spot to make it easy for yourself, so I think that will definitely be a key hole for everybody this week.

Q. What about 18?

BROOKE HENDERSON: 18, yeah, 18 plays long, over water on the second shot and the back bunker, so again, you need to be very precise, but I think you can pick apart this golf course and every single hole there's at least one shot where you need to be dead on.

Q. What's your plan for kind of the back half of the

season? Are you going to dial it back at all or how many Asian events are you playing to play?

BROOKE HENDERSON: I'm planning to play them all right now, so we'll see how it goes. I think we're definitely going to China in two weeks, I guess, and then see how it goes from there.

Q. How are you feeling at this point? Are you feeling pretty tired, or how are you kind of feeling this home stretch?

BROOKE HENDERSON: No, I'm feeling really well right now, and I think the week at home was really nice, and I'll have a week at home again next week. But if I was at home I'd practice anyway, so I may as well have a chance to win.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for coming in. Good luck this week.