

Canadian Pacific Women's Open

Tuesday, August 21, 2018

Alena Sharp

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Alena, good to be back in Canada, good to come back home. You were off site today at an RBC event, but how do you feel coming into this week here in Canada?

ALENA SHARP: I feel really good. I've been playing pretty consist, hitting the ball pretty consistently the last, I don't know, couple months. Worked hard on my putting. I took like five days off. I just needed a break. Just felt like all the hard work I was putting in wasn't really panning out and I was just getting really frustrated and really wasn't loving being out on the golf course.

Took few days off. Was in Whistler and did some hiking, zip lining, mountain biking trying to just get away from golf. Then I got back with a fresh attitude and I worked really hard on my putting heading into Indianapolis, and the results started to show.

I actually feel somewhat confident walking on to a green now, which is a nice feeling. I haven't had that in a while. I thought, great tune up to come into this week.

THE MODERATOR: We've certainly heard from Lexi as well lately about the need to take some time off. What is that mindset for you if you stand back and take a look at your game and see what you need, and if that's time, to be able to take it?

ALENA SHARP: I feel like my role has kind of changed like for myself. Like I feel like I'm more of a mentor to the Canadian girls out here. I've always told them, You got to have balance. Take time to yourself. It's not always all about golf.

I feel like this year, because I haven't had the results, I've been grinding, grinding, grinding and haven't even listened to my own advice. So just really taking some time to just relax, catch up on sleep, watch some mindless shows just to really get set and get more into that competitive edge instead of just going through the motions.

THE MODERATOR: Now and you come into a very busy week for you. You mentioned you're feeling good,



but how does the golf course look? How does it set up for you? How do you feel coming into competition?

ALENA SHARP: I feel like this course sets up well for me, especially if the wind is blowing. I've become a good wind player. I would love to see it blow 20 miles an hour each day.

You got to drive it well on the front nine, and on the back nine you got to wedge it well because it's a little bit shorter from what I saw yesterday. Got to be accurate with your wedges and hole those short birdie putts.

With the crosswinds I think that'll make it tough with the driving, so I think it suits my game.

THE MODERATOR: We'll talk about this lovely golf bag you have sitting here. I think back to the week we spent in Hawaii where it was you and Sara who were key in getting the ribbons out and in remembering everything that happened here in Saskatchewan.

Tell us about where tis bag comes from what it means to you.

ALENA SHARP: Well, we just wanted to do something special. When the crash happened, I mean, it was horrific to even read about it, just everything that was going on.

We were in Hawaii and we wanted to do something. We saw that the Symetra Tour players, Augusta James and Brittany Marchand, had done ribbons that week, which was awesome. I said, We have to do that, too. Let's get it for all the Canadian players so we all have one, and even the Canadian caddies. So we all had the green and yellow ribbons.

And then going forward we knew we were going to be here and wanted to do something. Sara came up with the idea of trying to get a golf bag in green and yellow. It worked out well. RBC teamed up with us on this and they made it happen.

We decided we're going to give it to the Pattison's Kids' Foundation at the end of the week, so it's staying here in Regina.

THE MODERATOR: Where it should be. Thank you very much.

We'll open it up for questions.

Q. You touched on the background with wanting to get the bag a bit there, but coming from Hamilton and in Ontario you don't really have a district connections to Saskatchewan. Do you feel any connections to Humboldt and Saskatchewan in getting that bag?

ALENA SHARP: For me, growing up playing hockey, I've been on a lot of busses going to hockey tournaments. I kind of have been there done that. Just what happened just still makes me -- like makes my skin crawl like how this happened.

I do have a family connection here. My aunt lives here and my cousins live here. I don't know. I just feel like just being a Canadian. I've said this all week: It doesn't matter where we play, it just feels like your home town. I wanted to do something for the community, and I think giving back and being on this platform as an LPGA Tour player, it was just something I could do to help.

Q. What did it mean to you as an athlete to see not just Canadian athletes come together for Humboldt, but around the world everyone came together?

ALENA SHARP: Yeah, it was unbelievable how, yes, it got world coverage. Just a hockey team from Saskatchewan. You wouldn't think it would get that much coverage, but it did. It made me proud to be Canadian, even though it was a tragedy, that everybody was helping and that GoFundMe raised so much money for the team and the families.

It's just hard to like believe that the whole world came together through the tragedy.

Q. With this tournament, no Canadian has won it since 1973. Do you feel extra pressure that it is a Canadian tournament and you're Canadian?

ALENA SHARP: I think every year we always have a little bit more pressure at this tournament being a Canadian. Definitely want to get that win as a Canadian and kind of knock that 19 -- it was 1973, right?

Q. Yeah.

ALENA SHARP: Yeah, it's been a long time. It's about time that one of us wins it, and it awesome to do to it week. Just want to have a chance at it going into the weekend.

Q. You're coming into this week coming off one of

your best four-round totals of the year, 8-under par last week in Indy. Does this tournament come at a good time for you in terms of re-motivation and coming in off a really good week as well?

ALENA SHARP: Yeah, I feel -- like I said earlier, I his my last eight tournament round have been under par, like collectively. I did well at the British Open qualifier; missed it by one shot. I was under par.

I just feel like my game is coming together nicely. You stick to the process and the results start to show. I just keep believing that it's going to happen, and you just keep going one foot in front of the other and hope it's this week.

You know, don't get too far ahead of myself and just play like I've been playing. It's harder to play in Canada because you want to do well. At the at the same time, you just got to stay grounded and stay in the present. That's my big goal this week.

Q. Comment on the role that your partnership with RBC has played in helping this bag become a reality?

ALENA SHARP: I'm very fortunate to have great sponsors. RBC has sponsored me since the Olympics. They do a lot of great work with women. I just came from a women's-only clinic; I did another one earlier this year.

They do a lot to give back to the community and they're heavily involved in golf. I really respect them a lot. I was very thankful they teamed up to help get this bag to be possible.

Q. When you look at the bag on the golf course, do you get emotional? Is it a reminder? How did you react when you see it? (Indiscernible.)

ALENA SHARP: Yeah, I mean, a lot of people have commented and it's definitely bringing attention, but I think it's for the right reasons. I don't see it as a negative distraction. I see it as a good thing.

Definitely gives you perspective. We're just playing golf. It's just a game. I think, yeah, it's a good reminder to stay in the moment and just enjoy.

Q. You said you were a hockey playing. You ride on busses and those types of things back in the day?

ALENA SHARP: Yeah, I actually was on a bus from Hamilton to PEI. We went over to play in a hockey tournament in PEI and we took a bus there. It was a long bus ride, yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Anything further for Alena?

You're one of I believe 16 Canadians here in the field. Great showing. You talk about your role as a mentor, but you're certainly still an active player. What do you think is the state of Canadian golf looking ahead to the future, to the next amateurs coming up?

ALENA SHARP: I think we're in great hands. We have a lot of great players. Couple of them aren't here because they're at Q-School, but our juniors have done well. They just got back from the British Am; they did well there.

I just feel like it's in good hands. Golf Canada does a great job with their programs and helping develop these players to become professionals. There is definitely a boom coming from the Canadian contingent soon.

THE MODERATOR: I think I saw you also have 21 Canadians on the Symetra Tour right now.

ALENA SHARP: Right. And our goal is to get into that International Crown in two years.