

ROUND 4 INTERVIEW
October 31, 2021

LUCAS HERBERT (-15)



HALEY PETERSON: We would like to welcome our 2021 Butterfield Bermuda Championship winner to the virtual media press conference. Tell me about this wind, playing in rough conditions. How does it feel to capture your first PGA TOUR win?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, I mean, it's pretty unbelievable. Just so hard out there today and I just, it was one of those ones you couldn't even let yourself kind of get ahead and think that you've won the tournament early because conditions were just so brutal that you could have hit a shot anywhere at any time offline and it was just, it was just good to survive I guess is probably the way to describe it.

HALEY PETERSON: Start of the day, four shots back, knew it was going to be rougher conditions. What was the mindset?

LUCAS HERBERT: It was a tricky one. You sort of had to be a little bit fluid with it depending on the conditions. I think early it was probably favorable to do some scoring. I think once we got to about six or seven, that was when the wind really picked up.

From then on it was probably more of a survival mode, just try and get yourself into position off the tee and in the fairway hopefully and in the middle of the greens and just, you know, try not to put too much pressure on the short game because, yeah, it was just obviously not easy out there.

So I knew I was going to have to get help from Taylor be able to win, and thankfully for me he struggled a bit out there and I was able to take advantage of that.

HALEY PETERSON: (Inaudible) Especially there on 18 green, you had some support out there with you this week; of course your caddie on the bag but those on the green. What did it mean to do that with them here in Bermuda?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, my first two wins on the European Tour, Dom wasn't here, my coach, so to sort of experience a win with him here. Especially we missed the past two cuts before this in a row, my game was really, really struggling and I decided to call in and get him out over here. By the time it looked a bit dicey trying to get him back into Australia once we got him out, so for him to make that commitment to come out and help me out a lot with my golf swing, we hit a lot of balls over the last two or three weeks getting ready for this event. To have it pay off so quickly and to share that win with him, that was really special.

Q. Tell me, I was out on the course, holes seven, eight, nine, especially I guess eight, what did you hit on the tee there and how much fun was that tee shot?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, I think I probably hit the worst shot of the day on that eighth tee. That was I think a 3-iron. Yeah, just didn't catch it too well. I thought it might have been out of bounds for a minute.

Yeah, those three holes were probably playing the hardest of the day, probably the most exposed out of all the different holes out there. I mean, that rain that came in, we were walking up in front of that tee box, that rain started coming in and that was brutal. We were all just sitting there going, we can't be playing in this, we need to just (inaudible) off for a minute, which thankfully it was, but it was very, very tough. You just had to try and survive really. Par was an unbelievable score there. You look at the leaderboard and it can feel like (inaudible) on that hole, but a par there. That probably was part of what set me up the rest of the round.

Q. Can you tell me the details of that par because we couldn't quite see, but how close you were to out of bounds and what did you hit?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, I hit 3-iron off the tee, kind of chunked it, caught on the wind and went a little right. Then that was when they blew the siren, so I was probably -- I'm going to say I was a good 55 or 60 yards short of the green on the right there and had a pretty good lie to sort of hit a little punch shot up the green to about six or seven feet and then I made that, which I was very happy with the par. It was whipping crosswind there and to make that was pretty good.

Q. While Danny and Taylor were providing enough for you to consider on the course, how much did Patrick Reed's posting of a 14 under earlier and the fact that you had a Masters champion and his accompanying aura of him being a nine-time winner, how much did that play into your mind?

LUCAS HERBERT: I'm struggling to hear.

Q. How much did Patrick Reed's score play into your mind considering that he's a Masters and a nine-time Tour winner?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, I think, I mean, early on in the round I think I checked the board through about three or four holes and it was a pretty big gap between fourth and third, which I think I was third at that point.

From there, I wanted to feel like we all kind of pushed on and pushed forward and really separated ourselves from the rest of the field, you know. My feeling was if it was just us three, it was easy to keep an eye on how other guys were playing and you knew a lot about what was going on. Obviously you see Patrick play well and post 14 under, it's difficult to know what they're doing when that group's in front of you and you're sort of watching a leaderboard.

Yeah, I think we saw he posted that on 14, so yeah, from there we knew that was the number that we just had to beat coming in. I felt like 16 was going to do it outright and 15 was probably a playoff, so that was kind of what I was thinking heading down probably 13 and 14.

Yeah, it was good being in that group that we're in though because it felt like it was sort of a three-horse race and almost like match play really.

Q. Lastly, how critical was the birdie on 14 after you had bogeyed 13?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, I mean, I didn't do a lot wrong for that bogey on 13, the putt just kind of bowed a little bit on me. I hit three pretty good shots and it wasn't in the hole yet. I just had to make sure I stayed positive and stayed patient.

Yeah, I holed a lot of putts from 25 to 40 feet this week, so I kind of got over that putt on 14 and went, like this is your range, you've holed so many of these this week, like you're probably going to hole this one as well. I just felt super confident. From the moment it left the putter, I was like, that's not going to miss, that's going in.

Q. Could you just tell me a little bit about -- a little more about your coach and what exactly -- like where he came from, his full name and what he helped you with specifically? Kind of layman's terms that helped you win this week.

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, so Dom Azzopardi is his name. We started working together when I was about 13, so we've been together for 12 years.

We started, we worked on the last two weeks, it was -- I was taking the club back a long way inside, inside plane going back and from there it was very hard to match it up. I was kind of leaking the ball to the right or double crossing left, which is not a really good way to play golf.

Yeah, so we just worked on that takeaway a lot. It's a lot to work on because then it throws out a lot of your feels of how the ball's going to launch. I just felt like I was going to hit a lot of shots left.

To be honest, like Thursday and Friday this week I still didn't 100 percent trust it, so it was really nice this weekend it felt like everything was matching up, what I felt like I was making a move at, the ball felt like it was coming out exactly as I thought, so it was good it turned out this week, for sure.

Q. I found it interesting, you made the comment that when you started with two bogeys in the first three holes, you kind of felt like you were going to miss the cut this week, talked about packing the bags and going back to the mainland on Friday. How do you explain the fact that now you're going home with the trophy?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, I mean, those first three holes on Thursday were pretty tough.

The wind was whipping pretty hard. I think I was sitting under a little palm tree on the side of the 12th green at 2 over through three thinking, I'll tell you what, if this wind doesn't die down or this weather improves, then we might be packing the bags early because this is tough.

It probably wasn't so much confidence in my own game, it was probably more the weather was just so brutal. Obviously it turned around quite nicely. I was probably playing a couple of difficult holes in that wind as well.

Yeah, it turned around pretty quick, but golf's one of those sports. There's endless of stories of guys that have started off with three straight bogeys, that have been 4 over through nine and then come back to win. Just a lot of stories like that. So I tried not to get too caught up in that early and just make sure that I just keep fighting. Maybe 30th place is a good result, maybe just making the cut's a good result. I tried to really focus on that and it just got better and better as the week went on.

Q. What's made you the type of player that loves the tough conditions?

LUCAS HERBERT: I think growing up in Australia we had a lot of this kind of stuff I played countless junior events where the wind was just brutal. Yeah, I feel like -- and especially playing on the European Tour now for two or three years, it gets pretty windy out there as well.

It's being exposed to a lot of golf where it gets quite windy. I've seen a lot of the best players in the world play in the wind as well, so just watching how they do it and then working on that. Feeling like -- just working on the things that I work on in the wind, I feel like it gives me an edge over when the conditions are perfect, I feel like that just suits the guys that are locals a bit more.

Q. How long do you think those putts were on 12 and 14 that you made?

LUCAS HERBERT: I'm going to say it was 20 feet on 12 and probably 35 feet on 14. That would be my guesses.

Q. (Question about being in the Masters.)

LUCAS HERBERT: Definitely gets me into the Masters? Okay. I mean, the next 12 months are going to be really cool. I've never played Augusta, so being able to play the Masters is going to be pretty cool.

Getting to play in -- we just talked about Kapalua, getting to play in a few of these events that I've watched growing up on TV, it's just going to be a cool experience. No matter how I play, it's just going to be phenomenal to play in those tournaments. It's going to be lots of fun.

I don't even want to try to put expectations on anything right now. Too easy when you win to

think you're never going to not win again. So I think the next few days we'll sit back and think and celebrate and then, yeah, reset some plans going forward as to what our goals are going to be and how we want to play in some of these awesome tournaments that we're going to get into. I hope that was a sufficient answer, Bernie. Sorry, I couldn't really hear.

Q. What did you know about Bermuda and this tournament coming into the week?

LUCAS HERBERT: There's a sizeable triangle that seems to capture a lot of ships and planes, that's kind of the extent of my knowledge on Bermuda, I think.

I've been to the Bahamas before and the water here off the ocean was very -- it reminded me a lot of that. Yeah, just amazing views, I think. Like you look at that eighth and ninth and 16th and 17th holes here this week, just pretty amazing views off the coast. Stayed at a really nice hotel obviously down there at the Fairmont, got a ferry pretty much every day to the golf course. Like pretty nice spot to be.

If the weather had been a little bit nicer, I think we could have enjoyed it so much more. Just unfortunately we got some pretty blustery conditions this week that probably stopped us from going to the beach or doing anything as fun. It's still an amazing place and yeah, definitely come back here again.

Q. Thank you for bringing that championship here home to Bermuda where you did.

Tell us, how did that weather actually feature in your victory? You wished you could have gone to the beach, but I'm sure you would take that victory with the bad weather over any beach day any day?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, 100 percent. I mean, that weather, it makes things so much harder and obviously I think it brings out the best players (inaudible). So that to me shows that the best players (inaudible) the leaderboard for the week.

Yeah, you've got to be so much more precise, you've got to be really good at understanding how the (inaudible) moves around the golf course. It didn't really feel like that out there, it seemed to be swirling around a little bit depending on those early holes (inaudible.) It felt like it moved around quite a bit.

And you get out to the exposed areas and obviously five degrees different wind direction could mean three different clubs. It was a big factor. Obviously it made everything play tougher and I really enjoyed the challenge out there, to be honest. It's not easy playing in that wind and weather. As long as you keep the right attitude and smile and laugh and just enjoy that challenge, then (inaudible.)

Q. When this course was designed by Robert Trent Jones, Sr., under the eye of Robert Rulewich and redesigned by Robert Rulewich, wind was very much a factor in course design, but you guys now hit it so much further than we did back in my day,

being almost 65. Is there anything that you could suggest to me in my capacity as chairman of this club that can enhance some holes that would make it a little bit more difficult for you as you will always be associated with us in Bermuda and be grateful?

LUCAS HERBERT: I'm no course designer, so I don't think I'm the person to ask about the design of the golf course.

I mean, it's not the longest golf course we play on Tour, that's for sure. I don't think that's any secret, but the test is not about the length, it's all about controlling the golf ball in the wind. As long as this golf course is here on this land, it's always going to be windy and the conditions are always going to be what makes this play harder.

If you wander over to Europe and have a look at the courses over there that are the best, they're the hardest because of the weather. St. Andrews is not that much of a difficult golf course on a calm, still day, but that's a rarity over there and those courses are all down to the weather. So I would say this course is very much down to the weather and how it plays.

Yeah, if you want to make it any harder, I don't think we're going to break par on a day like this if you're going to go and try and lengthen it at all.

Q. Thank you for that, much appreciated. As a champion of Bermuda, we'll take your comments to heart, take them very seriously.

Tell me how important -- I couldn't help but notice at the photo ops just now, you have a very interesting group with you. How important is it to travel with that much fun near you and how important is it that you have away from the course laughter. Obviously they're not laughing the way they were laughing there, I would be surprised.

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, I think we have so much fun. You've got to enjoy your job and we have a lot of fun traveling all together. The majority of the time most of my team is living in my apartment in Orlando as well. We're together a lot of the time. We have a lot of fun.

We're all quite different personalities and different characters, which makes it a lot of fun as well. Yeah, and also it makes the win so much more enjoyable because we've done it all together and we all feel like we're almost an equal part of this, this journey to winning out here on the PGA TOUR.

Yeah, I mean, we have a lot of fun. To be honest, this week we actually kind of had a discussion about maybe toning it down a little bit because we were maybe having too much fun and having too much banter. It's definitely a unique environment from what everyone else tells me. No other team around has got a similar culture going on. We definitely have a lot of fun and I think all of us really enjoy our job a lot.

Q. Never too much banter, mate. I know you talked a little bit about the future and

stuff, but one thing I want to put on your radar is the Presidents Cup team, building to something a couple years back on the international side. Do you have aspirations to be part of it and be part of the youth movement, if you will, on that team?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, I think we've seen probably three of the guys that have got a good chance of making that team playing out there today, Taylor, myself and Danny.

I like to think that we've got a good chance assembling a pretty good team. I mean, I would love to be a part of the team, don't get me wrong, but I feel like there's a lot of good players that are probably ahead of me at the moment, whether it be in the standings or whether it be in their actual games. We have a very strong team. All the guys like Scotty are playing really nicely and having a good patch in their career, but then we've got a lot of younger guys like Joaquin Niemann and Sungjae Im coming through as well that are just bolstering that squad so much.

I want to think we're going to be really competitive next year, but I don't want to say anything that's going to provoke that U.S. team because they're also incredibly strong. I would love to be a part of it. I wish I had been a part of the one at Royal Melbourne, that would be amazing. I'd love for it to go back to Royal Melbourne again to get a chance to play in front of our home crowd. Yeah, it's exciting times and I would love to be a part of that team.

Q. Rate your three victories from three different continents, where does each win rank?

LUCAS HERBERT: That's not a question I can answer (Laughs.) Someone's going to get upset with that answer. I don't know, I can't compare them. They were so different and they were so just different stages of my career and different times in how my game felt. Yeah, like I said, they're just so different. None of them are any better or worse than each other. I can only take the positives out of all of them.

The first one (inaudible) was just amazing because I led all week and had such a good support from the crowd over there, and then Dubai was amazing because it was my first win and there's a really good field there and I felt like such an iconic place as well to win. I was like really, really proud of that victory.

But then this is my first PGA TOUR win and it's just brutal weather conditions. There's so many positives to take out of all three of those wins, I can't sit here and rate any of them better than the others.

HALEY PETERSON: That's all the questions we have, Lucas. Thank you for taking the time to talk with us and again, congratulations on your win.

LUCAS HERBERT: Thank you.