

Graham DeLaet

Press Conference



NICK PARKER: Like to welcome Graham DeLaet to the interview room. 10-under, lead right now, 5-under 67, what was working for you out there?

GRAHAM DeLAET: Yeah, I played well. I got off to a little bit of a shaky start, 1-over through 3. And missed the greens the rest of the day. That's the key, hit greens, even hitting the fairways in the right part of the fairways, I felt like I was doing a good job of that.

Q. This is a course you have loved, but haven't played well here. What's changed?

GRAHAM DeLAET: Last year gave me a little bit of confidence. I finished 15th or something like that, first time I finished inside the top-50 here. And my love and enjoyment of playing this golf course turned into maybe I could play well here. And I think that was a little bit of the confidence I needed. Obviously I'm playing well this week, so that helps. I really do love playing Harbour Town, it's such a cool place. It's a great course.

Q. Tell us what happened on 9?

GRAHAM DeLAET: Yeah, I hit a great shot, 109 yards, and I was trying to land it short of the hole, because it kicks back toward the back left pin. And I hit a great shot, but obviously there's an element of luck. It just kind of one hopped and right in the hole. We couldn't see the bottom of the pin, but there was a reaction from the crowd, so we figured it was in. And it was more of a muffled sound hitting the pin rather than a real clank when you nail it. So I kind of had a feeling that it went in.

Q. At that point you are 1-over for the day, did that kind of kick start it for you?

GRAHAM DeLAET: I just birdied 8 to get back even for the day and made that one on 9, which was good. I hit a great shot into 10. I had six or seven feet. I actually didn't hit a great putt, and birdied 11 and 12. It was my whole round was that middle stretch, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. And all the way coming in, the last six holes I felt I had birdie putt after birdie putt after birdie putt. And hit some good putts and nothing really fell. But I felt like I just kept giving myself chances. And that's important out here.

Q. How do you feel your season has been this year? Do you feel you've been building to this?

GRAHAM DeLAET: Yeah, I feel it's been pretty solid. I

missed my last couple cuts, Bay Hill and Puerto Rico. But mentally I was pretty drained at the time. I needed a couple of weeks off. I took off Houston, and that's a tournament that I love and I've never missed. But I just knew from a mental standpoint I needed a couple weeks at home to recharge. And obviously it was a good idea to do so.

Q. Your golf season is off to good start. Has the play of Mackenzie Hughes and Adam Hadwin given you incentive to step it up?

GRAHAM DeLAET: Yeah, absolutely. It's great. I mean I don't know when the last time we had two went on Tour the same year, maybe back with Ames and Weir. We've got some good kids in the pipeline, I know, and some guys playing well on the Web.com Tour. I'm kind of the old guy now so I'm just trying to hang tight with some of these young guys. I was just looking on my phone on the way here, Nick Taylor is playing really well here today, too, he's in the top-5. It's great. Our country loves golf. And we've got tons and tons of support. And trust me, I want nothing more than to get a win for them. It's kind of the only thing missing on my résumé I feel out here. I want it. But I just have to keep playing good golf for the next couple of days, and hopefully that will take care of it.

Q. How much are you wanting to get back to the Presidents Cup team?

GRAHAM DeLAET: I would love to be on that team. Probably my most exciting week of golf that I've ever had. It was something I'll cherish forever. I was able to play well that week, which made it more special, from a personal standpoint, but we didn't get that win as a team.

I would love to be on that team. Pricey shoots me texts once in a while and says come on, finish this thing off. He's an awesome captain. He's a great guy. Every single guy on that team loves Nick. And I hope to be back on that team, that's for sure.

Q. I believe you've had some issues with chipping, is that correct?

GRAHAM DeLAET: Yeah.

Q. Sorry to bring it up. Where are you with that and I think you putted -- have you used the putter more around greens?

GRAHAM DeLAET: I guess there's a lot of ways to get around the course. And I'm trying to do it in the way that I think I can do it with the least amount of strokes, and that's what I'm doing.

Q. Coming to Harbour Town, small greens, there's more likelihood you're going to miss the greens here, probably, does that come into your thinking at all coming to this golf course?

GRAHAM DeLAET: I've been hitting the ball awesome this week, and I've hit a lot of greens, so I'm going to try to keep doing what I'm doing, man.

Q. You'll obviously tomorrow, if not go off in the last tee time, one of the later tee times, does that change your thinking or approach to how you're going to play this tournament?

GRAHAM DeLAET: I'm looking forward to not getting up at 4:45 again like I did this morning (laughter.)

It's always a little bit different when you're in the final groups, obviously you have more time to think about different things. But I've been in enough of them now that you just have to kind of preoccupy yourself in the morning. No matter when time I tee off I'll be ready to go tomorrow.

Q. What will you use on the weekend?

GRAHAM DeLAET: Patience, I think, is the biggest thing. Liken today I was 1-over through 3. It's so early in the week still, it's Friday. But I knew that I could still shoot a good rounds of golf. And in the past I've gotten off to a bad start or things don't go the way I want early in the round and I start pushing instead of just waiting. And when you're playing well you're going to have lots of chances. And holing those putts when you have the chance and hitting the right shot at the right time. That's the main thing for me. Stay in the present and just be patient.

Q. A lot of players have discussed the nice conditions at Harbour Town this year.

GRAHAM DeLAET: I think it's such a neat place. There's not many like it. I think Riv and Colonial and this place are kind of the three that I really love because it's precision golf, it really is. It's not -- the guys who bomb it the longest and can just dash out of the rough from 80 yards, there's no premium really on any fairways.

Out here you have to use your imagination so much. You have to hit it in the right side of the fairway. And even from the fairway sometimes you have to work the ball to get it in the middle of the green. And it's just a lot of fun.

The opening tee shot today was kind of cool. Usually I

hit a 3-wood on that hole, but it looked so good for a little low cut driver, and I hit that little low cut driver. And it seems that most golf courses we play are so big and you're trying to hit a high bomb drive. It's fun to use just some imagination.