
SYBASE CLASSIC
Wykagyl Country Club
New Rochelle, New York

May 23, 2004
Final-round leader quotes

AN INTERVIEW WITH SHERRI STEINHAUER

SHERRI STEINHAUER: Just regular pars all the way up to number No. 7. No. 7, I hit a 7-wood off the tee and came up short left and had about a 40-foot pitch and pitched it to about four inches and made that for par.

8 and 9 were normal pars.

No. 10, I hit a driver, 7-iron about 15 feet and made that for birdie.

No. 14, I hit a driver, 6-iron to about two feet, made that for birdie.

15, I hit a driver, 3-wood, short right, had a pitch of about, probably about 25 yards, and hit it by about 15 feet and made that for birdie.

16, I hit a 5-iron about 25 feet, hit my first putt by about seven feet and missed that, left it short. I thought I made it, but that was a slow putt.

17, the only tee shot really of the tournament that I missed, and I pulled it and hooked it and tried to hook a little 7-iron under the tree, it went out to the right, right of the bunker, pitched it up to about nine feet and I made it for par.

And the last hole just a par.

THE MODERATOR: A couple of Cliff notes here it says including this start, it has been 118 starts since you last won.

SHERRI STEINHAUER: I figured you would come up with that stat.

THE MODERATOR: Four years, 10 months and 8 days. Can you just give us your emotions, how do you feel?

SHERRI STEINHAUER: I was just walking over here with my friends and I said, are we dreaming? Did this happen? It's amazing.

Like I have been saying, I owe a lot of this to my caddy, Audrey Girdith (phn) because she believed in me last year after playing so horribly. I don't even know what I finished on the money list, 130-something.

And she believed in me, and this winter I was worried, I didn't know if she would want to come back and want to work for me and she did, and just gave me a lot of confidence.

I felt that then she knew that I could do it. So we have been working really hard this year, and we have been close, and not -- I haven't scored real well, had any great finishes, but it's an incredible feeling at this point.

THE MODERATOR: After Becky birdied 3 of the first 4, and you were 3 back, what were you thinking then?

SHERRI STEINHAUER: You know, because this year I have been struggling and not scoring real well and getting it under par, when the week started I said my goal was to get it to 12-under.

So I had it to 10 after three days, and Becky got it to 13. And I said my goal is to get to 12, that's all I want to do. I'm not going to worry about what Becky does. I think it's actually tougher to get off to that kind of a start and then maintain it, and I was just kind of plugging along, kind of quietly, and I kind of like that position.

So I just kept -- I didn't worry about her getting off to the hot start. My goal is to get to 12. I didn't know if it was going to be enough. But after the year I had, I said I will be happy if I finish at 12. And, unbelievable, it was enough.

Q. Sherri, does your past experience play into this at all, into your way of thinking considering that you had success here, and you say you are playing well, and did that play a factor in being able to finish it off the way you did?

SHERRI STEINHAUER: Oh, definitely. If I've never be in the position I would never know what it felt like. So I was able to come back on past experiences of being in the lead, or near the lead. And I was extremely nervous, but I was doing my best to stay as calm as I could, and I am really proud of myself because I think I did do that.

Even after I missed the putt on 16, and didn't hit a good drive on 17, and my goal was to just stay calm and not panic in the situation.

Q. You know, as you mature now, is it harder or easier to keep your emotions in check? You have had all of this experience for all of the years that you've been playing. Does it get to the point where you say it's second nature?

SHERRI STEINHAUER: Just because you've been here before you kind of know what you are going to feel, so that's an advantage.

If I had never been there before, you know, obviously I wouldn't know what to expect.

So in that way I would never, ever say that was easy, because I was extremely nervous and I never -- all of my five wins have come with my short putter, they haven't come with my long putter.

So one thing that I felt that was new, there was some times when I had my putter up here and I felt my heart beating.

So that had never happened in the past, but I had to just take a deep breath and forget about it.

Q. (Inaudible)?

SHERRI STEINHAUER: Two years ago. It will be two years ago Atlantic City.

Q. Your struggles over the past few years, you've never mentioned your putting, it's been ball striking, standing over the ball, stuff like that, right?

SHERRI STEINHAUER: Actually, this year, I have been striking the ball better. I've been putting pretty decently, the putts just haven't been going in, so that's been the difference.

Last year it was completely ball striking. If I hadn't have had the long putter I probably would be retired. So this year it was just a matter of the putts really not going in.

Q. Can you put your finger on a low point over the last year, or two years, you know, you said you didn't really think about quitting, calling it quits, when was that?

SHERRI STEINHAUER: Every tournament when I went out there. You know, I would try to find all kinds of excuses for not playing well, when it was actually me and, you know, I was fighting so hard just to make a par.

And, you know, when I would hit a golf shot, I would clench my teeth, hoping it would go close. This year I'm striking it better, and it's just more relaxed. I have a smoother swing. The swing feels better.

As far as the low point it was just every tournament last year. Every day that -- even in the practice rounds, I struggled through practice rounds, so it was just pretty much the entire year.

Q. When you are in the middle of that, is it the mindset, forget about winning, but let's just get back to being a respectable player?

SHERRI STEINHAUER: Absolutely. I think that's what got me through this week because I said this is a baby step. I cannot come out and just expect to win. I thought about it a lot this year, what's going to happen when I'm in position, how am I going to deal with it? I really didn't know how I would, and the confidence got me through this week to get through to the position that I was in.

Q. How big was the putt on 10 because that was the first time you had actually had the outright lead and once you got the lead you never lost it?

SHERRI STEINHAUER: Well, they are all big, and that one was big. I have to be honest, I wasn't watching the leaderboard. I didn't know where I stood. I knew where I stood with my group, and I was contemplating asking Audrey is anyone coming up from behind, but I didn't want to throw myself off in anyway.

I said, Sherri, you have one goal and that's to get to 12. So I didn't worry about what they were doing behind us. And, you know, when I made it, I knew I was one shot closer to 12-under. So it was a big putt.

Q. Sherri, does that mean to say you couldn't stand prosperity when you got to 13?

SHERRI STEINHAUER: Yes, I did have a second goal. I said to myself last night, I said all right, now, because I have had problems if I set a goal and I get to it, then I go, what do I do now? So I set a secondary goal. I said if I get to 12, I said let's just get to 15.

I didn't get in that nervous situation thinking well now what, I'm there, now I got to play conservatively.

I actually, on No. 16, when I hit that putt, I thought it was in. I hit it -- it was dead in the center. It was like putting through molasses. That ball just put skids on. It wasn't a bad putt. I just didn't judge it right.

Q. Sherri, five years ago it was like walking up and down for all of those sudden death holes, and the putt so long you could barely see the cup in the dark with the traditional putter, this year the sun high in the sky with the long putter, did you note the contrast in how you won and did you think about that on the green or on your way here or anything?

SHERRI STEINHAUER: Well, I think the time that I thought about it -- well, actually, it was yesterday when we were on the 18th green and Audrey, a lot of times she tells me where the pin is for Sunday, and she pointed and she goes Sherri, the pin is up there and she starts smiling because that's exactly where it was five years ago, too.

So that I thought about. I thought about the win. Actually, coming up 18, I was thinking when I was on the green going well, I've never been in this position with this long putter. What do I have, 3 putts to get it down. But I legged it up there. It was just a different position and actually a great feeling of accomplishment knowing that I can win now with the long putter.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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