

**CAMIKO SMITH**

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**MARK WILLIAMS:** Camiko Smith, thanks for joining us here at the 2020 Bermuda Championship. You were one of three local Bermudians to qualify for this event in a qualifier that was played earlier this month and you actually won it. You shot 70-71 to finish 1 under to be the medalist and advance in here.

I understand last year you were leading after one round of the 36-hole event and failed to qualify, so does this kind of feel like a little bit of a redemption story for you to make your first PGA TOUR start here at the Bermuda Championship here this week?

**CAMIKO SMITH:** Yeah, yes, that's correct. It does feel like a little bit of redemption. (Inaudible) and gave it way, but this year come around, with COVID and everything, you know what, I need to take advantage of this opportunity and that's what I did. Played well two days, got my spot, won my spot. Yeah, it's a bit of redemption.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** You're a 35-year-old, you're about to make your first PGA TOUR start. Come Thursday, what kind of excitement level on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the highest, what are you feeling right now leading into the week waiting for Thursday?

**CAMIKO SMITH:** Definitely very excited. Scale of 1 to 10, I would say 9. It's pretty high up there. To have it on my island, on my home course, right in my neighborhood, front yard, backyard, it's super exciting. Really looking forward to it, to being out there.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** And before we take some questions, Camiko, what sort of expectations will you have this week? I mean, if you don't have any to share, that's fine, but what would be a good goal for you to make this a successful week do you think?

**CAMIKO SMITH:** Expectations-wise, basically play well Thursday and Friday. Do my best to just put myself in position to make the weekend and just play well during the weekend. Just keep playing well really.

**Q. I was wondering if you could kind of trace the arc of your journey in the game, when you started playing, how you started playing and kind of your backstory in the game.**

**CAMIKO SMITH:** Okay. So we can start with Port Royal actually. I grew up right next to Port Royal. I had a few family friends that actually played a little bit of golf, so they would hit golf balls in my yard when I was like 5 or so. So I guess I took a little bit of interest from there.

But at the age of 9 I actually came up to Port Royal and hit up the caddie shop and basically said, "Hey, guy, can I possibly have a golf club?" The gentleman goes, "Yeah, sure, I'll give you one and you can hit balls," and went out to the driving range. Fired some out on the driving range.

His name is Teddy Greaves and I owe him a lot. Him giving me access to the golf course, allowing me to hit balls, taking me out on the golf course on the weekend and play, I probably wouldn't be sitting here right now.

Yeah, a lot of -- a lot of gratitude towards him. And he's super excited. I played junior golf when I was 12. I didn't win anything as a junior, I played pretty good, but recently just been getting better, better, better and here we are.

**Q. How many rounds would you estimate you've played at Port Royal and how would you describe what it takes to play well?**

**CAMIKO SMITH:** Rounds at Port Royal? A lot. Too many to count. Like I said, it's my backyard, so I actually hop over a fence and I'm right on it. I used to get kicked off for doing that, now I'm sitting here playing a PGA TOUR event in my backyard, so it's pretty awesome.

Yeah, a lot of rounds on this golf course. A lot, a lot of rounds. This golf course has been transformed eight years ago, so before it used to be a very tree-lined golf course and now it's more open. Just keeping the ball in play. The rough's pretty thick, which is new. It didn't usually have it like that. So that will be pretty interesting. Just got to keep the ball in play.

**Q. Absolutely. What hole is your backyard?**

**CAMIKO SMITH:** No. 4. So I would be basically 7:00, 8:00 at night on the putting green under the streetlights putting, chipping, hitting balls. Putting a flashlight up at a flag, hit balls at it, putt at it. That's it right there, man. No. 4 is my yard.

**Q. That is amazing. And could you kind of briefly describe the arc of your pro career, when you turned pro and where you've played as a pro?**

**CAMIKO SMITH:** I basically turned pro 2013, I want to say. I was working at Belmont Golf Course and they have a tournament called the (inaudible) Invitational and I turned pro during that event and gradually just basically worked for a while, saved up some money. Took me a little while, so basically just traveled to Florida. Grand Cypress, I worked with Fred Griffin a little bit. He really helped my short game a lot.

From there I just basically traveled back and forth to Orlando, practiced out at North Shore Golf Club in the Lake Nona area and from there just gradually -- now I'm located in Dallas, Texas, with my coach Carlos Brown at Hackberry Creek where he's brought me up to this point. He's really just helped me with my mental game, helped me with my confidence, total

belief in myself that this is where I'm supposed to be and here we are. Owe a lot to him as well.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** At 35, you're probably an inspiration to a lot of youngsters on the island just having practiced in the dark in your backyard, et cetera. Who was your inspiration growing up? Who did you look up to as a player?

**CAMIKO SMITH:** Well, I hope I'm an inspiration to a lot of young kids growing up. I need to be honest, I didn't really -- I didn't know many local golfers, so it was basically Tiger Woods at the time. Then local guy Dwayne Pearman, who's been around for a while. He's a local legend.

Then as I got older learning more about local golfers, Kim Swann; Louis Corbin, who actually was helped out by Joe Louis, the boxer back in the day; and Tiger Woods. When he won the Masters in 1997, I think I was like 12 and watching that pretty much drove me to want to be better and I wanted to do that. Yeah, he inspired me to work really hard and chase golf more.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** Well, you're not alone in that group, he inspired a lot of people.

**Q. What type of weather are you hoping for this week that might favor you?**

**CAMIKO SMITH:** Whatever comes. I'm pretty easy with weather. Whatever comes is good.

**Q. And also, would you prefer an early tee time or a later tee time, which might give you an advantage to see how the course is playing on Thursday?**

**CAMIKO SMITH:** I'm not picky. I'm up early already, so mid morning. If I had to pick one, I wouldn't mind mid morning. But I'm not picky. Whatever tee time they draw me, I'm good with it.

**Q. You obviously mentioned that you live on No. 4. Which hole on the golf course do you find the most challenging out here?**

**CAMIKO SMITH:** Let's see, No. 4., No. 4 is challenging. The first shot brings a bunker into play on the right fairway. If you take driver and try to blast it over it, you can block it into some bushes or you can pull it into my yard out of bounds. No. 4, it's been tricky. Can't give too much information about it before the tournament. Local knowledge, got to keep some of it to myself.

**Q. So I was wondering, this season, where have you been playing, what type of tournaments have you -- what's your schedule been like this year with the pandemic and the return to golf?**

**CAMIKO SMITH:** Schedule-wise has actually been nil really. I was in -- early January,

February I was in Dallas practicing and then I came back to Bermuda for the Par 3 Championship at Turtle Hill and I was expected to go back to Dallas the following week, but COVID was going on and then -- I mean, COVID, it threw everybody a monkey wrench.

So I haven't been doing anything really. I've just been here. We had lockdown. After we came out of lockdown, just been working for a glass company called Commercial Glass. So the last three months I've pretty much just been working. But I kept my game sharp. I would go to the gym early mornings like 4:00 in the morning in the gym and I would go work from 7:00 to about 4:30 and after that hit some balls (inaudible). Just keep my swing loose.

Yeah, looking forward to getting out of here in the new year and going back to Dallas, between Orlando and Dallas. The Advocates Tour, it's the tour I'm looking to play on, yeah, in the new year.

**Q. And Commercial Glass, what do you do for them and what are some of the jobs you've had kind of along the way outside of pro golf?**

**CAMIKO SMITH:** Well, Commercial Glass is basically installing doors, windows, storm shutters, different things like that. Putting mirrors in people's houses and commercial buildings, whatnot.

Yeah, it's pretty interesting. I play golf and I'm working with glass. I guess it's touch and go sometimes, I've got to be very, very cautious, but it's definitely helped me along the way just keeping my passion and drive alive. It's definitely helped me refocus that a lot.

**Q. How long have you worked with them?**

**CAMIKO SMITH:** Four months. Pretty excited, super excited that I got in. My boss was gracious enough to give me time off to prepare for the qualifier. Gave me two weeks off to prepare for it. I told him, "Hey, look, if I get in, another two weeks off." He called me and said, "You've got another two weeks off, here you go." He's pretty stoked about it.

**Q. Who will be on your bag for the tournament this week?**

**CAMIKO SMITH:** On my bag will be local member Kenny Campbell. Play a little bit of golf with him on the weekends the last few months, gotten to know him. He likes to walk a lot. I'm pretty quiet, he's pretty quiet. Yeah, that's my guy for the week.

**Q. Could you just talk a little bit about Walter King?**

**CAMIKO SMITH:** Walter King, yes. That's the name I shouldn't have left off. Walter King, I met him. He lives in Pinehurst, I met him in Pinehurst when I was a junior, but he pretty much established -- helped establish Port Royal golf course. Had a lot of juniors, Kim Swann, he let them pick the range, he let them practice, let them play on the golf course and whatnot. So he's been a great (inaudible) really helping golf in Bermuda.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** With the stellar lineup confirmed for this week, how will it feel to play alongside some of the bigger names in this event when the tee times come out?

**CAMIKO SMITH:** It's pretty interesting. You watch these guys on TV. I knew I would get here one day, but to see them in person, it's pretty cool. I met Danny Willett, who's a Callaway guy. I'm a Callaway guy as well. I met Danny Willett, so that was pretty cool. David Hearn as well, great guy. He gave me some good (inaudible) for getting into the event because last year I caddied. He was happy to see me playing in the field this year. Harold Varner is here. Nice to see these guys. It's pretty sweet.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** Just a couple more. Before the 2019 Bermuda Championship, you shared the course record with Adam Scott at 7-under 64. Just recall that day and what you did best that day and what that was like specifically.

**CAMIKO SMITH:** Yeah. 6-under front nine, I kind of zoned out. I pretty much just let everything happen. I made a ton of putts. Just wanted to get off to a good start. Birdied No. 2, had good chances on 3 and 4, birdied 6. I didn't birdie 6. I eagled 7, birdied 8, birdied 9, birdied 12. I had a few other birdie chances. I just zoned out really. My putter was on fire that day, I made a lot of putts, lot of putts.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** And finally, how significant, meaningful is it that Port Royal celebrates its 50th year anniversary and you're making your first PGA TOUR start in the same week at Port Royal?

**CAMIKO SMITH:** I didn't know that, but knowing that now, it's pretty interesting how everything just falls into place. I would say it's a humbling experience for that to happen at this time. Just looking forward to make everybody proud, make myself proud and my family and the island proud.

**MARK WILLIAMS:** I hope it's a magical week for you. Sounds like it already is. All the best for the weekend. Enjoy it and soak it all in. Camiko, thank you for your time this week and good luck.

**CAMIKO SMITH:** Thank you very much.