



Wonder oman

Stacy Lewis is no ordinary Major champion. Just a few years ago she feared she'd never play golf again and on the eve of the Kraft Nabisco she had to deal with the death of her grandfather. She spoke exclusively about her Major triumph with Chris Bertram

The obvious place to start is to ask what it is like to be a Major champion?

It's been awesome. All the places I have gone and all the recognition I have got has been amazing. Wherever I go people have been congratulating me.

Did the fact you played with World No 1 Yani Tseng make winning your first Major a more difficult prospect?

I definitely had the underdog tag going into the last round. I mean, after the way she started the tournament, I think everyone was ready to hand her the title. She had more pressure on her than I did and I just thought if I went out there and play good golf and she beats me then that is one thing – but I wasn't going to lose by backing off.

Was there an intimidation factor with her being the world's top player though?

I have played with Yani so much that I know I could hit it with her, I knew I could hang in

there with her all day. Of course she is number one in the world and usually closes the deal and gets the job done at the end of a tournament and so I think I probably learnt from playing with her and the other great players.

Did you notice Yani lift the trophy before the round? Doing that is considered bad luck in Britain...

Every player after the round asked me 'did you see her do that?' but I honestly didn't. I was over at the scoring table noting down the hole locations and I just thought they cheered loudly when she came on the tee. I didn't think anything of it.

Technically I suppose it was still her trophy as no-one else had won it by then.

Was there a point in the round when you thought 'I can win this'?

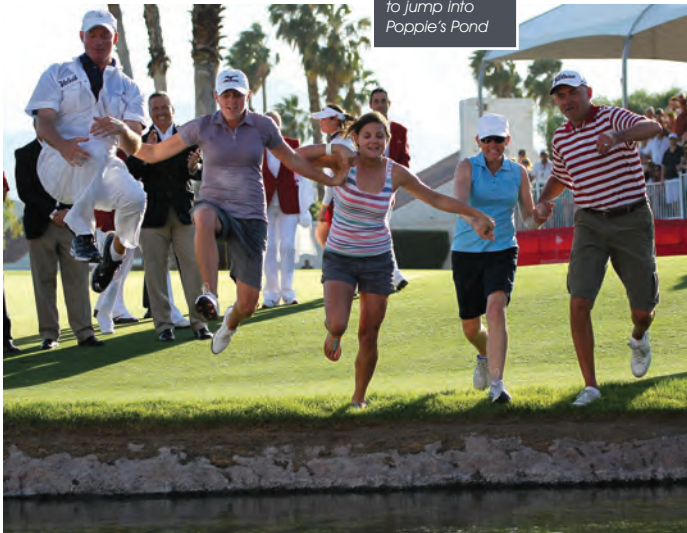
Actually going down the 3rd hole, I could kind of tell by the way she was playing she







*Making a splash
Stacy – and her
mum – about
to jump into
Popple's Pond*



*It's all mine!
Stacy clinches
the Kraft
Nabisco trophy
after her win*

wasn't going to shoot 66. She was hitting it OK and it was in the fairway but for her, she was just off a little bit. So I told myself 'you need to get your head down and get to work and take advantage of this'.

How were your nerves going down the stretch?

I was doing OK until we got to about the 15th. Then it started to kick in that it was going to be over pretty soon, and there was going to be a winner one way or the other. But I really tried to stay in the moment and it was the only time I really thought of what it meant.

Was there a key shot?

I think the 9th hole was key – I made birdie and she made bogey so there was a two-shot swing. Maybe if I had missed my putt and we'd been tied going into the back nine it could maybe have been a bit of a different story. I think she lost some momentum with the bogey on nine and I gained

some, so I think that was a huge moment in the day.

Could you enjoy the walk down the 18th?

Yeah I did. there are so many places you can go wrong on that hole, especially if you hit a bad drive and end up in the water. But there's also rough and it's difficult to find the correct lay-up so my caddie and I made sure we concentrated on every shot. Once I hit it on the green, I was OK from then! Although I would have liked to hit it closer – but at least I could enjoy the walk round the pond and alongside the stands, which is one of the best experiences we have in golf.

Do you feel like you have won a Major title a little ahead of schedule?

I think my game is really made for Major championships – just the way I hit it and I can get up and down quite well. I putt pretty well too. My game is

more suited to Majors than tournaments when you have to shoot 20 under par to win, I would say.

My personality suits Majors better too. If I probably didn't expect to win Majors this year I at least thought I'd put myself in contention more and give myself that opportunity on Sunday. I'm just going to try to do that throughout the rest of the year.

Everyone says the second one is easier to win. Is that how you feel now?

I don't know. We haven't played a Major since then so I haven't had a chance to go out there yet. It was a little weird starting to practise again even but it was nice to think we still have three more Majors to go for this year. But yes I suppose you wonder to yourself 'when will I win one, there aren't many chances' but now I suppose it is the opposite and you look at it as the door is now open a little.

Has Paula Creamer said to you that you are lucky to win one so early?

I haven't had a chance to speak to people yet really but I certainly know that she had a lot of pressure on her to win a Major. So to get my first win and it being a Major gets a lot of pressure off your shoulders. That's huge, although – going back to your previous question – some people say the next one is harder because you expect more from your self.

Which one would you like to win next?

Any of them would be great, obviously, but if you pushed me I'd probably say it would be the US Open I think. It's the hardest golf course we play all year and it's a great test of your game and you usually get the player who is playing the best golf at that time to win. To be called a national champion is something we all work for.