

24 October 2014



An interview with

JAMES MORRISON

OLIVIA MCMILLAN: James, welcome to the media center. Fantastic round out there. Course record. Were you aware of that?

JAMES MORRISON: No, I wasn't aware of that, no, until I finished. Very nice.

OLIVIA MCMILLAN: Do you hold many other course records?

JAMES MORRISON: I think my last one was when I was about 17, so I while ago.

OLIVIA MCMILLAN: Fantastic round out there. You want to start by telling us a little bit about it.

JAMES MORRISON: Yeah, kind of started with -- I finished with double bogey last night, so it was kind of a bad end to a good day yesterday.

I knew I was playing well. I actually know in Perth it gets windy in the afternoon and calm in the morning, so I was hoping for a nice calm day. I got that. Just played great all day really.

Missed a few early on, and before you know it, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and finish.

It was one of those sort of days where I had really, really good group. Wade played well. Dave McKenzie played well. We were all kind of having a chat and a laugh. It was actually really nice.

Before you know it, we were plenty under par.

OLIVIA MCMILLAN: Questions.

Q. You had a good round yesterday, you just didn't get rewarded for the effort.

JAMES MORRISON: Yeah, it was windy yesterday afternoon. I was a couple under par with one to play; made double the last. Bit of a kick in the teeth for how well I played, really.

Again, you still know that there is an early morning start today and you can kind of hopefully make some birdies.

Q. How familiar are you with the course?

JAMES MORRISON: Played here last year, but I've played a lot of Australian golf. My wife is from Melbourne, so I played pennant Waverly 2005, so I spent a lot of time down here.

Almost feels like home to me, so I love coming back whenever I can.

Q. You mentioned the double bogey. Was that 9 or 18?

JAMES MORRISON: 18. Hit it in the trees on the right; chipped out, 3-putted.

Q. Did you start well today or you just got rolling?

JAMES MORRISON: Just gradually really. I was 1-under early and then missed a few chances. Then kind of I think I birdied 15, 16, 17, and then a good chance on 18; missed that. Bit redemption, but I didn't come round.

And then had a very good, solid back nine, so finished pretty strongly.

Q. You're 99; is that right?

JAMES MORRISON: I think so, yeah, 99.

Q. What can you achieve with a high finish here?

JAMES MORRISON: Well, it's kind of -- China is next week. I think I have to be top 70 in order to get in that. Turkey maybe go down to 80; Dubai is top 60, so I think I need a top two roughly or it's home time.

Q. Do you have a little bit of a cricket background?

JAMES MORRISON: Yeah, didn't start playing until I was 16, so brief background; 18 to scratch in 10 months; went to college in America for a year; came back; played England cricket when I was younger. So I played cricket until I was 17 and I was playing golf at the same time.

Haven't played cricket since. That's my background. Then turned pro end of '06; this is my end of my fifth year on tour.

Q. What kind of cricketer were you?

JAMES MORRISON: A slow one. (Laughing.) No, (indiscernible) not too much running.

Q. (No microphone.)

JAMES MORRISON: Was very young. Was sort of 14, so I mean, played county stuff. Played for Surrey all my life. Take a nice keen interest in guys I played with. In my year was also Tim Bresnan (phonetic) and Beau Par (phonetic) and those guys.

Q. What sort of level did you get to?

JAMES MORRISON: I was playing under 17s when I finished, so I was playing men's cricket. Semi pro stuff.

Almost got to the point where it was cricket or golf.

Q. Why golf?

JAMES MORRISON: I guess like most golfers, playing cricket from so young, six years old competitively, got to a point where I wasn't really enjoying it.

Came late to golf and got better quickly and I just really enjoyed it, so I'm in the field for a two-day game against Essex looking around thinking I want to play golf.

Got to the point it was time to make a decision. My dad supported me, and that was it really.

Q. What suits you about this course?

JAMES MORRISON: I drive it straight and I've got a good short game. So unlike the longer golf courses, this sort of course suits me. I just feel comfortable.

I play so much golf and the greens are always great. There is no grass out of place. Just such a pleasure are to play. It is the best in the world, Australian golf, in my opinion.

Shame we don't play more down here over the years, but fingers crossed in the future we might do.

Q. You mentioned your wife comes from Melbourne.

JAMES MORRISON: Yeah.

Q. What's her name?

JAMES MORRISON: Jessica, and my little boy Finley. He's two and a half, so they're in

Melbourne right now for a couple of weeks while I do Hong Kong and this week. So keep her happy.

Q. When did you play in the Waverly?

JAMES MORRISON: 2005.

Q. Sand belt?

JAMES MORRISON: We were sand belt. We were division 2 at the time. I think we won division 2 that year to go to division 1 for the first in history.

I go back and play there all the time. Made some great friends at Waverly. Always try and good back and say hello.

In our league I think was Northern, royal Melbourne -- no, Northern, Kingston Heath, Commonwealth. Few of those sort of clubs.

Q. Have you been in contention this year?

JAMES MORRISON: Not so much, no. I mean, my first five years on tour was very much either top 10 or nothing. This year has been a bit more different. I think I've made 21 out of 27 cuts. Loads of top 20s, top 30s.

Had a pretty bad year last year. Lost my card, got it back at the school, and then kind of back on the tour this year. So it was pretty poor year last year. I figured out a few things.

My little boy is a little bit older now, so makes life a little bit easier.

Switched manufacturers middle of the year last year, so that was a lot of confusion and messing around. I feel like I am comfortable now with what I am doing, and now back to where I have been, hopefully.

Q. You got to be towards the head of the field when you start tomorrow. How do you approach that?

JAMES MORRISON: Yeah, I guess the old cliches are the same as every other day. In the way, I've got nothing to lose now really. I kept my card and I need a top two, so just keep on pushing really.

I mean, all depends on weather and how other guys are doing. Just going to enjoy it. No matter whether your last or first, playing out here is an absolute pleasure.

It's one of those weeks where you don't really care if you make the cut on the mark or not. It's just great to play four days here and enjoy

playing a fantastic golf course, because don't always do that.

It's an absolute pleasure to play.

Q. Do you play aggressively or conservatively?

JAMES MORRISON: A bit too aggressive sometimes, but again, it's mental approach, I suppose. In all my years of competing and not winning, I think I've always done it pushing pushing as opposed to playing negatively.

So out here depends on the pins. I mean, got to play smart and aggressive at the right times. Par-5s are reachable. See what happens.

Q. Just going back to 2010 when you won in Portugal, what did that do for you in terms of your career?

JAMES MORRISON: It was massive. I mean, my first year on tour, not sure what to expect, and had a good run of events.

I think I finished sixth in Spain, one in Portugal, and second the week after.

So it was kind of from nothing to kind of the headlines on you, I suppose, and it's massive learning curve. I had two or three good years after that. Had a slight blip in what I was doing, but I had other stuff to focus on last year that took me away from the game.

Feel like I've knuckled down and hopefully push on from here and go forward.

Q. Was that family stuff?

JAMES MORRISON: Little boy was born. Massive change. I played Nike for nine years, and the middle of last year, I think Sweden was my last week, I threw the contract in the bin and felt it was the right thing I had to do.

Was very mish-mash with what I was doing, buying clothes from the pro shop. Just wanted to do my own thing for a little bit. It backfired, but hasn't backfired.

I mean, I've gained masses out of the new Callaway stuff I'm playing. New Callaway driver. I really think it benefits for how hard I work on the course and off the course.

So very encouraged.

Q. You said you were an aggressive golfer. Were you an aggressive cricketer? Up you said you were slow.

JAMES MORRISON: Slow as in overweight.

Q. Shot maker?

JAMES MORRISON: Yeah, kind of. I kind of progressed the older I got.

Q. Didn't like running.

JAMES MORRISON: My running got slower as I got older. (Laughing.) But, no, I guess I was a bit of both really. Just enjoyed competing. Even cricket, batter No. 1, took first ball. Love being involved in what's going on.

Love playing the game of golf. I love playing any sort of sport. I mean, lucky enough to play it for a living and get paid to do it, so it's an absolute pleasure.

Q. You mentioned you're an aggressive golfer. Do you have to check yourself? You will on out bit later which means the wind will be up.

JAMES MORRISON: Yeah, very much so. You got to take it as it comes and try and reign in a little bit. My caddie I suppose attempt to reign me in, but we'll see. Whatever happens, happens. I'm going to give it my all and see what it can do.

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