

Mariah Stackhouse - Course Record.

Back in August 1996 a former Stanford Collegiate player made his professional debut. He sat in front of a large press assembly, bared his pearly whites and simply said "hello world!" The rest is history for Tiger Woods.

History was made here at Stanford Golf Course on Sunday, February 17, 2013 when our Freshman Mariah Stackhouse shot an unbelievable 61, including a mind numbing 26 on the front nine. To quote another famous Cardinal (John McEnroe) "you cannot be serious!"

Oh, yes we are very serious when it comes to Mariah Stackhouse. One look at her website and you will quickly discover that she has already set many junior records and comes to Stanford University as, arguably, the most accomplished player to date.

What a thrill it was to feel the buzz around Stanford golf Course as she was making birdies and eagles as if the game were easy. It reminded me of the day Annika Sorenstam shot 59 at Moon Valley Country Club in Phoenix. In fact, after Mariah holed a lengthy putt on the ninth to go out in 26, I nudged her Mom and said she could shoot in the fifties. Had it not been for a couple of hiccups at 13 and 14 she could have -WOW!

Mariah had said to Coach Walker before her round 'Coach, I am going to shoot 67 today'. Coach replied,

“Well, that’s great but how about breaking Mariko’s record of 63?” Apparently, a serious frown on her face was followed by her larger than life smile and a “yea, I can do that” response and off she went.

My position early Sunday morning was to see the team through the par three third. Once, Lauren had teed off there, I watched Mariah make birdie on number two and after Marissa Mar had told me she had eagled number one, you could sense that something good was going to happen for our team.

We began the day four shots back and clearly we needed a fast start if we were to knock off one of our pre season goals, which was to win two events before Pac 12’s. Our other Freshman, Lauren Kim, had also started hot with back to back birdies which meant we had caught our rivals Cal by the fifth hole.

Thanks to social media and live scoring, word soon got out that Mariah Stackhouse from Stanford was going crazy. Another birdie went in at the par three fourth, and another at the fifth to make her five under through five and when her eagle putt dropped on seven to go seven under, Mariah said she was in a “dream state”. Incredibly, the dream continued with a three foot birdie putt on the eighth and then at the ninth a “snake” went in to make her scorecard look like this on the front nine 3,3,3,2,3,4,3,2,3. Simply put, this is astonishing! 26 over

nine holes has been matched by Corey Pavin, but not by any other woman and certainly not in the college world.

As Mariah finished the ninth and walked up the hill to the tenth tee, I casually asked her if she needed some lunch. She had shared with me, on the third hole, that her battery for her viewfinder had died on the first hole. Instead of getting flustered and panicking she whispered she was having fun doing the yardages the old fashioned way, ie, pacing it off! The funny thing was, I actually had a spare battery for her when I saw her at the tenth, but I thought she was doing just fine the old fashioned way (ya think!) and made the- no brainer - decision not to give her the battery. Come to think of it she may never get a replacement battery after shooting 61!

The back nine for Mariah was a little more of a roller coaster. A three putt bogey ensued at the thirteenth, followed by another at the tricky par 3 fourteenth, but as she played the homeward stretch, she added two more birdies at the 16th and 17th. A birdie chance at the last for a sixty was not to be due to a miss read when sizing up her putt, but she calmly polished off a “knee knocker” to make history and officially score a course record 61. The back nine looked like this
4,4,4,5,4,4,4,2,4.

We were a proud winning team on Sunday afternoon. Although, Mariah separated herself from the field on

Sunday, this was the product of teamwork. No one else can see how the team have been pushing each other in the gym and on the practice tee - believe me they have all been stepping up.

It is far too early to say that this was Mariah's "hello world" moment, due to the fickle nature of this sport, so lets call it her "hello college world" moment. Mariah also possesses a mega watt smile similar to Tiger and I have a feeling we are going to be seeing Mariah's version a lot more in the years to come, especially if she continues to re write the history books.