

RBC Canadian Open

Friday, June 7, 2019

Graeme McDowell

Quick Quotes



Q. Graeme, thanks so much for your time. Another solid day. We were talking a little bit off mic. You mentioned how a bogey might have woke you up a little bit. Walk us through the process, what happened, and then how does it get you going?

GRAEME McDOWELL: Yeah, you know, sometimes in this game you bogey the 1st hole of the day and it's kind of that wake-up call you need. Today it was kind of the opposite I played the first 12 holes absolutely beautifully and I was in the front trap on 4, which was my 13th hole, staring another birdie in the eye and I knifed the bunker shot and three-whack it.

It kind of shook me up a little bit. Went from being calm and collected to being a little bit shaky coming in. So it was nice to get in there at 3-under par for the day. Lots more good stuff out there. I drove it well. Hit some nice short irons today, which I didn't do well yesterday.

Feel very comfortable on these greens, which are tough to putt. You feel like you've always got a least a cup or two of break in every you hit, even short range, and you got to get comfortable with those.

Q. Statistically speaking, your irons are leaping out of the page. You mentioned you felt a little crisper with the short irons today. Is it the iron game overall that's putting you in this position right now?

GRAEME McDOWELL: I think it's a combination really. I actually drove the ball yesterday as well as I have in a long time. It was key. I continue to hit fairways again today. Today when I had short irons I gave myself a few short looks at birdie, which was nice. I feel like all departments of my game are in decent shape. Hit a couple (indiscernible) looking bunker shots so I am going to do a little work on that this afternoon.

I feel really, really good going into this weekend. I love the way this course sets up. It's a great leaderboard. Obviously guys are going lower this morning, so going to have to continue -- probably going to have to get to at least 15, 16 under to have a shot this weekend.

Q. Lovely round out there. How did it feel?

GRAEME McDOWELL: Yeah, felt good. Played beautiful the first 12 holes. Putted 4-under for the day. Front bunker on No.4, my 13th hole, par-5, and knifed a trap shot and three-whacked it. Kind of felt a little

shook up after that coming in. Didn't play very well the last five holes. Birdied the fifth up the hill; knifed another trap shot on 6. A little shaky coming in.

Not going to take anything away from the fact that I played pretty well for the first 30 holes, the first two days. Drove it well. Iron play was way sharper this morning. I feel good on these greens. These greens can make you feel very uncomfortable because they're very slopey and you feel like every putt you look at has at least a cup of break on it. It's very hard to aim it outside the hole from three feet, but this is kind of what you have to do on this golf course.

My putter remains sort of one of the strengths of my game, and I'm going to have to keep it pretty hot this weekend the way the scoring looks, Brandt shooting 9 this morning. At 8-under par I'm going to need another 8 to have a chance to win.

Q. At the end were you looking at they leaderboard at what's going on with Brandt Snedeker?

GRAEME McDOWELL: Yeah, they were right behind us and I knew he was going low. It's weird. You get in a lead on Friday and you start to feel a tiny bit nervous. Then you say to yourself, Why are you nervous? You've got more than 36 holes left. There is no point leading on Fridays. You want to lead on Sundays. Simple as.

To led on Sundays you got to position yourself well, and that's what you do the first couple of rounds. Going into Saturday I positioned myself well. That's all I've done. I got a lot work to do. Like I say, I'm going to need between 8 and 10-under par this weekend to have a chance to win this great championship.

Q. You had the win in Mexico earlier this year. Been working exceptionally hard over the last couple years. How satisfying is it to see the results shining through?

GRAEME McDOWELL: Yeah, it's nice. I mean, I haven't missed a cut on the PGA Tour since I think Hartford last year. It's been a really good streak of golf, but a frustrating streak at the same time. Yes, I was playing okay, but I wasn't making any impact on leaderboards.

That's when the small percentiles come in out here.

When you're looking at stats it's just a half shot here and a half a shot there. That's really all that separates 30th in the FedEx from 100th in the FedEx. It's not the big golf that you think it is. It really is two shots over 18 holes, or sorry, over 72 holes. That's all it really is. It's putting a little better, a little better off the tee.

I think the big key this year has just been putting that little bit better. I'm back to putting more like myself again, the way I know I can putt. I think I'm top 10 in strokes gained in putting this year. That's not including probably my best putting tournament this year which was Dominican because they don't count the stats.

I feel like I'm happy the way I'm trending right now. I've got a lot of golf ahead of me, so I'm excited.

Q. (Indiscernible) with respect to your game, are you carrying anything from that week into this week so insofar as why you're having success through 36?

GRAEME McDOWELL: Yeah, I think there are some similarities in this golf course. I think the speed of the greens. Some of the guys feel a little bit not very comfortable on greens this slow. Not only are they slow-ish, I mean, let's me honest, you can't get them too quick because they would be really silly.

They're at a pace where we're a little unused to it. But the slope on those greens, when you get an uphill putt, you have to hit it uncomfortably hard. I think growing up on slow-ish greens I adapt well. The Dominican when I won there they were very slow. They are a nice what I can make pace.

These are the same way. When you got a look you feel like you can have an aggressive roll at it. I think that's probably one of the similarities. Probably the best I've driven it the last two days. Probably since Dominican.

Q. How do you stay in the presents versus looking ahead to Portrush?

GRAEME McDOWELL: I feel like I've had three or four months wrestling with the Portrush dilemma. Thinking of putting a statement out on Twitter and saying I appreciate everyone's concern. The people that think I should get an invite and the people that think I shouldn't, I hear them. But I'm pretty much come to terms with the fact that if I play well between now and Portrush I will play. If I don't play well between now and Portrush I won't and I'll deserve not to play.

I'm okay with that. The RNA don't have a precedent where they've invited guys before and that's fine. At least I know my fate. I'm going out here trying to win the RBC Canadian Open this week. I could care less about Portrush. I would rather win this week and not

play Portrush. That's the bottom line. Yes, it will be a special week, but it's not instance success.

I could be there and miss a cut and think, Well, what was all the fuss about? It's like, I would rather play well on this weekend and let Portrush take care of itself. I really don't care.

Q. How many times have you played Portrush?

GRAEME McDOWELL: Probably only played it twice since the changes were made. Obviously the original 16 holes, played them probably 300 to 500 times. I know my way around reasonably well. No doubt there have been a few changes and nuances and new bunkers. But, listen, be fun to be there, but really isn't the end of the world if I'm not. I'll feel like it briefly, but the great thing about this game is you've always got a great event the next week.