

U.S. Open Championship 2020

Thursday, September 17, 2020

Mamaroneck, New York, USA

Winged Foot Golf Club

Patrick Reed

Press Conference



Q. The hole-in-one, delayed reaction with no fans, and what club and what were you thinking?

PATRICK REED: Yeah, I had 166 yards, and from there I was thinking, just kind of a stock 9-iron and Kes thought I needed to take a hair off of it. From there I knew that if I hit it a little too hard, it's going to kind of bounce and use that backstop, going to be able to come down. And the biggest thing was make sure it enters from the right because it could kick left.

Yeah, I hit a perfect 90 percenter, and I think it one- or two-hopped in. One-hopped, all right, so we couldn't see how many hops it took. But it went in.

Of course I was excited about it, but really I knew from that point that, hey, you need to settle out, get ready for the next hole. Around here at Winged Foot, every golf shot you have to take full -- basically pay attention to because you hit one poor golf shot, a lot of things can happen out here.

Q. Can you describe the shot out of the rough on 17, and how much do you relish these types of conditions?

PATRICK REED: Well, I love when it plays harder. Really the shot on 17, it was like 203 to the front, 230 flag, and I could get a lot of club on the back of the ball. The problem was it wasn't really the back of the ball, right in front of it there was a lot of grass. It was in between 6-iron and hybrid. So it was kind of a hack-out, and the hybrid came out way better than I expected. I was thinking the best I could do is probably get 20 yards, maybe 15 or short of the green, and ended up getting all the way up there. And from there, to be able to hit that kind of golf shot, you've got to capitalize and at least make par.

Q. Have you played here much before? And during the week of practice, did you get a sense that as hard as it was, that there was a round out there like that?

PATRICK REED: Yeah, so actually this week was the first

time playing. I've heard a lot of great things about the golf course, heard it's a bear. Coming into it, whenever I first got here and started playing, I knew with how it was kind of set up that depending on how soft the greens were and how the wind was that if you get out in the morning, get fresh greens, you could go out and shoot a number.

But honestly I did not see that many guys being under par so far. Even with the pin placements and the course setup and with the greens being soft, it's still a hard golf course. You get in the rough, it's hard to get the ball on the green.

The fairways here, they're not that generous. They're pretty narrow and they have some spring in them, so a lot of balls were kind of landing and getting through it. But fortunate enough to go out there and shoot 66, and go out there and get a little work in this afternoon and get ready for tomorrow.

Q. When you get out to 66 at the U.S. Open on a track like this, how does that set up the rest of the week? Do you feel like you've got a lap on the field?

PATRICK REED: Well, you definitely feel great because that means you did a lot of things pretty solid and pretty well. That's the thing, there's a lot of golf left, 54 holes, and really you've just got to continue attacking, continue sticking to your game plan. At the end of the day if you let up at all or you try to play conservative, that's when also you can get in trouble here.

You know, it's one of those things that for me I'm an aggressive golfer as it is, so if I start trying to dial back too much, then I start to feel like I'm guiding things. And I'd rather feel like I make aggressive golf swings throughout this golf course.

Q. Do you feel that hard golf courses benefit you just because of you against the field?

PATRICK REED: You know, I love hard golf courses. I think it separates the top golfers compared to the rest of the field. Also I think it separates the guys that can use creativity and can handle adversity. Out there you're going to hit some quality golf shots that are either going to have a bad bounce, end bad up in a bad spot, or going to land on



the green, catch a ridge, go down. How do you react to that, handle do you it.

And I feel always been very good forgetting what happened in the past, forgetting what happened on that one shot and move on and focus and what's coming up.

Q. When the ball went in for your ace, there really wasn't much reaction. Did you give any thought to what this would have been like with 40,000 people on the grounds here?

PATRICK REED: It would have been nuts. Up here in New York, the fans are amazing. You go ahead and you hole out from the fairway, you make a hole-in-one, the fans will just go crazy.

It was unfortunate the fans weren't here because that would have been an awesome experience. But at the same time, an ace is an ace. I'll take it either way. But it was just kind of one of those things that once it went in, I was like, all right, let's move on, get ready for the next tee shot on 8, considering -- being a drawer of the golf ball, I did a fade off that tee. From that point on, my focus was more on the next hole.

Q. Jordan said that you said it was only your second hole-in-one as a professional.

PATRICK REED: Yeah, second one as a professional. First one was at Shell on 16, and last one was here.

Q. You've played a lot of golf with Jordan. He was talking about he doesn't necessarily have complete command of his golf swing. I wonder what it's like to play with him and watch the way he grinds and if there's anything you can relate to in that?

PATRICK REED: Well, I think that's the thing with Jordan. Even though he didn't swing it well today and didn't feel like he really made golf shots he likes, with how big of a competitor he is, he's still going to grind, he's still going to figure out a way to get the job done and get a score out of it.

I mean, he went out there and kind of that start and with how it was kind of looking early on and then rally off three birdies in a row. He always stays in it. He allows his putter to do the work, he's able to get up-and-down.

I think that's what you see in all the great golfers out here and the top players in the world, is even when they don't have their "A" game off the tee or on their iron shots, they're able to get the job done and figure out a way to get a score out of it.

Q. You yourself do that, too.

PATRICK REED: Yeah, I'm a grinder. A lot of scrappy -- when you're playing well and hitting the ball well, you're going to shoot low numbers. It's when you're not. And I feel like I'm able to kind of scrappy -- scrappy type of golf, able to kind of get it around and get the job done whenever things aren't going my way.

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