

U.S. Open Championship 2020

Friday, September 18, 2020

Mamaroneck, New York, USA

Winged Foot Golf Club

Bubba Watson

Flash Interview



Q. Bubba, 1-under 69. You had it going there in the middle. What was working well?

BUBBA WATSON: I was just getting the ball in play. I made a few putts. Just kept trying to hit the greens. The first few holes were playing really long compared to the first couple days and the practice rounds.

So I was just trying to hit the center of the greens, and then you just roll in a couple birdies here and there. And then to end with a double bogey, it's tough, but at the same time, knowing how tough this golf course is and how tough it's going to be on the weekend, we've just got to make the cut. That's the first goal, so we can fight on the weekend.

Q. Talk about the change in conditions from yesterday.

BUBBA WATSON: Yeah, so it was a little bit more wind out there, and then total opposite direction. The holes that played very difficult yesterday are now downwind, so it helps a lot. Number one, gosh, we had -- everybody was hitting little sand wedges in there. Today I think I had a 7-iron in there just because of the cold and the wind. And then it's supposed to be colder tomorrow morning. Just going to keep getting tougher and tougher as the pin locations and the way the weather is.

Q. You're one of the guys that likes to see golf courses right in front of you. You perform better that way, I think, than courses that everything is kind of hidden. What happened yesterday, because it would seem like this would be a perfect golf course for you.

BUBBA WATSON: Well, "seem like" is not really always the truth, right? It's one of those things where it's a mental issue that I've had for about five years now on different golf courses, different things, different expectations of myself.

And then if you look at the stats yesterday, I think I missed three greens. So physically there was nothing wrong. I was hitting the ball well. To hit that many greens in a U.S. Open, I think you're pretty happy. I just didn't make any

putts. Even today I missed some putts that could have went in. It's not that I'm hitting bad putts, it's just they're not going in.

Who knows. I might struggle for the next six months and then win three in a row, know what I'm saying? It's golf. It's an athletic sport where everybody is trying to play their best.

I don't feel like I did anything wrong yesterday. I just didn't make the putts that I wanted to make. And today I made a few more. Even though I made a double bogey on the last hole, I still played good golf at a U.S. Open.

Q. How has your community and business back home been affected by Sally?

BUBBA WATSON: You know, my friends and family are all okay. My house, my mom's house, our friends' houses are all okay. I know there's a lot of boats that got messed up. I haven't heard about my business yet. I haven't heard about the candy shop. I know there's some damage to the Wahoos' stadium. There's a little damage to the car dealership, Sandy and Bubba's Milton Chevrolet. That's not in Pensacola, but it still had some damage from the storm. I haven't heard the complete damage of the ice cream shop, the candy shop.

Just trying to focus on this right now, but when I get home, obviously me and my wife, my family will do something. We can help Pensacola. We'd love to do something like J.J. Watt did a few years ago for Houston. Something like that would be tremendous. Just anything like that in that direction, just to help the community, lift the spirits of the community because I know there's some people hurting for sure.

Q. Your round today with the three birdies right in the middle, and you must have been happy with keeping it together most of the back nine until 18. How important do you feel that was at the end? It's got to be a discouraging end to the round, but talk about in general how many greens you hit, how it's been a little bit of a story so far for you at an Open.

BUBBA WATSON: Yeah, you know, I always feel like I hit

the ball pretty nicely, and around here I've hit it somewhat in play, and I've hit a lot of greens. I think I missed four greens today, and I missed three greens yesterday. At a U.S. Open, that's pretty good golf.

And it's tricky to make putts around here. As you know, the greens are very difficult. We've got some humps and bumps on them. You're trying to get them in the right places. All in all, even though I made two double bogeys in two days, I'm still right there. I think when I looked, when I finished right there signing my scored card, I was in 20th.

And again, it's going to get -- it's not getting any easier out there. Starting at 20th I could move up by the end of the day. Should be able to sleep in a little bit and try to attack the golf course again tomorrow.

But again, I'm hitting the ball really nicely, and my mind is in the right spot, and again, the question just asked, there's other things -- there's other bigger things out there. This year has been a crazy year for everybody in the world. And now, my hometown, the destruction of the hurricane, there's so many bigger things out there right now, but I'm going to keep battling as much as I can.

Q. It seems like that hasn't been talked about too much, either, in the media, the damage there. Anything you can mention --

BUBBA WATSON: You know, it's one of those things where there's a lot of damage. The TOUR has asked me how they can help, but I haven't been there yet. Luckily for us, our friends have been staying at our house, a bunch of friends have been staying at our house because we have a generator. Have been very blessed to play on the PGA TOUR. We have generators and we have different things that make the house work even in a terrible situation. So a lot of people have been coming over for ice and different things to our house, just trying to keep the kids safe and everything.

So when I get back, we'll assess how we can help, how we can help as the Watson family, how I can help a community that's helped me so much.

But obviously when it hit on Wednesday, the first text I sent my wife is I should I come home, because again, golf is golf and life is more important than that. And so that's really where I'm at. And it was tough. I thought of Jay Monahan here and he said, call me on Monday and see what we can do. And I said, yeah, I've got to assess the situation, see how I can help.

I think Teddy is going to fly down too. His mom has a house in Gulf Shores, Orange Beach area, Perdido area,

which is where part of the eye went, as well. So he's going to go there to start helping his own parents out. So he's going to fly down with me back home when we go home.

And that's what I'm saying, right now I'm trying to stay focused on a very difficult golf course instead of the very difficult situation at home, but my wife is holding the fort down pretty nicely, and again, we've been so lucky that we have a bunch of different families. We have a guest house and different things where we can bless people and help them as much as we can so far.

Q. What year did you move back to Pensacola?

BUBBA WATSON: That's a great question. I don't remember. Gosh, let's see, I'm trying to think. I think we bought the house in '15 maybe and then moved in in maybe '16, give or take, right in that area. I'm just guessing, right in that area.

Q. Would you have pulled out?

BUBBA WATSON: If boss lady says come home, I'm going home. One of the issues was where do you fly into. My motor home takes a while to get down there, so it would be like two days later.

It's one of those things where I'd have to fly -- we looked at it. I was going to have to fly probably to north Alabama, maybe Montgomery airport would have been open that day. But the storm was there, so I would have had to land probably in Tennessee and then drive my car behind the storm, right, that was on Wednesday.

So yeah, if boss lady said come home or if there have been some more damage to my own house, I mean, I'd have been down there as fast as I could get down there.

Q. Is it possible when you talk about this distraction that given the U.S. Open it could actually help you? You don't want to overthink --

BUBBA WATSON: No, I was nervous as could be out there. I was thinking about what the cut was even when I had three birdies in a row. I was sitting there going, okay, we can take a couple bogeys here, we can do this, because again, it's because my mind races, right, I get in the rough and I feel like how are you going to play out of this stuff, and I get down on myself.

So no, there's still trouble at home --

Q. I guess perspective is what I mean. You talked about that earlier, a tough year. Does it help being at a test like this to have --



BUBBA WATSON: No, I'm still -- I know what you're asking, but I'm telling you, I'm still a head case.

Q. I never questioned that.

BUBBA WATSON: Exactly, I'm letting everybody know I'm a head case. No, you would think it would relax me a little bit, and that's really what the mindset was going into today. I was 2-over where we knew with the weather, different wind speeds and different wind direction, I knew that I could easily play solid and still miss the cut.

So my focus was I had my plane ready to go home today just in case because I wanted to get home and be with the family and be with the community. But now I'll have to cancel the flight. So that's a good problem to have, I guess, cancel the flight and be home late Sunday night hopefully.

Q. Curious how you played 9 today and how different that was from yesterday.

BUBBA WATSON: Yeah, so yesterday I hit a -- gosh, I hit it in the rough. I hit a good tee shot, it went in the rough and it was into the wind, so it was going to be hard getting there, long iron or maybe or 3-wood or something in there. I laid it up.

And then today was an 8-iron. I hit it in the fairway. I hit an 8-iron in there. DJ told me in the practice round Wednesday, I played with DJ, he said when it was downwind for him, I think on Monday it might have been downwind, he hit 9-iron. So I was like, man, that's a big -- you don't see that until the wind switches, and today I hit it in the fairway and it was a perfect little 8-iron in there, 195 hole I think it was.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports