

U.S. Open Championship 2020

Friday, September 18, 2020

Mamaroneck, New York, USA

Winged Foot Golf Club

Jason Kokrak

Flash Interview



Q. Jason, 1-over, 71. Different conditions out there today, but you must feel good about the golf you played and your position heading into the weekend.

JASON KOKRAK: Yeah, any time you're under par at an Open, you're doing really well. Didn't get off to a particularly good start, 3-over through 4 or 5 or whatever, but just didn't hit the driver as well today. Managed my game pretty well, hit it a little bit better on the back side and started off with a nice up-and-down on 10 and then kind of settled in and -- you're going to make bogeys out here. It's a really tough golf course. The wind is gusting, and a few miscues here and there, it's inevitable.

But a nice couple birdies on that back side to kind of save the round.

Q. How much harder was it today than yesterday, and how good is a 71?

JASON KOKRAK: Definitely much more difficult. The wind, the greens were probably just as fast, but they were firming up. Some of those shots straight downwind on 17 and 18, if you hit anywhere near the flag, it was bouncing 10, 15 yards.

You've just got to play the golf shot for what it is. You're going to have different shots no matter where you're at on this golf course, and just leaving yourself in a good spot to either get up-and-down or ideally an uphill putt.

Q. What do you think a 10 handicap would shoot in the conditions you had today?

JASON KOKRAK: I always get that question. I mean, if a 10 handicap driving it well, they could break 100. But if they don't, they're not. It's one of those things. It's an incredibly difficult golf course. A 10 handicap gets it over some of these greens or anywhere, it's an automatic double. It's hard to say for sure.

Q. The margins are pretty thin out here, and you've been up there in the past, had chances. What's it

going to take for you to get to that next level?

JASON KOKRAK: I think just becoming more and more comfortable in that position on Sunday. I mean, I think without fans, it's definitely the energy is not there, but internally I definitely want to get that win, but I just want to play solid golf. I want to get better and better every year.

I'd like to tighten up the wedges a little bit better. Putting has been better the last year or two. Definitely putted great this week so far. Hopefully that continues, and fairways and greens.

Q. Do you have any positive experiences playing golf in New York or in the New York area?

JASON KOKRAK: I kind of grew up in the Warren Youngstown area, midwest Northeast. So I grew up on these type of greens, poa, bentgrass, longer rough. I kind of grew up with this kind of stuff. So I'm comfortable chipping out of this stuff. I'm comfortable here in New York, and looking forward to the weekend.

Q. A number of holes, the numbers are showing, played significantly harder today. Were there any you thought were particularly difficult either in terms of wind or hole location?

JASON KOKRAK: All the ones into the wind were hard for me. No. 2 played, I thought, a lot more difficult because if you didn't hit that fairway, you weren't going to hit that green. Thankfully the USGA moved the tee up on 3 so we didn't have to carve a driver in there.

But you know, with it gusting out there, it was difficult on every shot. You had to really pay attention. Any mental mistakes is pretty much going to be a bogey. I think if you can leave yourself in a good spot, not too many swales to putt over, I think you're going to do okay. But any time that you're going to get there it's just you managed what you've got to do.

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