

U.S. Open Championship 2020

Friday, September 18, 2020

Mamaroneck, New York, USA

Winged Foot Golf Club

Patrick Reed

Flash Interview



Q. Patrick, even par-70. Different conditions out there today, but you must feel good about the golf you played and where you stand heading into the weekend.

PATRICK REED: Yeah, you know, any time you play in the U.S. Open you know that you're going to have one of those days that things just aren't quite going your way, you're not quite -- whether it's hitting quality golf shots or anything like that, and I felt like today was that day. I felt like I left a decent amount of shots out there, felt like I was a little loose with some shots off the tee and also irons, and to be able to feel like that and come out and shoot even par around a day like today, it's definitely a positive and makes you feel good going into the weekend.

Q. Where is your confidence?

PATRICK REED: I feel good. I feel ready to go out and put myself in position hopefully tomorrow to have a chance late on Sunday. But I think that's the biggest thing is I feel like the game is where it needs to be. I feel good. I just need to tighten a few things up here or there, but the short game is sharp, and when I play around a place like this, that's what you need.

Q. Can you talk about the idea of where you're at based on how many fairways you've hit and how you've been able to do that?

PATRICK REED: Yeah, you know, the past month, month and a half I've actually been hitting the driver really well. Been hitting a lot of fairways. Yesterday I felt like I hit a lot of quality shots that ended up just barely in the rough or just barely in the first cut, so they weren't really that bad.

Today there was a little bit more looseness off the tee. I felt like I put myself in the right spots to be able to either get it on the green or get close to the green or have a good opportunity to get up-and-down for par. And I think that's the biggest thing is this golf course, even if you miss fairways, you've got to miss it in the right spots. There's a lot better spots on the left side compared to right side or vice versa depending on hole, depending on pin

placement, and I feel like I've done that pretty well and am still able to kind of attack the golf course.

Q. You've made some strides off the tee over the past month and a half; what did you work on specifically to improve that?

PATRICK REED: I think the biggest thing for me is just try and keep the backswing a little shorter and not try and get too quick with it. Everyone likes to hit driver hard, but at the same time around here I'd give up 50 yards just to hit the ball in the fairway.

Q. It seems like you're using that cut swing more often this week; is that a strategy?

PATRICK REED: Yeah, you know, I mean, kind of -- I use the cut out here just when the hole kind of requires it. There's some of these holes, especially with how firm the fairways are right now, that a dogleg left or a dogleg right, if you get it actually working away from the hole, you're shortening your fairway by a ton.

On some of those holes, those dogleg rights, I feel like if I fade it I'm riding with the fairway and the ball is not going to have a chance to kind of bounce and bound through, or if I draw it on those holes, if it lands on left center fairway, it's going to go through most of the time.

Q. What was the origin of that swing? I remember at Augusta you had used it a lot, but had you used it previously in your career?

PATRICK REED: No. Really when I was on the range one day I was trying to figure out, okay, how is it that I can hit a cut -- I wouldn't really say properly because it's not really properly, but try to hit a cut where it's a little bit more consistent. Being a drawer of the golf ball, every time I feel like I try to make cut, I kind of wipe it and kind of drop the shoulder. So then my coach at the time, he was like, hey, why don't we try to hit a cut -- what do you do when you're in the trees? You always seem to be able to manage hitting out of the trees and cutting it around everything, you're usually really good at it. So what's the difference? I was like, well, I kind of do this. He's like, well, do that with the driver.

And so on the range I did it a couple times, hit pretty good ones, and we took film of it, and actually my body moves a little bit better that way.

Q. What is it that you're doing?

PATRICK REED: I kind of stay more level on it. I don't kind of drop that shoulder and kind of wipe it. I'm able to kind of feel like I make the same golf swing as I do with the draw, just kind of changing the face angle. Because of that, it seemed to work.

Putting it into play the past two times -- well, the first two times would have been Valspar, which I hit some quality shots off the tee there down the stretch, and then Augusta when I won. If it's not broke, don't fix it.

Q. Why do you think this kind of test suits you?

PATRICK REED: I think, if anything, it's just because I love the grind. I love getting in there. I love when it's hard, when you have to be creative on all different golf shots. Kind of like today on 1, a lot of guys just normally -- and even me, I would have just kind of hit a normal 9-iron there, but because of how slopy the green is, I was like, why don't I just try kind of a chippy, kind of draw an 8-iron and try to bounce it up there, and kind of using my eyes and being more creative rather than sit there and aim and shoot.

Q. I haven't checked the leaderboard in a couple minutes, but I think you're playing with Bryson potentially tomorrow. What are your thoughts on that pairing? I know you guys have gotten closer the last couple years.

PATRICK REED: It's going to be good. I look forward to playing with him. I always enjoy playing with Bryson. It's kind of one of those things that we go out there, and I think around here it's not really as much on who you're playing with because you're out there attacking the golf course. This golf course you have to think about every little thing off of tee shots, iron shots, putts, everything.

You don't really hang out with the guys you're playing with as much because you're too busy trying to figure out where you're trying to play this golf course and kind of put it together like a puzzle.

I think that's the thing about the U.S. Open, there's not as much talking going on at the U.S. Open as there is other golf tournaments because it's a premium on every single golf shot. You let up once and you're going to make a mess of the golf course.

Q. How would you compare your style of play to Bryson right now? You were talking the other day about how you've been hitting these bullets down the fairway with your driver and he's just hitting moon shots. In general how does your play compare?

PATRICK REED: It's completely different. You know, he sends it to the moon, and I hit it underneath the trees, he hits it over the trees. I played a practice round with him and we were on No. 8 and there's a tree on the right that I'm kind of cutting around. I could cover it, but I'm not really trying to take that tree on. I'm going to play it left of it and kind of peel it around it.

Well, he wasn't even looking at that tree. There's a tree right of that that's even closer to the tee box that he cleared by 20 feet. The height he's hitting the ball is -- I mean, it's vertical. And really around a place like this, you get downwind, that ball is just never going to come down. It's just going to keep going. The speed he's producing, you're going to have to hit the ball higher.

Swinging that hard and having that much speed, it's kind of going to probably be hit it low. If you tried to hit a driver the height I hit my drivers, it would probably kill half his speed. His speed would be down because he'd kind of have to get on top of it.

It just shows there's so many different ways to play a golf course, there's so many different ways to play the game of golf. He's kind of showing one way, and I show another, and everyone is different.

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