

U.S. Open Championship 2020

Saturday, September 19, 2020

Mamaroneck, New York, USA

Winged Foot Golf Club

Paul Casey

Quick Quotes



Q. You're 5-over through your first seven holes; I'm worried Drew Stoltz and Colt Knost are taking money from you at Whisper Rock the first seven holes, and then the last 11 you go crazy; six birdies in your last 10 holes, a 30 on the back nine at Winged Foot.

PAUL CASEY: Well, let's get one thing straight: Colt has never taken money off me, ever. So let's just clarify that. Last time I played him I took some heavy money off him, so he wants his money back, so as soon as I get back to Whisper I know he's going to want shots.

Yeah, in all honesty I kind of wanted to walk in after the first five, six, seven holes. It was just ugly. In fairness, it was incredibly difficult out there. It was windy this morning. It was cold. Those first few holes with the wind straight into your face on holes 1, 2 and 3 are just very, very difficult. They can be played well if you strike it well. If you hit great golf shots, every golf ball seems easy, and I got a little out of position, and nice display of what can happen.

But then on the flipside, look what can happen if you suddenly start striking it well. When they flash up 69, yeah, it's not the full picture, is it. You've got to dig a little deeper. It was a stressful day, but I'm happy with what I shot.

Q. Did you think something like 30 was possible on the back nine at Winged Foot?

PAUL CASEY: I was just trying not to shoot 80, in fairness, after that front nine. No, actually for a moment there I thought -- I had to count my score because I thought there was every chance of a 29. I wasn't sure what score I was on, I was just trying to take care of business. It went through my mind on the putt on the last, I had to quickly add up and realize it wasn't possible because I don't know how many 29s would have been achieved at a U.S. Open, either. Probably fairly few. I know J.T. and these guys have shot low rounds.

Yeah, look, I'm glad I finally got one off of Winged Foot. I sort of got -- it takes its pound of flesh every single time you seem to play this golf course, so I feel like I got an

ounce or two of my own flesh back.

Q. What was the degree of difficulty out there today compared to yesterday, in terms of hole locations and setup conditions?

PAUL CASEY: Yeah, you know, I think they've been very fair today. Nothing is silly. Nothing is crossing the line in terms of fairness. It was really just the conditions early on this morning with that coolness and the breeze which made it extremely difficult for the guys starting out.

I think it's going to -- with the wind, the flags are laying down right now, which is a shame for us, the early guys. The afternoon guys are not going to have that test that we had this morning, so you'll find the leaders will probably just -- the flags laying down, it's a shot easier at least. It's drying out. The golf course is drying out. The humidity is not in the air right now.

And all the criticism that the USGA have faced about it's not tough enough, trust me, it's plenty tough, guys are just playing some phenomenal golf. Look at the people who went home yesterday. There's a lot of great players. We had to get the first two rounds in because we had less daylight, as well, and so I tip the cap to the USGA. They did the right thing because it could have been another massacre from what we saw Monday and Tuesday with the rough, and they set it up brilliantly.

From its position, they can dial it up. You're starting to see a little bit of glossiness, as we say, on the greens, that shine to the greens, and it's good. Who knows what we'll get tomorrow. Could be completely diabolical, but right now it's been a very, very well set up golf course and fair test.

Q. (On the 2006 U.S. Open at Winged Foot).

PAUL CASEY: Well, I made the cut. I have very few memories because I finished well. I finished top 20. What was I, 15th or 18th? Lone 15th. I saw it yesterday.

Really the lasting memories were Phil -- Tiger missing the cut, Phil missing the 18th fairway, Ogilvy's brilliant up-and-down -- well, his chip-in on 17 and the



up-and-down on 18 because 18 was a very tight lie. That was a brilliant pitch. And Monty -- well, Monty was flawless through his career at hitting soft cuts, and if memory serves me right, he tried to hit a hard 8-iron or a hard 7 --

Q. It was a hard 8.

PAUL CASEY: And instead of hitting the soft -- like why did you just go against your natural shot. Those are my kind of memories there. I don't feel like I was physically scarred or anything.

Q. But you said it takes its pound of flesh --

PAUL CASEY: It does, but it does on a regular day. I've played corporate outings here off the forward tees and it's still difficult.

Q. When you look at the degree of difficulty and you kind of compared Oakmont, where does this rank in the degree of difficulty?

PAUL CASEY: It's right up there. Yeah, it's right up there. What's amazing is it's right up there and it's not like it has any kind of penalty areas that really come into play. Carnoustie has the out of bounds on certain holes, Oakmont has the treacherous little bunkering, but this place is just flat-out hard.

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