

# U.S. Open Championship 2023

Saturday, June 17, 2023

Los Angeles, California, USA

The Los Angeles Country Club

## Wyndham Clark

Flash Interview



**Q. 1-under 67, talk about that putt on 18. Obviously it meant a lot to you. We saw the fist pump.**

WYNDHAM CLARK: Yeah, I wanted to be in the final group. Every shot matters out here. And on top of it, we couldn't see. So just the fact making it when we were kind of just feeling it and didn't really have the clearest of reads.

Yeah, there's a lot of emotion. It's a U.S. Open and I wanted to be in that final group. So yeah.

**Q. It goes to say you knew where you were on the leaderboard?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: Yeah, I'm not a huge scoreboard watcher, but walking up there I kind of knew where we were at. I really wanted to be in that final group.

**Q. Your first time in this final group, major weekend setting. How do you feel you handled it?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: I thought it was great. I played really good. The front nine I kind of had it going. A couple loose shots on 6, not getting up-and-down there for birdie, and then not birdieing the par-5.

But I handled -- I felt like I handled all of it really well. I had two back-to-back bogeys which were unfortunate but followed it up with birdie, and then birdieing at the end I felt like I handled all the adversity, and I feel like my best round is still out there.

**Q. As an Oklahoma State guy, what has Rickie meant to you, and especially inspiring the putter?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: Well, honestly, Rickie is I'd say one of the -- if not the best Oklahoma State alum as far as he was so involved with the team. He always comes back. He gives his time. He talked to us multiple times when we were in college.

Even when I came out here, he's always sent me notes of good playing or even some tournaments he would tell me, hey, I think this is a better play to play off the tee.

Rickie is a class act and a great Cowboy, and fortunate to have him as a friend.

As far as the putter, we were playing at Medalist where he belongs in Florida, and I hadn't been putting good, and this was right before Bay Hill, and I played with Rickie, and he just made every single putt.

Afterwards we were practicing a little bit getting ready for it and I hit a couple and I was like, oh, gosh, this is really nice.

So I texted the Odyssey guy, and I said, hey, can you make me Rickie's putter? And he's like, well what specs? I said, the exact same. So literally had the exact same putter. And I joked with Rickie today, he changed the grip. He changed the grip and cut it an inch, so I was like, all right, I got to change the grip and cut it an inch.

**Q. Take us back to your childhood as a very young golfer. You're out there with your buddies, your friends, you're lining up a putt dreaming of winning the sport's biggest prizes. For you personally, what was that dream?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: Well, I can remember a lot of times. I grew up playing at Cherry Hills Country Club and they have a putting green right by the 10th tee, and I'd be out there putting until dark, and yeah, you do that.

You have putts just like I did on 18 where you can half see it and half can't and no one is out there and you're just calling out whatever tournament it is to win.

So I've done it many times. It's a little surreal to do it. Obviously it's just Saturday, but it's a little surreal to be in this situation. Honestly I'm really looking forward tomorrow and the challenge it's going to bring, and hopefully it's my day.

**Q. Are you always a big club twirl guy, because that one on 18 was pretty ferocious?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: You're not the first one to say it. No,



I don't twirl too often. The nice thing was I hadn't hit too many good shots in the last five holes. It was a perfect number, and I knew it was going to be at least somewhere near around the cut.

So yeah, I twirled it. It was kind of in the moment. Obviously the shot worked out. I'm not one that twirls that often, but when the shot calls for it, I do it.

**Q. Are you an emotional player in general or pretty flat lined? Where do you fall on that spectrum?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: Well, if you think I'm flat lined out there, I'm not. I'm very emotional. I try to keep my emotions very level just because I think that's how I play my best.

But yeah, deep down inside I want to fist pump every time I make a putt and talk trash and whatever.

But I try to keep it as level as possible because that's how I play my best.

**Q. How big was the bogey on 17?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: How big was it? Yeah, it was huge. It's a tough pin for me. I hit a cut. It was hard to see. I didn't feel comfortable drawing it into that flag. Obviously to the right is the miss. If you miss in the left bunker it's pretty much auto bogey, as well.

So when I hit it, I didn't like my shot, but I thought I was just going to be in the flat in that hazard, which we did hit practice shots on Tuesday and Wednesday, and I was like, oh, you can actually get it up-and-down from here barring getting a bad lie, and unfortunately it kicked and went into a terrible spot.

So my caddie and I, it was an easy decision. It's like, we can't hit this on the green. It's going to go to here, so might as well just drop and try to get up-and-down from there.

So making bogey didn't cost us the tournament, and it actually was one of the biggest points of today.

**Q. You seemed very calm making that bogey putt. What keeps you calm on the golf course?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: I kind of just try to stay within myself and not let any one shot dictate the next one. The minute I make that one, I'm on to the next one.

I just try to stay within myself and focus on my mental goals and let the shots take care of themselves.

**Q. Tomorrow is Father's Day. Just want to know how big of a role your dad played in getting you prepared for a moment like the one you're going to face tomorrow.**

WYNDHAM CLARK: Yeah, my dad was definitely the one that -- my mom first took me to play golf, but my dad was the one that really got me into golf. He picked it up just a few years prior to me starting at the age of three.

Every time I'd go golf at a young age, it was with my dad. There's so many memories of us leaving at 6:00 a.m., our family on like a family vacation and we'd come back and play golf before noon, and that was the only way my mom would let us do that.

We had a bunch of -- there's a ton of memories, and he took me to tournaments. My dad played professional tennis so he's an athlete and he gets it, so he instilled in me hard work and discipline. I feel like I get a lot of my fieriness from him.

So he's given me a lot. My dad is a big reason why I'm out here. Hopefully tomorrow can be a great Father's Day for him.

**Q. You mentioned the darkness. When did that start affecting you guys, and would you like to see earlier tee times tomorrow so it doesn't impact Sunday?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: Yeah, I mean, it's a little ridiculous that we teed off that late. I would say right around hole 15 or 16 it started getting to where you couldn't see that well. I mean, I don't personally understand why we teed off -- we played twilight golf.

At the end, it was -- the last two holes I 100 percent think my bogey on 17 was because I couldn't see, and I think Rickie's bogey on 18 was because he couldn't see.

I'd like to see us go off an hour and a half, two hours earlier. If we had a playoff tomorrow we wouldn't even be able to play the playoff tomorrow because it was so dark.

With that, I'm not trying to make an excuse, but it definitely was a challenge. 17 and 18, my putt on 17, I literally couldn't see it, and we just played off of feel and how Rickie's putt came in, and then my putt on 18, same thing. John was like, well, it's kind of around here. Make sure you hit it soft because we need to -- we don't want to blow this by. We need a tap-in coming in.

So it's kind of tough and it's crazy to think that we're doing that on the last two holes of a major when we could have teed off two hours earlier. Hopefully tomorrow we don't

have that issue.

**Q. You mentioned you have a pretty good relationship with Rickie. What's something that maybe the public would be surprised to learn about him?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: With Rickie?

**Q. Yeah.**

WYNDHAM CLARK: Rickie is a little older than me, so a lot of our relationship was more me a little bit idolizing me and he was a role model and someone I aspired to be. I mean, we've had a lot of fun times in Stillwater together when he came back. I've played a good amount of golf with Rickie.

I'm trying to think of a specific memory. I mean, honestly one of the funniest things is just the fact that I'm using his putter, and we kind of had a running bet with Joe Toulon who's the Odyssey guy of who would be the first one to win with the putter, and I fortunately got that one at Wells.

We've kind of started a little trend out here of guys using the putter. I have the utmost respect for Rickie.

**Q. Going back to your comments about finishing late, obviously you guys know that it's TV, right, but do you feel like it should be a little bit more important as far as how you guys perform than when it finishes for the East Coast time zone?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: Yeah, I mean, it's TV, but it's -- what is it, midnight on the East Coast? Personally I don't quite understand it. I know we're West Coast and whatnot and I know they probably have the say, but I would like to think that they would step in and be like, hey, we want to make sure it's in the light and we have time.

Definitely Rickie and I had a little bit of a disadvantage on those last two holes playing in the dark.

That's all I have to say on that. I've never really played a final round of any tournament in the dark. I have in my first few years on TOUR, I'm the last tee time off, and there's many times when we're trying to finish our last hole and I have to come back the next day, but it is crazy to think that we almost -- honestly, we both could have called it if we wanted to on that putting green and said, hey, I can't see, and we'd play tomorrow, and I think that would look pretty poorly on both sides of it.

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