

PGA Championship

Thursday, August 6, 2020
San Francisco, California, USA
Harding Park Golf Club



Tiger Woods

Flash Quotes

JOHN DEVER: Good afternoon, welcome back to the 2020 PGA Championship here at TPC Harding Park. Pleased to be joined by four-time PGA Champion Tiger Woods.

Tiger, pretty solid round today, five birdies. Any one of those that might stand out to you as you think back to your round today?

TIGER WOODS: Not necessarily the birdies but the par putt I made on 18, which was nice. Making, I think, the big par putts is what enabled, over the course of a tournament, to keep momentum of the round going, and that was a big putt for me to make after making a mistake on my tee shot, missing it left.

You know, kept it rolling from there. I made some good putts. For the most part of the day, I missed the ball on the correct sides. This golf course, you have to hit the ball in the fairway. You get a ball in the rough, into the grain, there's no chance you can get the ball to the green. I felt like I did a decent job of doing that, and the golf course is only going to get more difficult as the week goes on.

Q. You came out nice and gave yourself some nice looks early. When you haven't played a lot of competitive golf, what's the process of kind of building that rhythm again?

TIGER WOODS: Well, I felt that practice sessions have been very good. They have been very intense, and I felt like I was -- I got the flow of the round early at Memorial, after taking five months off, and got off to a quick start there, and there's no reason why I can't do the same here.

I was able to do that. I made a nice putt at 10 after Rory gave me a nice little look there. I felt like I kept the round going most of the day, and I let a couple go here and there, but for the better part of the day, it was a very solid round.

Q. You talked about some of the putts you made today. Can you just talk about the idea of why you wanted to go to the new putter and why it seemed to

work so well today?

TIGER WOODS: Well, I've been messing around with this putter for the better part of over a year. Rob and I have been talking about -- you know, it's difficult for me to bend over at times, and so practicing putting, I don't spend the hours I used to. Wasn't unusual for me to spend four, five, six hours putting, per day. I certainly can't log that with my back being fused.

Most of the guys on the Champions Tour have gone to longer putters as they have gotten older, because it's easier to bend over, or not bend over. And so this putter is just a little bit longer and I've been able to spend a little bit more time putting.

It's also very similar to my sand wedge. I putt with my sand wedge all the time at home. I like the feel in my right hand. I like blading putts and hitting the ball in the equator. Not unusual for me to be messing around with something a bit longer. Felt like I was able to spend the time putting again and log in time, and felt like I was able to get ready for this event.

Q. Because you said you have been working with it over the last year or so, what would have kept you from putting it in sooner? Is it not having the comfort with it yet? Are the green surfaces --

TIGER WOODS: It has nothing to do with that. You know, a couple years ago, I put in the Ardmore and I needed a change. It's not usual for me to make a few changes here and there with the putter and I putted with the Nike Method for a little bit. Won a few events.

But also, there's something familiar with my other one. I've won a few events with it. But every now and again, it needs to be benched and this was a good week for it.

Q. You ever think of putting that thing in a safe? I'm talking about the original. Just based on how much you've won with it.

TIGER WOODS: Well, I have won with it. I've putted with -- even my first one I won the Masters with in '97 was slightly longer than the one I've been using all these years.

So I went to a little bit shorter putter at the time to let my



arms hang in '99, and I had a nice little run there in '99, 2000, and kept that length for pretty much my entire career.

Q. How challenging was the rough today, and going off of that, how important was that third shot on 10 from the rough to set up the birdie on your first hole played today?

TIGER WOODS: Well, I got lucky on that lie. I hit it far enough right where it was burnt out and I could hit the bottom, which was fine. Hit a nice little flop shot up there and made the putt.

But overall, this golf course, if you hit the ball in the rough, and you get a ball that's into the grain, there's really no chance you can get the ball to the grain. So it's important to drive the ball in the fairway, and the golf ball is not going very far. These conditions, the air is heavy and not flying, so it's important to get the ball in play.

Q. Were you in between clubs on No. 8?

TIGER WOODS: No. I mean, it's 229. It was slightly in off the left to the front. I'd have to absolutely smoke a 4-iron to get there, and if I do that, I'm going to turn it back into the wind and it's going to get killed.

There's nothing wrong with it, I thought, missing it in that bunker, but when I got down there, the green was a little more baked out than I thought it would be. The miss was probably short center and chip up there like J.T. did or -- and Rory putted it up there.

Q. Back to the putter for a second. Notah was joking on the air yesterday that he was quite certain you probably had that resting against the nightstand back wherever you're staying this week. Is it in the area code or are you just completely committed to what you have right now?

TIGER WOODS: Well, I always travel with it. Even when I was using the TaylorMade putter a couple years ago, or when I was using the Method putter, it always traveled with me.

Q. So it would come off the bench quickly if need be?

TIGER WOODS: Well, I've always messed with it. I've had it since, what, '99, 21 years.

I regrip it all the time because the grip wears out, as you know. If you use it enough times and towel it off, it gets a little bit smaller. So I regrip it quite often. But that putter is always traveling with me.

Q. More of a general question on the round. A lot has been made, we've all examined how little you've played for the reasons you have, and in terms of the prep, what were expectations coming into today? And when you look at the way you hit it today and putted, is 2-under --

TIGER WOODS: I thought anything today in the red was going to be good. The way the forecast was, it was supposed to lift today and get a little more windy. I think the winds are supposed to be 17 to 20; that was the forecast this morning. I felt like if I shot something in the red, I would be right there because the conditions were going to be tough this afternoon for the guys. I was able to do it. I didn't think there were that many guys at 4-under or better, but the greens were soft this morning. If you drove the ball in play, you could get the ball close to some of these flags. A few of them are a little more difficult than we thought.

Q. Looked like you were fighting a little bit of a pull off the tee. What causes that, and how were you able to fix it as the round wore on?

TIGER WOODS: Yeah, those were toe balls. Toe balls usually go left. It's about -- for me, getting the path oriented a little bit better and I was able to do that and started hitting my little cut out there and hit it solid, and I turned a couple over, which was nice.

Overall, I felt like I was able to make a few adjustments out there during the round, and that's what you have to do.

Q. When you're introduced on the first tee at a major championship and there's just silence, how strange was that? And was there one of your birdies where you instinctively expected some sort of crowd reaction and got nothing?

TIGER WOODS: Well, that's our new norm. I experienced that a few weeks ago at Memorial and most of the guys have experienced that who started out playing the TOUR a little bit earlier than I did.

It's just the way it is. This is our norm that's going to be for a while. I don't know how long it's going to be. The energy is different. You're not going to have as many distractions out there, as well. There's really no one moving around. You don't hear the crowd noises. It's just different. That's probably the only way to say it; this is what we're going to have to get used to in the near future and for probably for a while.

JOHN DEVER: Tiger, thanks for stopping in. Have a great

night.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

