

The Memorial Tournament Presented By Workday

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Dublin, Ohio, USA

Muirfield Village

Denny McCarthy

Press Conference



PRESENTED BY



THE MODERATOR: Runner-up Denny McCarthy.

Denny, I know you talked about your putting out there. It was phenomenal all day. Just talk us through how much of a confidence boost that is for you knowing you can do that in contention on the back nine on Sunday.

DENNY McCARTHY: Yeah, obviously, my putter was pretty hot for most of the week. It kept me in it when I needed to make some saves coming in. But I also learned that I can hit a lot of really tough demanding golf shots. I've been putting a lot of work in and a lot of the shots I hit this week, that work showed on a really tough demanding place like this. I wasn't perfect ball striking, but it's so much better than I was.

This place, the greens on the back nine were concrete. When the wind's swirling, changed direction a few times, I mean, missing it in bunkers and sometimes a good shot. So it was really firm and fast. I hit a lot of really good golf shots and I've got a lot of positives to take from this week.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up for questions.

Q. Can you describe your emotions? So close to your first win. Still I think your first second place, so that's, you know, certainly a great showing.

DENNY McCARTHY: Yeah, I'm heart broken right now. It really sucks. I thought this was going to be the week. It just felt like I got a couple good breaks and I was just making the par putts and just felt like nothing could get in my way today. Yeah, it sucks. It really sucks, because I haven't been quite this close to the door to knock it down, but I've put myself in a spot with a chance to win a number of times and it hasn't happened yet. But just got to keep working really hard. I know a lot of good golf is very close by.

Q. I believe the only two bogeys today were on 18, obviously twice. I mean, that's obviously a very, very difficult hole. Under the pressure and the conditions,

just how tough is it?

DENNY McCARTHY: Yeah, I mean, I played 18 pretty well for most of the week. I played 16, 17, 18 well, really, all week. You can call -- I mean, 16's a par-3 and a half, 17's a par-4 and a half, and 18's a par-4 and a half. So those holes have always been tough. Obviously they played into the wind in off the left all week pretty much. Makes it even harder. Makes 'em even longer. You're hitting longer clubs. The greens are concrete.

So, yeah, I mean, it was pretty incredible that I didn't make a bogey leading up to that. I think that just speaks to the grind, the will, the grit I have inside of me. I'm a really fierce competitor and I never give up, and you guys probably saw some of that this week.

Q. You were just playing tremendous special golf just sort of knocking down the greens and playing very smart. I think you were conscious of that and it was clearly a winning formula at that point. The first time there was any sort of nerves or something was 14 green. Did you feel something change? Because -- obviously 15. Was that when you realized this is the moment?

DENNY McCARTHY: No, no, I didn't. That's a really demanding wedge shot that I hit in there really close, and then I have a putt that's -- the greens on the back nine were -- it was an ice rink pretty much. They were literally -- you're tapping down marks and your putter slides.

When we got to 9, I mean, the greens were -- I mean, they were baked out. They're purple and concrete. So I had this little ball or two out left-to-right putt that you feel like you got to tap. That was just a really hard putt. I didn't hit a great one, but that's -- I mean, I don't know how many putts I made like that this week. I made a lot of 'em. I didn't feel like I hit that bad of a putt there. I got a really nice break off 15. I pulled it into those trees and it kicked out. And really the only mistake I made all day was hitting that wedge shot and I got maybe a little too aggressive off a ball above my feet lie. With the wind off the right, I thought if I aimed at the pin and just hit a good one it would kind of turn left, and the wind lulled on me and I hit it in that bunker, which was dead, and I hit a really good bunker

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shot out on the down slope.

So I felt like I -- if you guys thought there was a moment, I feel like I was really cool inside and I was able to make that putt on 15. It looked like things could have maybe gotten away from me there, and I kept it together. Same thing on 16. I hit a great shot, wind lulled on me, one hopped in the bunker. 17, I hit two great golf shots. That's a really hard hole. You almost need to hit it within the front edge to three or four paces on to hold that green. That was a 6-iron I hit.

So it was a really hard demanding golf course and I hit a lot of good shots and I've got a lot to be proud of.

Q. I was going to say, you stole that narrative by making the putt on the green at 15 and then again at 17.

DENNY McCARTHY: Yeah.

Q. Sorry, 16.

DENNY McCARTHY: Yeah.

Q. You were almost five strokes better in strokes gained putting than the next best person.

DENNY McCARTHY: Today?

Q. No, this week.

DENNY McCARTHY: Oh, this week.

Q. Plus 11 I think for the week and next was like plus 6 or something.

DENNY McCARTHY: Yeah, I mean, I need to -- you know, if I'm going to have a chance to win, my putter's -- obviously that's the strength of my game. It's going to have to be there. Yeah, I mean, I see these greens really well. I played well here last year. I like hard golf courses. I think it just -- yeah, I'm a good putter, but it's more so, I think, the attitude that I have. It's like playing defense in basketball. I feel like I can make every putt. That's a great feeling to have, especially when you're coming down the stretch.

Yeah, I hit a couple really good putts on 18 too. I mean, the one on -- the one in the playoff hole really looked like it was going to go in. Yeah, it sucks right now. But I also hit a lot of really good shots to go along with that good putting and I don't know what my strokes gained approach was. It's gotten a lot better over the last couple years and, you know, I'm seeing some really good strides and looking forward to playing some more championship high-level golf

coming up.

Q. Are you at LACC?

DENNY McCARTHY: I am, yes.

Q. So this sort of golf must make you pretty confident going into there?

DENNY McCARTHY: Yeah. And I've played there four or five times, so I have a good -- I have a good feel for the course and I'm excited for it. Thanks.

Q. Obviously you can hear the emotion in your voice. When have you, if you ever have, experienced anything like this?

DENNY McCARTHY: I don't know. It's been a little while. I mean, anything I do competitively I -- if something's coming down the stretch -- I mean, I shot hoops on Tuesday and I was a little nervous, tingly, like going in a 3-point contest. Like, obviously it wasn't like it was today.

But I like being in that moment. That's exactly what I want to be playing golf for. I was definitely nervous, and I definitely had some adrenaline, but I feel comfortable in that situation. I love that aspect of being a competitor is when it starts to feel a little uncomfortable, how can you control that, how can you manage your emotions out there. I don't know when the last time I've felt quite that amped up, but this can only help me. I'll use this as a learning experience to try and get better.

Q. I didn't really expect a 3-point contest answer to that. Could you give us a little more --

DENNY McCARTHY: Yeah, the TOUR posted something. Six or seven of us did a 3-point contest at Ohio State's facility, NBA style. Like, five off a rack, five from each location. And so just even little competitions like that kind of get me going. I mean, playing ping pong, playing whatever it is, I mean, like, I'm excited to -- I get the juices flowing, I get competitive, I want to beat guys. I get nervous even when I play ping pong. Like it's --

Q. And one last thing. Obviously, we talked about a lot of the good things you did today. What is it you think you need to do differently, if there is anything, to get the win next time?

DENNY McCARTHY: I think maybe just be a little bit more consistent off the tee. And maybe try and add a little bit of length. I'm not the longest guy, but I'm not the shortest guy. I'm probably in the middle-ish. I picked up some speed lately, just my body moving a little better. And I've

made a lot of strides in my driving over the last two, three years. But I think that aspect can get a little better. My wedge game's in a really good place right now. You can always get, you can get better at everything. I can probably even get better at putting still. And that sounds crazy, but I can still get better in that area. And, you know, I've been working really hard on my approach game, specifically scoring clubs, pitching wedge, 8-iron, 9-iron. Try to be really dialed in 8-iron in. And the long irons I've come a long way too. But it's a hell of a game that we play and it's just, something like this is going to make me very hungry for more.

Q. With your play this week you also earned a spot in The Open Championship. What does that possibility coming into form mean to you as well?

DENNY McCARTHY: I think I already qualified for the Open Championship.

Q. My apologies. But what's it mean that your play is leading to success heading into this part of the season?

DENNY McCARTHY: I mean, I like hard golf courses. I like championship golf. Like I said, I'm a very fierce competitor, so when the lights are the brightest and everyone's watching these elevated events and major golf championships, I love that. I love -- as much as it sucks right now to be, to finish runner-up here this week, I love being in that situation. That's what I play golf for. So with a couple majors around the corner, another elevated event coming up, I'm excited about where my game is and looking forward to having another opportunity to win a tournament.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Denny.

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