

U.S. Senior Open Championship

Thursday, July 8, 2021

Omaha, Nebraska, USA

Omaha Country Club

Robert Karlsson

Quick Quotes

THE MODERATOR: It's my pleasure to welcome Robert Karlsson in here, a 3-under 67. Robert, six birdies, three bogeys today. Could you kind of take us through your card, take us through your round, clubs you hit in, putts you made.

ROBERT KARLSSON: The course is set up very difficult, so when you miss a shot, you miss it. I birdied on 2. I hit the sand wedge, third shot in on 2, 12 feet. Left on No. 3 into the bunker, 5-iron, plugged in the bunker and almost shoot it in. Three-putted 4, 30 feet. 6, got a 3-iron, two putts. 11, 8-iron to 12 feet. Missed the drive on 12, chopped it out sideways, missed the green. Made a great bogey actually. It was very important for the round to keep it going, just drop one. Then hit to three feet on 14 with an 8-iron, and two feet with a 5-iron on 15. 7-iron in on 18 to eight, nine feet, something.

THE MODERATOR: Nice way to finish. You mentioned 12, you made bogey there. Sometimes in U.S. Opens -- and you've played in plenty of them, and now a U.S. Senior Open, your first -- those par saves and bogey saves can be really important. Talk about that, how this one kept you going, and in general, how important those are.

ROBERT KARLSSON: I had a couple of them where I missed the driver and adjusted the play out sideways. I was lucky I got away with one on 17, but when I knocked it in from 4 1/2, 5 feet on 12, it felt like a really, really good save, even though it was a 5 on a par-4. I hit it right in the rough, and the fairway is so slopey, so I just tried to hit the fairway from 40 yards, and it rolled over and just rolled up against the fringe on the other side, so I had a horrible lie for my third shot. So I left that 25 yards short of the flag. It was a good, good up and down to just make a bogey.

Then I played well from there in. I had a birdie chance on 13 that I missed, and then played well and made a few birdies my last five holes. So it was obviously very encouraging.



THE MODERATOR: You've played in a bunch of U.S. Opens now, and this is your first Senior Open. How does the condition compare to playing in that U.S. Open atmosphere?

ROBERT KARLSSON: It's great to play a U.S. Open. I've had some success on some of them. You know the mental aspect of the game is going to come in. It's going to be -- you're going to miss shots. You're going to make bogeys. So I just told my caddie this morning, let's go out and be ultra, ultra patient, no matter what happens. So it was kind of my goal to be that.

The setup this year, I mean, obviously it's my first Senior, but from tee to green, it's pretty much what we play on the big U.S. Open as well. Maybe the rough will be slightly higher, but not much because it's brutally thick. The greens are obviously very soft at the moment, and maybe a little bit on the slow side if you compare it to what it probably will be on the big U.S. Open.

Also, the greens are very slopey, so I'm not so sure we can play them that much quicker. It's a good setup. It's tough.

THE MODERATOR: You mentioned you had a couple nice performances in the U.S. Open, one of those being in 2008 at Torrey Pines. We were just there for the U.S. Open. I don't know how much you were able to watch this year, but did you have memories that came back from that championship?

ROBERT KARLSSON: Of course it comes back. This time I watched it on TV. When you play well in a place, and I know how that back nine played, and it was very exciting TV. I kind of just turned it on to see a little bit on the last day while I was waiting for a flight. I mean, the guys, they all looked like they were the world's best players the first six or seven holes, and they all turned like 10 handicappers. It was amazing to see, but that's what pressure is doing to the players.

When things start to go wrong in a U.S. Open, it can go very quickly. Obviously, being European and vice captain for the Ryder Cup, I'm very excited that Rahm pulled that one off. It was great to see.

THE MODERATOR: For you, in addition to being a high level professional golfer, also have done some coaching



and some mentoring. Can you talk a little bit of the work you've done with Madelene Sagstrom over the last little bit and what you learned from that as well.

ROBERT KARLSSON: I started working with her when she turned pro. The Swedish Golf Federation did a mentor program, so I kind of helped her a little bit and gave her advice when she turned pro. I'm not doing that anymore because she's kind of standing on her own two feet right now. It was a fantastic experience. If you're going to say something to someone else, you'd better believe it and think it yourself. So it was a very, very good learning experience for me as well. I had to go back and really think on what I was trying to give to her.

Obviously, everything from the mental aspect to things that amateurs are not used to even thinking -- she was a very good college player. She thought it was great to be a pro because now she can practice so much more, and it's actually the opposite. When you turn pro, you probably practice less because, even if you don't have another job or you don't have another school to take care of, now you have to run your own kind of company.

So it's a lot of things like that that she needed to take on very early on, and she did very well on the Symetra Tour, and I'm very happy for her that she's now pulled through and won her first tournament on the LPGA. I hope she can have a good strong finish to this year.

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