

Travelers Championship

Thursday, June 20, 2024

TPC River Highlands

Cromwell, Connecticut, USA

Will Zalatoris

Quick Quotes

Q. You talked about some struggles you had over the recent months with your game. Something a little bit different today?

WILL ZALATORIS: Yeah, I got out here Saturday night and then Sunday I had a basically all-day grind session just to try to figure out what was going on. I got into some bad habits, figured out kind of what I needed to fix, and just kind of dug it out of the dirt. It's kind of nice to be able to do that. I think a lot early on this season I would play a tournament, need to take three, four days off, and now I'm able to just keep on going. So really, like, even though it's nice and warm, that obviously helps with the back, but I think it's just trying to find the right cadence of when I'm taking time off, and so far this stretch is the best I've felt. This is week three, I'm going to play next week too. So sometimes you just got to dig it out of the dirt. I really, throughout the year, I didn't really have that ability to go out and go do a full-blown grind session of hitting 300, 400 balls and sometimes that's just what it takes.

Q. Is it one of those things, like what does -- what can you tell from your body like, hey, I have it or I don't have it today. Is it sore, is it soreness you don't have anymore?

WILL ZALATORIS: Yeah, I think it's just general fatigue. I used to hit 3, 400 balls a day when I was a teenager, and now if I do that two days in a row I need a day off. But just the farther I get from, or the further I get from the surgeries that I had last year the more comfortable I'm feeling with my back, the quicker I'm recovering, the better I'm feeling. So really as the year goes on, even though my results haven't showed it, I felt a lot better, I just got into some bad habits and I thought it was just kind of a nice reset after the U.S. Open. I love majors, it's always been a career goal of mine to win one. I hated the way how I played and sometimes you just got to dig it out of the dirt.

Q. (Question about his swing.)

WILL ZALATORIS: Yeah, I think I know, I'm able to feel what I'm doing better. I think for awhile there early on this



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season I was hitting it really well, but I didn't really know what I was doing. Then kind of got off a little bit, had to search a little bit. Then finally digging it out of the dirt, realizing, okay, here's what's different from earlier on in the year versus now. So it's always going to be a work in progress, but the reins are off now, I don't have any, I don't have any restrictions in terms of how much I can play. The first year was going to be -- my surgeons told me it's going to be a lot of ups and downs, but your line of best fit is going to be still on an upward trajectory. So I feel really good. I feel like the plan that we've had in place with just maintaining everything throughout a season's really paid off and it's a lot of patience and I'm not a very patient person, so...

Q. The swing feel about as good as it did maybe around Genesis time?

WILL ZALATORIS: Yeah, I mean, honestly, that's kind of -- I hit a going back and looking at old videos sometimes, just because I feel like there's some things I do better now than I did then -- but I needed to go back and look at, okay, Genesis was the best I've hit it this year -- same thing with Bay Hill -- and I just need to see what the differences were. So going back and looking at it, it was pretty blatantly obvious. It took me a couple hours really to engrain it. But it's nothing special, it's just I got very off with my setup. I was hitting down on clubs pretty hard, having the ball in the back of my stance. Now I'm moving it way forward and trying to swing more around my body, which is basically what I tried to do coming back and the changes that I've been making with my surgery. I think because I had felt so good I just got into some old habits.

Q. Was that part of that grind session, looking at video?

WILL ZALATORIS: Yeah, I mean, we -- I sent, I mean, probably a dozen videos to my coach -- he's up in Detroit, so I'm going to see him all week next week. It's just nice to, it's nice, when I'm miss-hitting golf shots and they end up in the right places now. I think that's the big difference.

I think the example I can give you was kind of mishit a tee shot today on 12 and I'm about 20 yards farther back than I



wanted to be. I got 8-iron in as opposed to wedge. Just trying to hit it in the middle of the green, I barely block it out right, the pin's front right, and I got a 10-footer for birdie and I make it. As opposed to trying to carve something in there and put it in the bunker and end up making bogey. It's very simple stuff, it's nothing special it's just keep making less mistakes.

So, I think I'm driving it a lot better, that's one thing too. I think my ball speed's up with the new driver, but I'm also hitting it a lot straighter. So, I mean, really the thing that's been holding me back over the last kind of month or two has been my iron play, which is obviously very uncharacteristic. So it's kind of nice, just went back to the good old days and had to hit some 6-irons to a green that was 195 yards out and had to try to get five in a row within a 13 yard radius. So it was fun this weekend having everybody here and grinding my tail off and it's nice to see it pay off in the first round back.

Q. (No Microphone.)

WILL ZALATORIS: It's more recovery on the back end. I haven't changed much on the pre-round stuff. The back, on the end of the day, got to do a cold plunge, do some dry needling get some ART work with my physio. Then from there it's just make sure that I'm recovering for the next day, because it's not like I'm playing a short schedule here, I'm going to be playing, it's going to be a lot of golf over the next few months, but my body feels ready for it. This is week three, and I played three weeks in a row earlier this year and honestly was not prepared for it, and now I definitely feel prepared for it.

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