

Sanderson Farms Championship

Thursday, October 5, 2023

Jackson, Mississippi, USA

Country Club of Jackson

Russell Knox

Quick Quotes

Q. Russell, solid round of golf out there, just the one bogey at 16, seven birdies, good ball-striking day, 25 putts. A lot of players have issues at 16. What is the big challenge about that difficult par-4?

RUSSELL KNOX: I mean, there's water on the left, obviously, so you don't want to go there.

But today we had the wind kind of off the left. To be perfectly honest, I hit two terrible drives there in the pro-am, so it wasn't my most confident tee shot. I hit it just in the right rough, and I was pretty happy with that, to be honest. Just kind of misjudged my second and third shots a little bit.

But just nice to be up here talking to you.

Q. This is a golf course where if you can control your golf ball, you can probably do pretty well. What is the challenge with this golf course when you're making your way around it?

RUSSELL KNOX: Yeah, like what you said, if you're controlling your ball, you're in the fairway off the tee, the greens don't spin much here with your approach shots, so if you're in the fairway and you're dialed with your approaches, it is go time because the ball is just going to stop.

So that's kind of the strength of my game, always has been. If I'm in the fairway, it's attack.

But like you said, the greens are tricky here. They managed to put the pins just on the grain changes quite often, so you've got to be holing putts, and today I holed a few, which was very pleasing.

Q. You're a veteran out here. You missed the Playoffs this year, but you've got a lot of experience. This FedExCup Fall gives you another opportunity to get going. What did you do to prepare yourself for these



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events this fall, and how are you approaching it?

RUSSELL KNOX: Yeah, it's been the most challenging year for me. My golf has been nowhere near the level that I would like it to be.

I mean, I got off the couch. I got to work. My coach Jeff and I just put in the time, made a few changes to my technique and a few different things, and it's been nice to see some nice golf here recently.

Obviously thrilled with shooting a good round 1 here.

Q. You said you got off the couch, but is part of working out the puzzle to better play working out what you were doing that wasn't letting you perform? I was looking there, and you had like a three- or four-month stretch where you played 11 or 12 tournaments, made one cut. Do you know what you were doing wrong to kind of improve it?

RUSSELL KNOX: I mean, obviously you're always working on your technique and trying to see if there's a glaring hole there. For me, it's just mental. I just got myself in that stretch in a bad little funk. It wasn't like I was down on myself, but I just was like creating too much fuss about things rather than just kind of like dumbing it down, and okay, hit it in the fairway, hit it on the green.

I think I was just trying too hard, trying desperately to find the form which I feel like I'm capable of, instead of just being like, just go for it. It's obviously come down to these last five tournaments for me to keep my card for next year, and I know I'm going to have to play significantly better than I have been playing.

That kind of frees me up. I know it's in there. I see it in practice. There's been some nice glimmers here recently.

Yeah, I can't wait to see how I do.

Q. Brad Whittle is back on the bag, caddied for you for a long time and then there was a break and he's back the last couple weeks. How did that come about?



RUSSELL KNOX: Yeah, I always joked to him, I don't know if I should say this, but I'm like, he's a bad rash. I just can't get rid of him.

No, Bradley and I have been friends for a long time and he's worked on and off for 10 years pretty much for me. He's worked probably six or seven of that.

Yeah, whenever my last caddie and I kind of broke up, the first call is always to Bradley, and he's my caddie for life on and off, and we've had incredible success in the past. That's obviously the first thing is like, oh, what works, yeah, Bradley, so we call him.

I have a comfort level with Bradley, so hopefully I made sure now not to get rid of him again.

Q. I want to talk about the Ryder Cup. I know you were close to making that team one time. Did you watch much of it over the weekend? Europe won; you're from Scotland. Does that give you inspiration when you watch it?

RUSSELL KNOX: Yeah, I loved watching Robert McIntyre, Scottish guy, play, obviously. That was very inspiring. Great to see a Scot make the team, and obviously the whole outcome of it for Europe was unbelievable.

I did watch it. I mean, time-wise I wasn't waking up at 2:00 in the morning and turning it on, but yeah, I definitely caught the second sessions and then most of the singles.

It was definitely riveting TV there on Sunday when it got close for a few minutes.

But no, it's an amazing tournament. I'm gutted that I haven't got to experience it. I've been close, like you said, once, maybe even twice, but wasn't meant to be. It would be nice to be a 40-year-old rookie, though.

Q. Do you still feel like there's an opportunity or a window for you?

RUSSELL KNOX: I do. Obviously the game is changing to more of a power game -- well, obviously it's changed already, and that's not what I'm about, but if I can play like I did today, I'll be close.

I still know how to play golf, and I've just got to do it my way and not their way.

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