

Waste Management Phoenix Open

Friday, February 5, 2021

Scottsdale, Arizona, USA

TPC Scottsdale

Billy Horschel

Quick Quotes

Q. Two really solid rounds of golf back-to-back. You finish late, then you start early and you're in great position for the weekend. Tell me about the day.

BILLY HORSCHTEL: Yeah, the day was really good. I played really solid. Yesterday was a little sloppy starting out, a lot of birdies, a lot of bogeys. Cleaned it up towards the end of yesterday and came out today, felt really good. I hit it really well, hit it really solid. Caught some bad breaks. Fortunately I made a birdie from divots on 15 and No. 3 for birdie. Just didn't get a lot of putts to go. I made one big putt at 15. Other than that, just hit a lot of edges and really solid day of golf. But I'm in good position going into this weekend, and that's all I can do.

Q. You had 91 feet of putts, which is still a solid day. These greens seem so receptive. Is it difficult to figure out the spin when you're hitting wedges in?

BILLY HORSCHTEL: Yes, it is. In years past these greens have been really firm. The ball is not going to hit. It's going to hit, bounce and then maybe check up. I hit a good shot in at No. 6 today that I thought I took a lot of spin off, took my 52, and it landed two yards short, bounced past the hole, spun back and wound up spinning back all the way 20 feet back to the front edge of the green.

Yeah, it's difficult because in the back of our head we know -- I mean, I know how fast and how firm these greens have been in the last handful of years and this year they're really soft and they're actually slower, and I think that's just due to the weather they had last week.

Q. You're a First Coast guy but a Florida guy. Are you rooting for the Bucs this weekend?

BILLY HORSCHTEL: Yeah, I mean, to say I have a professional football team, NFL team like the Gators is not really the case. I pull for the Patriots. I've always sort of pulled for the Patriots for a long time because my dad's buddies -- Arthur Blank, the owner of the Atlanta Falcons,



is a really good friend, so I pull for the Falcons, and then I loved the Bucs when Jon Gruden was there, I loved the Miami Dolphins when Dan Marino was there, I pull for the Jaguars because I live there in Jacksonville now, so yeah, I would like to see Tom win another Super Bowl. It would be pretty impressive, 10 Super Bowls, seven rings. He's already the GOAT as it is, but that's just unheard of.

Q. Another solid round out here. You finished at 68 and you're in a good spot heading into the weekend. Your thoughts on the day?

BILLY HORSCHTEL: Yeah, the course was very gettable. I think some of the pins maybe were a little bit tougher, but played really first solid nine holes. Just didn't get much out of it. I had a lot of putts burn the edges and I didn't birdie 17 from right there in front of the green, easy two-putt.

And then from there on in, it was just hit a lot of good shots, just didn't turn out the way I wanted and just burned a lot of edges with a lot of putts. But really happy with the way my game is. Just going to go do a little practice, tighten a few things up and be excited about this weekend.

Q. What's it been like playing with less fans out here?

BILLY HORSCHTEL: It's been nice to play with fans this week. I mean, we're used to 100,000 plus on an average day here, so it's a little unusual. It's unusual to see the tents not up. Sort of made a comment to my caddie, Brian, and my stats guy, Mark on Tuesday playing a practice round on 17, I actually thought the hole looked tighter without the stands up, which really shouldn't make sense, but it seems like when the stands are up that holes looks wider.

But yeah, it's nice to have fans back out here. I know it's not what we're used to, but it's just nice to hear some applause and you know how close your golf shot is from the middle of the fairway.

Q. What do you make of seeing Steve Stricker at the top of the leaderboard?

BILLY HORSCHTEL: I sort of joked to Brian, I saw it on No. 17, I saw Stricker was at 11-under, and I was like, man, he turned back the clock this week a little bit. He's still a great player. He's still a great putter, great iron player.



Obviously he doesn't hit it as far as he used to 10 years ago. So when you look at this course, distance does matter a little bit, but it's still a great -- you've got to hit your irons. It's a great mid-iron to wedge course, and he's always done that really well. It's not shocking to see. I mean, he's 53. He's still got a lot of game. He still competes really well. It's not shocking to see.

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