

Arnold Palmer Invitational

Sunday, March 7, 2021

Bay Hill, Florida, USA

Bay Hill Club and Lodge

Lee Westwood

Quick Quotes



Q. (No audio.)

LEE WESTWOOD: Rolled it in. So you can't want for more than that. I thought we had a really good battle, we were never, it was never really more than one in it all day and there were tough conditions out there and it wasn't going to be a day where -- I don't think anybody was going to shoot 68 or 67 -- it was a day for playing sensible and hanging on and grinding out the pars.

Q. Is his length even for somebody who has seen it all out here still kind of something hard to get your arms around?

LEE WESTWOOD: Yeah, I mean it's great to watch. I like it. He's obviously, you can see the shape of him, he's worked hard in the gym and he's worked on his technique to hit it a long way and it's not easy to hit it that straight as he hits it as far as he hits it. So people are going to have advantages and his is obviously length. He can overpower a golf course. So it's fun to watch, I think.

Q. That said though you're right there and you figure out a way to stay in touch with him. So do you just have to put that out of your mind when you're playing him?

LEE WESTWOOD: Yeah, I mean I'm not short myself. I think I hit it about 350 yards down 16. I only went in with wedge into that par-5. But what impressed me about Bryson today, some of the iron shots he hit into the wind, the way he kept the ball down and 17, 7, par-3, 2, and he's got a big advantage. He was hitting 6-iron off some tees where I was hitting a hybrid on the par-4s to get in the fairway and really knocking it down and holding it into a wind. That's an aspect of his game I don't think people appreciate.

Q. I think a lot of people think away to combat distance from a course setup standpoint is grow the rough, shrink the fairways. But then Bryson went and won at Winged Foot, he won here, is there anything that can be done to kind of mitigate some of his

distance?

LEE WESTWOOD: Well it's definitely not to make golf courses longer, that will just play into -- you'll have everybody trying to hit it as far as they can. I think it's nice that Bryson does what he does and that he's unique to doing that. I think if everybody did it then I think it would kind of get out of control. But, yeah, making golf course, growing the rough -- there's an art to -- he hit some shots out of the rough today, like 9 and 15, there's an art to judging a lie and seeing how it's going to come out and if it's going to release or not, whether it's going to come out soft. That's all part of the game.

Q. Are shorter wider courses the answer? Because if everyone's hitting out of the rough he's 50 yards ahead.

LEE WESTWOOD: Well I think that would lead to very slow tournaments. He would be stood on the tee waiting for the green to clear on most par-4, wouldn't he? So, no, I don't think that's the answer. I think golf's in a good place, I don't know where everybody is panicking about it, I think it's exciting to watch right now, there's a lot of different combinations. You've got Bryson, obviously and then I suppose myself who is nearly 48 can still contend, with people like Dustin Johnson and Colin Morikawa winning last week, young lad, he hits it a long way but you wouldn't say he hits it miles. Then you got Rory and people like that. Rory's game's great to watch.

So golf's in a healthy place, if you ask me, I don't see the big problem, the big issue that everybody he's making it out.

Q. What is the depth of field of golf today as compared to maybe 20, 25 years ago?

LEE WESTWOOD: I think people are more knowledgeable now about technique and technology. I think, I mean I could get some stink for it, but I think in general players are more professional now and analyze the game maybe a little bit more and we have learned -- well I say we, the kids have learned off watching Tiger and people like that. I learned off watching people like Nick



Faldo and Greg Norman and Bernhard Langer. Bryson, he could look back and see that, but he could also look back and see how Tiger did it and learn from that.

No stone is left unturned now from these kids, they have got trainers, dieticians, massage therapists if you need them, people taking them to the gym to do the right exercises to be specific for their golf swing. So that's why there is a greater strength and depth on all tours.

Q. Would you be where you are today without your workout regimen?

LEE WESTWOOD: No, Nick Price told me years ago that I should start going in the gym and it took me about seven or eight years to listen to him, but I got to the age of 30 and started working out more, started getting stronger, getting stronger in the right areas, working with Steve McGregor and it's given me the longevity. We have worked on specific areas that are going to wear down in a golf swing and built muscle around those. So I've got a bit of protection from bad backs and bad shoulders and bad knees and bad hips.

Q. What did you make of having a decent-sized gallery? Are you comfortable with it?

LEE WESTWOOD: Yeah, it was great to have people watching again. I'm the kind of person that feeds off a crowd, a gallery. And I really struggled when we came out of lockdown and we were playing tournaments without fans. I was enthusiastic, but I wasn't as enthusiastic as normal. It's nice to see people out there and people cheering and shouting your name and it creates an atmosphere and an environment that's nicer to play golf in.

Q. When you were standing back there on that 6th fairway, what were you thinking?

LEE WESTWOOD: I knew, I knew -- when you're playing with Bryson, when I'm playing with him, I'm not going to go out there and go blow for blow with him. Some people can do that and will do that. But that's the way for me to play myself out of a tournament. I know he's going to go left, I don't know if you saw me I hit mine and then I gave it the (Indicating) like that. Just having a built of fun with it, you know? I hit that -- it was a little bit in off the right, I think I got it out there about 310, 315 down there, so you know, only 70 or 80 behind him, wasn't it? He got the benefit of the angle.

Q. That crowd at 6, once he found land kind of reminded me like a goal Emirates or something like that. Was that the loudest celebration you've ever seen off a tee box?

LEE WESTWOOD: For a drive?

Q. Yeah.

LEE WESTWOOD: Yeah, I guess so, yeah. Yeah. There's the anticipation there, people want him to go for it and there will come a time when he aims further left, won't there and maybe in a practice round next year or the pro-am he'll go straight at the green, not chicken out and go right of that trap (laughing).

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