

Palmetto Championship at Congaree

Sunday, June 13, 2021

Ridgeland, South Carolina, USA

Congaree Golf Club

Bo Van Pelt

Quick Quotes

Q. What were your expectations coming into this tournament, and you must really like Congaree right now?

BO VAN PELT: Not a ton of expectations. I just had three weeks off, so it was good to kind of practice a little bit. My game felt pretty good. But it's golf, you never know. My game had been trending in a decent direction, better than it had been a couple months ago.

I was excited to play here. I like the golf course. Obviously, it was a good week for me.

Q. What specifically was the reason you played so well this week, and you had a chance to tie Chesson toward the end. What went right for you this week?

BO VAN PELT: I putted the ball pretty good. I got a lesson from a guy up in -- he's actually based out of Indiana, Bruce Rearick. Just made like a slight adjustment in my posture and kind of my setup, and just kind of cleaned up my stroke a little bit. I had a couple three-putts, which is easy to do out here. Overall, I putted really well out here this week.

Q. Can you tell how close you came to retiring or giving up golf for longer than 3-1/2 years. How seriously did you think about doing something else?

BO VAN PELT: I didn't play 18 holes for over three years. I had three shoulder surgeries, so I thought I was done, to be honest. My hand kind of got numb. Got referred to a guy down in Dallas named Greg Pearl, who looked at me and said, I've got to take out your first rib. As soon as he did, my shoulder didn't hurt anymore. I said, well, let's see if I can get my game back in shape.

It's been fun. It's been tough. It's kind of like starting over. When you're out of the game that long, all your old feels aren't the same. My coach Mark Wood, who's up in Charlotte now, we've been together 20 years. We've been



working hard to try to get it back. He came up here this week and gave me a couple of good tips and kind of got me going in the right direction this week.

Q. Was there any indication, when you were playing in tournaments this season and missing the cut, was there anything that told you you should still be out here?

BO VAN PELT: Yeah, my good was still good enough. It's just my bad was horrible. It was like all of a sudden I'd miss one 40 yards and make double, and then I'd play four or five holes really well and look like a real golfer. Once I got rid of the bad, I knew the good was still in there. Got to be in there more consistently.

Q. How did you get that self-belief to keep going? The results were pretty rough this year.

BO VAN PELT: Yeah, you've just got to work at it. Like I worked my ass off for my whole life to get out here, and I just needed to work a little harder. I think I didn't appreciate how hard it was going to be. When you don't do anything competitively for three years, like stuff that we just did naturally because I did it every day, I had to start over. I thought I would kind of take back up and be where I was, and it wasn't going to be that way. It was just hard work.

I mean, I just -- you -- nothing's given to you in this game. You've got to go back to the range and figure it out.

Q. Did you ever have a moment and have a heart to heart with anybody and say maybe the game passed me by?

BO VAN PELT: Well, miss a bunch of cuts in a row, and you get up in the late 40s. There's been some guys play well this year, but percentage-wise, there's not a lot of guys my age who I kind of came out here with still around. That's just the fact of the matter, right? That's kind of what we all sign up for. So, yeah, there's times when you think that.

I just knew I wanted to work at it and see how good I can get. This week gave me some indication just with my



length, and I played with younger guys, and I was hitting it right with them all week. So I'm excited for the rest of the summer.

Q. What did today feel like? Did it feel like riding a bike? Or did you feel new again and nervous?

BO VAN PELT: Look, I think everybody was nervous. I think my mental state was really good. I went through my process. It was fun to be out there and get the nerves going. I've had nerves going just trying to make the cut this year. So nerves going to win is a lot more fun.

Q. Do you find that you're an inspiration to a lot of the players, and now you're just a competitor? You're not the inspiration guy, now you're the guy that's trying to win the tournament?

BO VAN PELT: I hope so. That's what I'm trying to be. If that inspires some people, great. Look, I'm trying to keep my job and trying to stay out here until I turn 50.

Q. And at 50, you're thinking about the Champions Tour?

BO VAN PELT: Yeah, for sure. I saw some friends when they played in Tulsa a couple of weeks ago, and they look like they're having a ball. My body is still healthy and my game's good enough, I'd love to compete with those guys.

Q. I want to ask you about your body. I don't know if you want to put it in percentage. Is it all gone? It's the right shoulder, right?

BO VAN PELT: My right shoulder. Yeah, I don't even think about it any more.

Q. That wasn't from wear and tear from golf. That was from a backpack?

BO VAN PELT: Yeah, I picked up one of my kid's backpacks in the backseat of my truck, lifted it over the front seat. There might have been some damage in there, you never know, but that was definitely the thing that did it.

Q. When was that?

BO VAN PELT: That would have been late in the year of '15 and finally in the early part of '16, I went and got an MRI, and 85 percent of my labrum was torn.

Q. And the bone spurs they found while they were looking around?

BO VAN PELT: Yes.

Q. And then the rib thing was just a miracle of modern medicine?

BO VAN PELT: My labrum repair went great. My doctor was fantastic. I just couldn't hit balls. It hurt all the time. He referred me to another guy. He said, look, it's a unicorn deal, not very many people have it. As soon as he took the rib out, I got the relief I needed.

Q. What are you going to take from this tournament? Where do you go from here?

BO VAN PELT: I've got a week off. I'm not in the U.S. Open. I'll probably be pissed off for a couple of days that I didn't win. I felt like I should have had a good chance to win the golf tournament. Then I'll get back to work and get ready for Travelers.

Q. One more thing. 3 1/2 years away from golf, did you do anything golf-like, like putting around the living room?

BO VAN PELT: Yeah. My body, every time I tried to go practice, it would hurt. It was probably a blessing I never got close to coming back because I was just so far away. I just coached my kids' sport teams and had fun doing that.

Q. What was in that backpack?

BO VAN PELT: I don't know. Too much stuff.

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