

U.S. Open Championship 2021

Thursday, June 17, 2021

San Diego, California, USA

Torrey Pines Golf Course

Richard Bland

Flash Interview



Q. Talk me through a little bit about your round, how it felt to be out there today.

RICHARD BLAND: Yeah, this is my second U.S. Open. It's nice to play a U.S. Open that plays a little firm. I played at Bethpage, which was very wet and kind of more sort of throwing darts kind of thing, where this one is a lot more -- you have to be a bit more patient, and if you do get it out of shape a little bit, then okay, minimize sort of mistakes, which I was able to do today. Made a couple on the back nine, which okay, a little bit disappointing, but it's a U.S. Open. Everyone is going to make mistakes.

Yeah, happy with how I played. Drove the ball very well. I hit my irons pretty good all day, and I holed out well, so my short game was pretty solid when I needed it.

Q. Tell me about the last month or so, picking up that win at the British Masters.

RICHARD BLAND: Yeah, like I just said, the first few days were just a blur really, a complete whirlwind, and everything that went off the back of it, which you don't expect, or you've never experienced that before, so you don't really know what's to come. But yeah, it was great. It was great to have like a week off that I could sort of take it all in and do all that kind of stuff. I wouldn't have liked to have been doing that at a tournament with the media coverage and what have you.

But yeah, it was actually quite nice to get back playing again in Denmark, which I backed it up with a third place there. I was coming in with some good confidence and managed to carry that on today.

Q. What's the beginning of the week been like here? I know you mentioned you played in 2009 and 2017 was your last major at the Open.

RICHARD BLAND: Yeah, I got here on Saturday. I flew Saturday. So Sunday I just kind of got a feel for the place, figured out where everything was. Just did a little bit of practice, not too much. Hit some balls, worked on some yardages to just get that kind of, right, how far is my

wedges going. And then yeah, I played with Westy on Monday. Again, just sort of getting a feel for the course. Didn't really look at it too much. Got a bit of info out of Westy and just sort of -- yeah, got a feel for it. And then played Tuesday nine holes. And then played yesterday with Rosey, which is great. Rosey is a good friend of mine.

He's done it here. He's won here and he's also won the U.S. Open, so got a few pointers off him, as well, which was great. Then I really sort of, right, where can you miss, where can you not, where can you be aggressive, where have you got to kind of back off a little bit.

Like I say, then just getting ready to go today really.

Q. Top 15, top 10, a great round today, you're right up there. What's it going to take to make a push tomorrow?

RICHARD BLAND: Yeah, more of the same. I think this -- the way I see this place, your score is probably more on the front nine. I know the back nine has got the two par-5s but they're not reachable for me really. Maybe 18 if I smoke one off 18 and it's warm and it's a hurricane gale wind I can probably get there. But today it's probably too cold and the wind is off the left. Yeah, I feel the front nine is where you can make a bit of a score and then the back nine has got some tough par-4s where you've just got to hang on a little bit.

If you just keep putting the ball in play, then you're going to give yourself a chance.

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