

# U.S. Open Championship 2022

Thursday, June 16, 2022

Brookline, Massachusetts, USA

The Country Club

## Hayden Buckley

### Flash Interview



THE MODERATOR: Hayden Buckley, 2-under 68; can you talk us through your round today.

HAYDEN BUCKLEY: Yeah, it was nice -- it was kind of nice being out early. I could tell the wind was going to be calm for the first few holes. That back nine, a couple pretty tough holes.

I didn't really get off to a hot start, but I think out here even par is a lot better than most weeks, and turning at even par -- one little slip-up on 17, kind of a shorter hole that found my ball over the bleachers, which wasn't great, but I hit a lot of fairways, hit a lot of greens and had some looks. That's kind of the way I've been playing for really the last few months. Just haven't really put it all together.

I think a big putter change this week really got me comfortable early. My speed was pretty good all day, too. I think if my ball was in the fairway off the tee, which it was I think the majority of the time, it was pretty easy pars and great looks at birdie.

It was not the easiest round out there I don't think, but I like to hit a lot of fairways, and hopefully I can keep doing that.

#### **Q. How did the course play today compared to the practice rounds?**

HAYDEN BUCKLEY: Completely different winds. I think I had some notes in my book that certain holes I was hitting different clubs on Monday and now it's a completely switched wind.

You know, it's hard. I think practice rounds, I'm a little bit different. I think everybody kind of is. I don't know if it's -- it's early in the week and I'm still a little sore from last week or I'm a little more focused during the tournament, but everything is always a little bit different.

But the greens were pretty consistent. I think late yesterday they were rolling pretty fast, and this morning -- it's tough when it's early. I think the ball rolls a little bit slower on those greens, but they were perfect.

It's going to get a little bumpy, a little windy out there late. That's just kind of how it is, and I'll deal with that tomorrow.

#### **Q. You put yourself in good position after one round. What are you going to have to do the rest of the week to replicate that?**

HAYDEN BUCKLEY: I think just hit a lot of fairways. I was very impressed with the iron play. I think I made two birdies on par-3s and missed a 10-footer for birdie on another one. The long iron play was there; if I can put the ball in play off the tee it should give me good chances.

I've kind of been working hard on course strategy and kind of knowing where to hit shots and when to hit them. That was kind of a recent development the last few weeks that has turned into a strength.

I think if the ball is in the fairway, it's a great chance to shoot low scores.

#### **Q. The playoff on Tuesday morning at the qualifier, can you talk through the process of how you spent the night waiting for that and what was in your mind?**

HAYDEN BUCKLEY: I think we walked off the course at 9:00 that night and had to wake up again -- I don't know what it is with 4:00 a.m. wake-ups, but had to wake up again early and get out there at 7:30. I knew a five-for-one playoff isn't really ideal, but really the way I played in the qualifier I thought I was lucky to be in a playoff at 5-under. I really thought 6 or 7 would be the number.

Showed up out there and hit one really close on the first hole and made birdie and kind of knew at that point -- there was still two of us left, but I knew at that point we were pretty much in. Made a long putt on the second playoff hole and kind of locked it up again, which was nice.

I've had a couple off weeks with a lot of missed cuts the last few weeks, so getting another chance to play, I've been figuring out a few things, and like I said, with my putter change this week, it's kind of been a week-by-week small change that everything is finally coming together.



It was nice to see with my playoff record from the Korn Ferry and from Canada, it was nice to have that opportunity again.

**Q. In the putter change, what did you change? Was it a different style putter?**

HAYDEN BUCKLEY: Yeah, I went from a blade to kind of a half mallet, switched the grip. The grip is on sideways. I actually switched my grip, as well. I kind of went just completely different from what I've been doing, and it worked.

I'll kind it ride it out hopefully the rest of the year.

**Q. What type of grip are you using now?**

HAYDEN BUCKLEY: It's just a SuperStroke and it's just turned sideways. You look at it, it looks like somebody messed it up. It took a day or two to get used to it, but I love it.

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