

The 149th Open

Mixed Zone

Tuesday, 13 July 2021

Adam Scott



OLIVIA McMILLAN: Adam, thank you so much for joining us. I believe you are not here on-site at Royal St. George's at the moment, but I know that you have been out here last week practising very hard ahead of the 149th Open. Can you give us your thoughts on the course.

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah. Obviously when you haven't been to a site for 10 years or so, you don't remember everything, so there was plenty to relearn.

I thought the course was in very good condition and certainly playing very nicely, maybe because it was slightly softer. I'm not sure. But it wasn't such a shock coming back to the links. It felt quite good.

I enjoyed my practice last week, and I'm looking forward to getting down there tonight and then obviously playing again tomorrow.

Q. Just wondering when you come to a British Open, do your confidence levels go up given the amount you've played and the way you've been able to play British Opens in the past? Obviously you've come close before, but do you feel a level of comfort when you come to that as opposed to a U.S. PGA or a U.S. Open?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, I think it was like an evolving thing through my career, really getting comfortable on the links. It probably takes -- when you're only playing the links one week a year pretty much, it takes a while to really figure it out. It's certainly very different from how we usually play golf, and even coming over here last week, it had been two years since we were at Portrush. That was the last time I really played links.

Just getting comfortable changing your ball flight, you're trying to use the ground and the course. It helps you a lot if you can do that, and that's very different to what we do week in and week out.

A quick refresher course last week and the confidence goes back up, and I think I got everything where I wanted it, and given that I've had good results in the Open over the years, I think I'm very confident that I can have one round tomorrow and get out there and put myself in contention through the

weekend.

Q. I wanted to ask one piece of advice you got as a young player coming to the Open from someone and how it helped and whether you'll see out some of the young guys this week and share some of your knowledge with them and what you would pass on to them.

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, look, The Open is a tricky one. I was lucky I played early enough and Peter Thomson walked a couple of my first ever practice rounds at the Open, so that was a nice -- that was an experience, that's for sure. He was quite brutal in his assessment of how I was playing.

From a five-time champion, you have to listen and understand he knows what he's talking about. Certainly he encouraged me to use the ground where I can. He put it quite bluntly.

As far as the other young guys, it's been good to see the success with Cam and Lucas in the last few weeks really, a bit of an Aussie domination. They're obviously playing well. I certainly wouldn't seek them out to throw my two cents' worth in, but if they thought they could learn anything from me, I'd be happy to share anything I could. The biggest thing is they're playing with confidence, and that's very hard to get in the game of golf, and so they've got to use that to the best of their ability this week.

Q. I hate to mention this, but you've turned 40. This will be your first Open Championship as a 40-something. I just wonder how much the inspiration, whether there had been any inspiration from what Phil Mickelson has done this year, and do you think that you can still contend and win the big titles in your 40s?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, luckily I've really not had any setbacks physically over the years. I think looking at where I am physically at 40, I'm in good shape. Certainly seeing Phil win the PGA at 50 gave me motivation to kind of keep myself in good shape. From a distance I've been able to see the effort he's put into his body physically the last few years to keep him out contending, so it certainly can be done.

There are always exceptions to the rules like Vijay Singh and Steve Stricker, who really, you could argue, played their best golf in their 40s. I certainly feel like with where everything sits,



the big picture for me at the moment, I think that the best stuff can still come.

Q. You've been at this championship so long now, playing it so well, come so close. It's a significant venue because of Greg Norman being the last Aussie to win here. It's a long drought that there's been no Australian winner at the Open. I'm thinking with all of those sort of feel-good factors with the likes of Min Woo Lee and Lucas Herbert and everyone else, maybe this is the time that the drought gets broken?

ADAM SCOTT: Could be. The form is good. Min Woo and Lucas are playing well. Cam Smith seems to play well at big events every time at the moment, and Marc Leishman has come close at an Open, as well.

For me The Open now is, if we had to rank tournaments you'd love to win, that sits clearly at the top. I felt like I had a hand on the Jug once, and it was a good feeling while it lasted. I'd like to kind of have two on there. But if there is one event I'd like to win before my career is out, it would be The Open.

I'm not really stacking the pressure on myself this week, but it would be a lovely story for an Aussie to follow in Greg's footsteps here.

Q. Any thoughts about what the rest of the year holds for you after The Open? I know our quarantine situation is extremely prohibitive in Australia at the moment. Do you have any plans to come back home later in the year?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, just generally I really don't know plans past the end of the FedExCup in the States. The new schedule hasn't really been released for next season I don't think because of all the issues with the pandemic. Trying to sort out tournaments is getting difficult, and currently I have not made any plans to come home at the end of the year.

I've done 14 weeks' isolation so far through the pandemic and a few weeks with the kids in a hotel room is not very thrilling for me. I think while that stays in place, I can't really see myself coming home.

Q. Any specific changes for this week? Anything equipment-wise or anything you've changed up for the different sort of test that St. George's is? Obviously driving is very important. Have you changed the makeup of your clubs or anything like that for the week?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, I have, actually. The driver coincidentally I changed because I was driving it -- I haven't driven it well this year. The stats clearly show that. It is normally a strong part of my game, and when it is good it filters down through the bag, so I did some work with the guys at Titleist here in the UK when I arrived a couple of weeks ago,

and they've got me squared away with a new driver, and I'm very happy about that, so I'm excited to drive it a bit better this week and try and keep it in the short grass.

But yeah, The Open is a very different test than what we do week in and week out, so I have quite a different bag setup. I'm using a 3-wood, which I don't normally use, and then I've taken the 4-wood and the 7-wood out, which I do normally use, and I've put in a driving iron and a 3-iron is back in the bag, which I don't normally use. I've taken one of my wedges out and -- two wedges came out and replaced it with one in the middle because I feel like you don't need to use all the loft when you're at the Open. Certainly if it's windy you don't need to play the ball in the air; it's not a priority. So I've got a very different bag setup this week.

Q. The driver, is it a different model and different shaft, as well?

ADAM SCOTT: A different head. It's the TSi4 head, which I've used earlier this year. The shaft is -- it's basically the same shaft I was using when I won the Masters and the period before. I used that Graphite Design shaft for about four or five years back then, and certainly it's like my comfort zone with a shaft, and nice kind of familiar feelings putting that back in.

Yeah, I'm excited about where the little change with the driver went because, like I said, for me I feel like it's a key to my game. It's a strong suit, and it just hasn't been there.

Q. You mentioned you've been in the UK a couple of weeks. Can you take us through exactly where you've been and what you've been doing and where you've been playing? And is it a significant sort of change to what you might have normally done for an Open preparation? Obviously you couldn't have done it last year because the tournament didn't happen, but have you made a significant shift in terms of getting ready for this event by being in the UK for a longer period of time and obviously to get used to the links courses again?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, I usually come over at least 10 days before, and I pretty much stay at the venue where we're playing. However, I had to do kind of the isolation for a few days here, test out after five days, so that was a bit restrictive, obviously, and then got down to St. George's a bit last week. However, I left; I didn't stay there the whole week. I kind of went down for a couple of days and came back and practised at Queenwood, which is where I'm a member over here. I have been for 20 years since I've played the European Tour. And just really kind of balanced my time and energies and everything spent practising.

Usually I would be down at St. George's by now and playing the weekend; however, slightly different with the bubble-type setup this year. I felt like if I got my work in early I could come

in a bit later and just not treat it like a regular event but come in a bit more fresh and play a practice round on Wednesday because I know the course now, and get ready to go and conserve the energy and not be so influenced by some of the restrictions that the bubble has with guys down there.

Q. You talked about Aussie domination before. The biggest story this week has been Ash Barty winning. Can you draw much from that? Can you draw any inspiration from that? How significant is it from your perspective?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, it is. I'm a tennis fan, and like everybody in Australia I'm a huge fan of Ash. She's brilliant. She's having a great year, too. To win Wimbledon, it's like winning The Open or the Masters, isn't it, for a golfer. It feels like that. So it is incredibly significant. She played great, and it would be fun to keep that Aussie theme going and kind of take Wimbledon away from the UK and The Open trophy. That would be great.

Q. The Olympics are around the corner and it's obviously well documented you withdrew a while ago. Can you take us into the rationale there? Have you had any second thoughts about it since then?

ADAM SCOTT: No, definitely no second thoughts about it. It's questionable really whether it should go ahead, an event of that scale. The fan situation is not good at the moment.

I don't think certain parts of the world don't understand the fear that the Japanese are experiencing at the moment. They're not as advanced vaccination wise as some other areas. You have to question whether it's really a responsible decision to go ahead.

But that's not really why I'm not going anyway. I've been home seven weeks so far this year, and it's hard to justify another week away.

Q. What impact did Greg's win in '93 have on a 13-year-old Adam Scott on the Gold Coast or Sunny Coast, wherever you were at that time? Do you remember it at all and how did it impact you at that age?

ADAM SCOTT: I think it was the most impactful time. I was really into the golf at that point. I'd stopped playing other sports and I was golf nuts, and it was right around that time that that happened.

I remember getting up and watching the end, falling asleep a for little bits here and there because it was probably early in the morning, I think.

You know, yeah, strong images of the whole round, that final round of Greg's really. It was quite inspiring. I think it was the

perfect victory and timing for me, looking back on it and wanting to just be out there doing what Greg did.

OLIVIA McMILLAN: Adam, thank you so much for your time today. We really appreciate it, and we wish you all the best of luck at the 149th Open this week.

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