

The 149th Open

Mixed Zone

Thursday, 15 July 2021

Justin Harding



THE MODERATOR: Justin, thank you for joining us. A lovely start for you. Can you talk to us about your round.

JUSTIN HARDING: I played pretty good. Hit it nicely from tee to green through the first six holes, I would say. Barring a couple missed putts I would have been a couple under par. I hit one bad tee shot today and that was on 7, and it took me two to chip out and a bit of a mess from there on in.

I thought bouncing back with a birdie on 8 kind of leveled it out, and I played solidly. Managed my ball quite nicely on the back nine, felt like the wind freshened up a little bit, made a couple nice putts and ultimately sort of managed it pretty well.

Q. Three birdies in your final five holes; that was a nice stretch of golf there for you. Can you talk to us about that?

JUSTIN HARDING: 14, I hit two 3-woods and probably about 10 or 15 short of the green and lovely chip up there to a couple feet. 15, I had a good up-and-down, short-sided myself, so that was nice, as well. 16 and 17, rolled in I think they were probably 12 to 15-footers. Both were downhill, so that was fortunate. I battled a little bit on the uphill putts with the speed of the greens.

Ultimately I was just quite happy getting in with a couple under. 3 is a bonus. I would have been happy with 1. But no, I'm very pleased with the day.

Q. There's an excellent contingent of South African players here this week. Is it nice to see your name at the top of the leaderboard so early on and hoping for a South African winner this week?

JUSTIN HARDING: That would be lovely, whether it be me or whether it be a couple other ones. I think there's 13 of us playing this week. We've got a strong contingent and they're all capable of playing well. We had a good run earlier in the European Tour season and wouldn't it be nice if we could kick-start another one.

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