

The 149th Open

Mixed Zone

Thursday, 15 July 2021

Justin Rose



Q. How important was it to get off to a start like that today?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, I mean, birdieing No. 1 was a great start. Hitting the fairway on No. 1 is important, and I had a nice wedge into the green. I think the important shot, even though the first two were pretty good, was making the putt. These greens are subtle, tricky to read.

To sort of make a nice double-breaker on the first hole got me up and running and at least seeing the ball rolling at the hole, which was nice.

Q. You must be delighted with a very solid round to open up The Open this year.

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, for sure. I mean, playing 18 it wasn't lost on me that a bogey-free round is pretty good around Royal St George's. It's a gnarly golf course. It's playing well this year, it's playing fair, but there was definitely a nice breeze to challenge us all day long.

So if you did hit a loose ball off the tee or you mis-clubbed with an iron, you were going to put yourself under pressure, and I absorbed a lot of that sort of pressure today in the sense of when I had a 40-, 50-foot putt from just off the edge of the green I managed to roll it up pretty close to the pin and not give myself too much stress out there until 18, which I actually kind of a terrible tee shot, great recovery shot.

And then, again, left myself a little bit of work to do with a five-footer to kind of keep it clean. But nice to make that one and bank a good round.

Q. Why do you think no Englishman has won The Open since '92?

JUSTIN ROSE: Well, yeah, I mean, I think there was a lean period of time where just basically it was just Westy flying the flag for us for the sort of late '90s, early 2000s, and then a few of us began to sort of develop through. Right now I think it's probably as strong a chance as we've had, maybe even ever. The quality of golf that a lot of the guys are playing, Tommy, Paul Casey, Poults, Matt Fitzpatrick, obviously myself, they've had an opportunity to win many majors with Westy, and Poulter has had a couple looks at the Masters. Listen, the lads

can do it. I have no reason why. We've all grown up playing lots of links golf to be honest with you, and yeah, it should be a style of golf that we all relish.

Hopefully Royal St George's with the St George's cross is kind of a lucky omen this week.

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