

The 149th Open

Mixed Zone

Saturday, 17 July 2021

Mackenzie Hughes



Q. Kind of a steady start and then a heck of a finish with a couple birdies coming in. How would you sum up your day?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, I felt like I was in great control early on and had lots of great looks and was swinging it nicely and wasn't really getting much out of it.

Kind of had a bit of a stumble there at the start of the back nine, dropped a couple shots, and yeah, it was nice to kind of stay patient, hang in there and get a couple coming in. All in all was very pleased with the effort, and in with a shot tomorrow.

Q. On that point, do you feel like you can attack this golf course given maybe the conditions? What is the game plan for tomorrow?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Not really. I don't think that's -- I think you have to pick your spots. I think there's certain holes where you know there's a certain spot you really can't miss it, so you end up playing to kind of the fatter side, but there are some opportunities out there where it gives you a wedge or it gives you a pretty good hole location that you have to kind of be aggressive to, but you start forcing it around here and you can make some bogeys.

I think a lot more of the same tomorrow and hopefully the putter heats up.

Q. The last two days you haven't hit as many fairways as maybe you'd like, although it's hard from here at home to know sort of how far off the fairway any of these misses are. But what parts of your game have allowed you to stay where you are on the leaderboard?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: I really think it's in large part making good decisions. But I think sometimes stats can be misleading, too. The first hole I missed the fairway by a foot, second hole I missed the fairway by a foot, the fifth hole I missed the fairway by two inches. Not far off and were quite good shots.

I think that I have been in control of the ball for the most part, and if I have been out of position I've been good at managing my way around and putting the ball in the right spot so that my next shot is relatively stress free. Sometimes it means hitting it to 40 feet and trying to two-putt, which around here

sometimes is pretty good.

Q. On Sunday at Torrey Pines you battled back from a tough start to get right back in contention. Today you bounced back strong from a couple bogeys at the start of your back nine. Are those examples of sort of the positive attitude that's elevated your game in the past couple years?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, certainly. I think that it would have been easy after those bogeys to get down and certainly because I had been playing pretty well and had some good chances, so to drop those shots was disappointing, but I knew I had a couple good holes coming in where I could get one, and yeah, it was just a matter of staying patient and trying to get a putt to drop, and thankfully I got a couple to go there at the end.

That felt nice, and again, gives me a nice chance tomorrow.

Q. Second major in a row that you're in contention; what does it say about your game right now?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Just that it's getting better. I don't think that much has changed. It's just that you get a bit of belief, you get a bit of confidence, and that can go a long way.

I think I learned a lot from yesterday, or sorry, from the last major at Torrey Pines, and it doesn't guarantee anything for tomorrow, but certainly nice to have that in my back pocket just with some experience and what those feelings are like.

Like I say, I have the luxury of sort of coming from behind tomorrow, which is a bit -- maybe call it a bit of an easier position to play in. I'll try and use that to my advantage and hopefully get off to a good start and get myself in the mix.

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