

The 150th Open

Mixed Zone

Monday, 11 July 2022

Paul Lawrie



Q. How do you feeling about teeing off?

PAUL LAWRIE: I did it once before actually. I think it was 2010 that I did it here. So it's always nice to hit the opening shot. Hopefully it will be calm and you get four hours of decent weather. It's a nice thing to be asked to do. Looking forward to it.

Q. (Indiscernible) significance with The 150th Open?

PAUL LAWRIE: Yeah, it maybe does, actually, but I'm kind of obviously you still see it as you're a player and it's just an opening tee shot and you want to get it on the fairway. It's obviously a huge celebration for them. It's a huge week, a big milestone. The more you think about it, actually, it's a nice thing to be asked to do on the 150th.

Q. First shot, were you nervous?

PAUL LAWRIE: I'm always nervous on the 1st tee. I'm never great on the 1st tee. No matter what tournament I'm playing in I'm always a wee bit nervous. But obviously it'll be a little bit more because it's The Open and it's the 150th.

Luckily it's a nice, big, wide fairway down there. I can miss any fairway no matter how wide it is. I just checked it down there, I think I remember. The stand on the right now -- because that looks a bit closer than it did before. It's a little tighter down there. It's not tight by any means, but it's a little tighter. It's not horrible but I managed to pop it down there somewhere.

Q. (No microphone.)

PAUL LAWRIE: It's funny because when we had the Champions challenge first year, I hit first because I was defending champion and I hit a horrible poor hook and it was only like that from the fence. And Tom Weiskopf was next. And as he was walking over, he whispered in my ear, thank... you went first. (Laughter.)

He hit the same shot. He hit it right next to my ball. The pair of us hit terrible shots down there. But the first time we did this thing, there was people -- I don't know if you remember it -- but it was unbelievable basically. People everywhere. I would say that's the most nervous I've ever been. Apart from '99

opening tee shot, that was...

Q. (No microphone.)

PAUL LAWRIE: I don't remember that, actually. It could have been. I don't remember it being a Monday. I think it's quite early this year. It's always good fun play in this thing.

When you play with Mr. Watson, again he's played four holes there, and he's not missed a shot. Not missed a shot. He's just flushed every one. Obviously doesn't hit is as far as he used to. It's always nice to play with him. Stuart played lovely. Didn't hole a putt. It was good fun.

Q. (No microphone.)

PAUL LAWRIE: If you'd seen me play there, no. It wasn't the best. I wasn't very good. My ball-striking there was a bit poor. Well, we'll see what happens. Normally, you can get around these courses a wee bit easier in a car. If it was meant to, I certainly wouldn't be playing.

But because it's links and the ground's really hard, I nearly hit it on the last there. So that's not my normal shot down there. So the course will play a little shorter. So hopefully we can bumble it around somehow.

Q. (Inaudible question.)

PAUL LAWRIE: Harder and faster the better. Proper links out there. The greens are a wee bit green, which is surprising, but the fairways they obviously left them. They are looking pretty bad already and it's only Monday. We have a few days to go before it starts. Course is looking great. Good as I've seen it.

Q. (No microphone.)

PAUL LAWRIE: Jack came out in a buggy, Mr. Nicklaus came out in a buggy and said hello. I didn't say hello to him, but he was out (indiscernible) and it's always nice when you see him.

And I saw Tiger on the putting green this morning. It's great that we all play in it. It think it means a lot to R&A that your past champions actually want to play and celebrate the fact that you're an Open champion. I think it's really cool.



Q. (No microphone.)

PAUL LAWRIE: Like today, you're playing with a proper legend of the game in Tom Watson. And I hit a couple of shots that were not the best, and you're thinking, I hope Tom was not watching there when I was scruffing that in the left-hand bunker.

So, now and again, it's a bit odd when you play -- I don't get that very often that I'm playing because (indiscernible) game, but when you're playing things like this, and you're playing with people like him, you think about it a wee bit and you can't believe that your name is on there, but it is, so you just -- it's taken me 23 years and I'm not quite there yet.

Q. (No microphone.)

PAUL LAWRIE: Yeah, and I said it to everybody the last few days -- it's the best that we got to. The first year I went, I had Lee Trevino on my left and Gary Player on my right. And Mr. Nicklaus dead across from where we were sitting. And you're just like, you're in the middle of these three chatting away about stuff. And it was just the best ever. I didn't say much because you're sitting next to those two, they're chatting. What -- it's just amazing.

Q. Going back to the tee shot, how are you with the early starts?

PAUL LAWRIE: I'm 53, so I'm wide awake at 4:30. By 5:00 I've had my pee. (Laughter).

So, no, shouldn't be a problem. I'm up in the middle of the night having to pee. I'll be wide awake by 5:00. Not a problem.

Q. (No microphone.)

PAUL LAWRIE: It's actually not a bad draw. I don't know what my second round time is. It can only be, like, half ten, half 11 or something. It's a great draw for me. Looking forward to it.

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