

The 150th Open

Mixed Zone

Thursday, 14 July 2022

Paul Lawrie



Q. Can you talk about that?

PAUL LAWRIE: Yeah, to be honest. It's nice that it's here, and it's a nice big wide fairway. I fancy my chances down there with a 3-iron even for me. Like I said to you before, I'm always nervous on the first tee. It's always something I've always been. But I didn't feel bad this morning. Tim Barter thought I looked really nervous just now on Sky, but I was just wandering about and gathering my thoughts.

I normally like watching the game ahead tee off. I've always gotten to the tee really early my whole career, but I couldn't do that this morning because there was nobody there. And I put a nice swing on it and off it popped down the fairway. No bother.

Q. (Indiscernible) it was actually quite a few people.

PAUL LAWRIE: I was surprised how many people were there to be honest. I wasn't expecting that. I thought there would be a few, but the stand on the right was pretty full. Nice to see all the people. You always get great support here, don't ya. It's always cool.

Q. Did that help settle your nerves a little bit?

PAUL LAWRIE: Not really, no. You just kind of -- I mean I would fancy one of you hitting that fairway down there. Never mind somebody (indiscernible). Maybe not. I've seen your swing, but some of your mates.

No, I mean, it's just a nice thing to be asked to do. Obviously, Mr. Slumbers phoned me a couple weeks ago and asked if I'd do it. And the first thing you think of is how cool is that, being asked to do it? So it's lovely.

Q. I think it's first time in 150 Opens, The Opening tee shot is with your own ball?

PAUL LAWRIE: Is that right?

Q. Why is that?

PAUL LAWRIE: You mean this yellow Wilson Staff ball?

Q. Yes.

PAUL LAWRIE: How nice is that? I'm 53, not 23, so my eyesight's not the best. I just see it better when it's flying. Also when I'm in the rough as much as I am, it stands out like unbelievable. Even the marshals can see it. I quite like it actually. I never thought I'd play with a yellow ball, but I actually quite like it.

Q. Tell us about 18, walking up 18. The drive so close for hole-in-one.

PAUL LAWRIE: It just shows you nowadays, Webb and Min Woo were in between 3-wood and long iron, whereas for me it's driver. To get anywhere near the pin, I have to hit driver. These boys were chip 3-woods out there. The game, it's crazy how it's going. For me it's flat out driver, and it needs a bounce to get up there, which it did. I hit a lovely shot. It was about 5 feet and knocked it in.

Q. The course played fair?

PAUL LAWRIE: I thought the pins were tough, but I think they have to do that. If they don't do that, I think it would be a birdie fest out there. Even with that, I think it will still be pretty good scoring.

I thought the course was very good. Obviously the fairways are very hard. You want that. It's links golf. You want guys that have to run it through the ground, go on the ground, and judge distance as opposed to pitching on the green and spinning it.

Q. Bit of a lie-in tomorrow morning?

PAUL LAWRIE: Bit of a lie-in, yeah. Half 11:00 I think we are. I mean, a lie-in would be half 5:00.

Q. (Indiscernible). How confident are you feeling about the rest of the week?

PAUL LAWRIE: I thought 2-over was harsh today. I thought I played a little better than that. I didn't do much wrong. Even the 4th hole, I made double there. And I had a really nice tee shot, but it just didn't get through the rough. Had a terrible lie in the rough and it came out left, and made 6 there.

And there were a couple of occasions where I had nice shots and made bogey off the shots. I thought 2-over was pretty harsh.

But overall I'll need to be under par tomorrow to have any chance. But we'll see what happens.

Q. (Indiscernible) pin positions. Anything in particular you can jump to (indiscernible)?

PAUL LAWRIE: There's a few I've never seen. I mean, back left on the shelf at 8. Even Dunhill Links, I've never seen a pin up on that top corner there. Back right to 11, I've seen it there Sunday at Dunhill Links. But there was a few -- I mean, 4, back left pin at 4, and a left-to-right wind is a mega tough pin. Everybody is going to have to bailout right there.

There were six or seven that I thought were pretty meaty but they were fair. You could get to them all. I thought the pins were tough but fair.

Q. You get to have lunch in the big house now?

PAUL LAWRIE: I do. I can pop in for a wee drinky poo later on. It will be quite nice.

Q. (Indiscernible)

PAUL LAWRIE: Yeah, it is. Again, a few weeks ago, they let me know that, would I accept that? Well, absolutely. Again, for someone like them that supported my foundation, they've supported the challenge, the Scottish Challenge that we've got on, the town pro tour, they put money in for us, the R&A. They've been amazing for us with the amount of money they've given us and funding through the years. So a huge honour for me.

Q. Have they told you at all what you need to do to get a tee time here in the future?

PAUL LAWRIE: I think I have freedom of the links already. I can get a tee time any time already. Now that I'm an honorary member, I may just add that on the pail as well.

Q. You've obviously won The Open before, but teeing off The 150th Open Championship here, was it one of the most special moments in your field?

PAUL LAWRIE: I like to think that every event is the same. In my mind, you've got to play that way. If you don't play that way and you make things out to be too special than they are and put too much pressure on yourself, you're not going to perform. I feel as though I'm here to play. I'm here to get the ball in the fairway off the 1st. That's all you try to do. Whether it's The 150th or 140th. If you're a player, that's what it is.

It was nice to do it, don't get me wrong, but at the end of the day, I'm just trying to shoot the best score I can shoot.

Q. You said you can understand the pin positions. (Indiscernible)?

PAUL LAWRIE: It's not a good thing, is it? Please don't go there. (Laughter).

Q. You have to go to the left (indiscernible)?

PAUL LAWRIE: Yeah, again, I think it's -- I don't think it's their fault, but the fact that we have to put pins where you have to put them to make sure that scoring is not silly around here tells you that maybe the length that things are going is just starting to get a wee bit out of hand.

I don't know if they've got any ideas to change that or not. But I thought there was a few pins out there that I didn't think we would see. It is what it is. It's still a special event. It's always going to be that.

You've got a lot of greens obviously that double up, and you've got to wait quite a bit for groups on the left and right of you, but that's just what The Old Course is. I don't think it takes away from it, but obviously having to do the things that you shouldn't really have to do to a golf course to protect it unfortunately, but that's where we're at.

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