

The 150th Open

Mixed Zone

Thursday, 14 July 2022

Ernie Els



Q. Overall how would you assess your performance today?

ERNIE ELS: Yeah, it was good. Obviously just that one hole burning me at the moment. I played good. I putted nice and played good. I just had that one frickin' tee shot on 17. Anyway, that's my day.

Q. What are you most pleased with?

ERNIE ELS: I played well overall. Hit it in play and hit good iron shots and played the course the way you should play it. Just felt comfortable.

As I said, just that one shot is going to keep burning me until tomorrow.

Q. You were looking for that level of comfort obviously out there on Wednesday. Did you find it there? Is that what preparation is all about?

ERNIE ELS: Exactly. I haven't played links golf since last year. I only came in Monday afternoon. I needed to get over the jet lag and never really had a proper practise round. I needed to find my feet yesterday, and that's what I did, and I felt comfortable today.

Q. How did your knowledge of this course help you out today?

ERNIE ELS: A lot, but still even playing it so many times, you're still a little unsure of the bounce and so forth. I hit in the bunker on 6 off the tee, which I don't think I've ever been in, and then obviously what I did on 17.

Yeah, absolutely. Yesterday's practise round helped me a lot to really feel what the ball is doing, just really fast. The golf course is playing fast.

Q. Do you ever get used to the size of the greens here, having more knowledge from over the years?

ERNIE ELS: Not really. On 9 today, I must have had a 150-foot putt. I was on the green. I was on the one side, and the flag was on the other side. You don't ever really get used to it. It's just unique, a wonderful place.

Q. Another good course for The Open at Muirfield. The women's championship is going there this year, historical. How cool is it for them to go to a place that you've won, a place that you know?

ERNIE ELS: Yeah, obviously a great venue, wonderful history. Great to see the women playing at Muirfield. It's wonderful to see them play there. That's one of my favourites obviously. Obviously this one and Muirfield and Lytham, they stand out for me.

Q. What makes it one of your favourites? What aspects of Muirfield?

ERNIE ELS: Just the piece of property is amazing. You're right on the water, but you don't have a hole that's on the water. Every single hole goes a little different direction, and the course is the way the members play it. There's nothing tricked up. It's just what you see is what you get.

Q. Once you shake off the one bad hole, will you reflect on the fact that you've got 54 holes left and you're actually playing well?

ERNIE ELS: Yeah, exactly. I'm under-par, which is good. The wind's picking up a little bit now, so going out is tough. So, yeah, I've got to take the positives when I start thinking about it.

Q. Does it look like you're on, at least right now, the better part of the draw?

ERNIE ELS: Who knows? Right now the wind started picking up, so maybe. Who knows? It kind of switched, went right to the west.

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