

The 151st Open

Mixed Zone

Thursday, 20 July 2023

Lucas Herbert



LUCAS HERBERT: Took some good shots to get in the right position to be give myself the chance to be 3-under through 16. So I'm not mad about it at all. Obviously would have loved to change 17, but I felt like I maybe hit a poor chip shot and that's about it.

I didn't do a lot wrong other than that.

17 is going to play tough all day. It's pretty hard to feel the wind in there and the tee box. It's very enclosed and you don't get a lot of exposure to it. Guys are going to get that wrong all day. I don't think I'll be the only one to run up a big number.

All in all, I'm not unhappy with it. I'm pretty pleased with even par.

Q. How about the eagle on 16?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, obviously hit a good tee shot. That hole today playing downwind it makes it so much easier. Great tee shot, middle of the fairway. Basically a perfect 5-iron. I don't know where it pitched, but it must have covered that bunker that's about 20 short of the green, just, and sort of made it down to the front edge there.

You sort of can't really get left of that hole, so to keep it right there and get on the green, give myself a good look was great.

To be honest, I didn't think the putt was getting there at all. I was just trying to lag it up, get it really close, get the speed right. Because I felt like the greens were a lot quicker today than they have been in the practice rounds.

The speed was thrown out a bit. I didn't mind it because I felt like last week and early this week the greens have been quite slow, so it felt like I could focus on the stroke a bit more and not have to hit it so hard.

Yeah, just trying to get the speed right and was lucky it fell in the front edge there.

Q. Fantastic shot on 16. I couldn't see the lie. Was it close? Looked like you had to hit it.

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, it had sort of gone up the lip and

came back down and made a little putt, so it wasn't like a big fried egg that you're hacking out sideways. It still had 1 kind of spun around in its own pitch mark and it wasn't much fun.

I thought I was going to struggle to get it out, so just hit it hard and hope, and it came out.

Q. You were saying yesterday that there could be carnage with the 17th. Everybody has been talking about it all week. This is what they wasn't, isn't it, the organisers? They want that drama on the 17th? You were the first to get caught up in it.

LUCAS HERBERT: Well, I could have told you there would be carnage. I could have predicted it for you. I think it's a great hole. There's no wind. It's a gap wedge and you can make a two pretty easily, but that wind gets going and like I said you can't really feel it too much on the tee. It becomes a really tricky shot.

There's not really a goof miss. I probably hit in the best spot to miss it and it was still quite a tricky chip.

I saw the group behind me. Someone else came off the front of the green in the front bunker. Our group all missed the green. It's not easy.

Felt like there was about 5,000 professional golfers sitting around us in the stands watching it. But it's just not easy.

I could have hit a poor different shot and made a bogey there and got away with one, but as I was, I made a triple. You know, doesn't make lunch taste any better, but to get myself to the position I was in, that anyone even cared about that triple is kind of what I care about.

Q. Is that the toughest pin position today?

LUCAS HERBERT: To be honest, the pin position doesn't matter. Literally I'm aiming at the same spot every day no matter where the pin is.

You hit it on the green, you're not going to have a putt more than 30 feet. I felt like it was tricky to read, if anything. But yeah, right pin is probably tough. I think a left miss is probably better than anything there. The right pin gives you more room



if you do miss it left.

Yeah, it's just not an easy pin on that green.

Q. When you're trying to get out of that bunker, what happened?

LUCAS HERBERT: I had sort of one foot in the bunker, one foot out. Look, in hindsight it's very easy to look at it, and maybe even from the stands look at it and go, just get it out on to the green, but it just wasn't as easy as that.

I felt like if I had have hit it just a fraction harder I could have been back in the bunker on the other side. It was just a really tough shot. Had to get pretty steep at it because I didn't have a stance in the shorter side of the bunker, so just didn't come out the way I wanted it to and it rolled back in.

Fortunately it rolled where I could get a stance for the second time around.

Yeah, look, that's links golf. I think everyone this week -- I had another one on 18 where you hit it in the fairway bunker and just grab your sand wedge straight out sideways. You're not getting on the green from in there.

Everyone is going to get at least one those this week try, and just limit the damage as much as you can when you get in there.

Q. Was the pace of play an issue there?

LUCAS HERBERT: No, it's The Open Championship. I don't expect it to take less than four hours.

Q. What were the things you did particularly well to get to 3-under?

LUCAS HERBERT: I think I hit some really nice iron shots early on and just kept the ball in play off the tee. I had the one that I went out sideways on 18, and other than that I can't remember any tee shots that were just playing defensively from there.

I felt like I hit a lot of shots from the fairway where you're able to at least get it to a position where you can maybe have a chance to make birdie.

I feel like when you do -- you hit it in the rough or you hit it in the fairway bunker, at best you're going to have maybe 40 feet for birdie a lot of the time.

So just getting in the fairway, getting a chance to put spin on the ball and stop it anywhere near the pin gives you a chance to make birdie.

Rolled a couple of them in, but just yeah, I feel like this place, it's a perfect example of Tiger in 2006 hitting irons everywhere. It's not necessarily a place you can get too aggressive with.

It's just keep it in play, keep it out of these bunkers. I am sure everyone is talking about it. They're not doing any favors with the ball rolling off the side. It's just flat in there.

It's plus one out sideways from them. Keep it out of them, keep it out of the thick stuff, and you're going to have a chance this week.

Q. Big picture you've obviously played pretty well.

LUCAS HERBERT: I've shot level par top 20 at the end of the day. I'm not mad. I would have loved to have finished --

Q. I've seen you mad.

LUCAS HERBERT: It's pretty fun. I would have loved to have made 3 on 17 and 4 on 18 and we're sitting here laughing at 4-under, but the reality is I didn't.

I could have made the first two holes and we're sitting here talking about how great the last 16 holes were.

It's just the way golf goes sometimes. It sucks that it happened when it did, but hopefully I get the luck on 17 the next three days.

Q. You didn't realise at that point that you were joint leader?

LUCAS HERBERT: I knew. 16 holes into the first round and we're the third group out. Who cares?

Q. We do.

LUCAS HERBERT: It's nice to write a story, but there's guys that haven't woken up yet. There's so much golf to play. Leading through any point of my round today doesn't mean a hell of a lot.

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