

The 151st Open

Mixed Zone

Thursday, 20 July 2023

Patrick Reed



Q. How do you feel after today's round?

PATRICK REED: Oh, it was frustrating. Felt like I hit the ball pretty well for the most part. Left myself a lot of good looks, a lot of good spots. Just didn't really make anything.

Didn't capitalise on any of the par-5s. Was in perfect position on 5, the first par-5; was in great position on 15 and missed a short one there.

And then the last one, the ball literally hangs on the edge, the high side. Wind is even going that direction and I'm sitting there going, this has to fall, and it just hung there.

The game feels good. The number is just not producing. That very easily should have been a 4-, 5-, 6-under par round and I shoot 1-under par. I guess I could say it's kind of one of my better first rounds I've had in a while. I'm having to play huge catch-up.

The good thing is the swing feels good, and around here, you have to hit the ball well. I think I missed two fairways today. I missed the 18th and then I missed -- was it 14?

Besides that, I was playing from the fairway, and when you do that around here, you can score and you can attack this golf course.

I just need the putter to wake up and kind of get a little hot. A lot of burned edges and just a lot of missed putts.

I made a couple six, seven-footers for par. I think I made two of those, and then made a 9-footer and 11-footer for birdie, but besides that, just blank.

Q. With the Ryder Cup, do you feel like the way things are you need to, if not win, do you feel like you need to be right up there, sort of like Brooks did to have a chance?

PATRICK REED: Yeah, I mean, the only thing I can do on that is go out and play well this week, go out and have a chance hopefully to win the tournament on Sunday and put myself in that position where they have to think about it.

That's the thing; playing good golf takes care of everything.

Takes care of these events, the majors, takes care of the Ryder Cups and all that. Just going and playing your way on, but playing well.

Yeah, the guys that are part of LIV of course we're on the 8-ball with that because of course we only have four tournaments that count. All we can do is continue playing solid golf and give yourself chances because winning trophies takes care of that.

Q. Have you had any conversations with Zach?

PATRICK REED: I talked to him the other day on the range. He came over and said hi. Our conversations even with the past captains and other players is never really about golf.

Always ask how they're doing, how the family is doing, because really the relationships I've built aren't based off of golf. It's based off of who they are as people and friendships outside of our work area.

Q. When you think back to Augusta, there's a lot of mystery about how the LIV players would perform in the majors this year with how different everything was. What do you think you guys have showed, your performances, Brooks, Phil, Bryson?

PATRICK REED: We're the same players. The only thing is coming into the majors we feel like we can kind of be a little bit more rested and kind of ready to go and try to peak at the big events.

I know a lot of the guys, even in the past, that was the biggest thing, is making sure that you're sharp and ready for the majors. It wasn't about every event you're playing. It's about the big four.

I think that's the biggest thing, is I feel like now with a little slighter schedule and everything, you're allowed to really get your game sharp and mentally get ready for what you're up against at these majors. That's what it is.

It's not like you have to be on physically, but mentally it takes so much out of you every single shot. It tests every aspect of your golf game, and you have to be on every one of them.

Q. How have you found it for you specifically? You usually



play more tournaments than everyone else.

PATRICK REED: It's been an adjustment, especially early on in the year, having that long of an off-season. But it was great. I got to spend a lot of time with family, got to watch the two little ones grow up a little bit, and was able to be there and be dad, not just always being home for a short week and being able to see them for a little bit but I'm still grinding trying to get ready for the next event.

I can actually do things with them, go on vacations, go to their school plays and sporting events, things like that. Other than just being there, beating balls, see them at night, saying hi, and that's about it.

Q. How did you spend last week?

PATRICK REED: It was awesome. We stayed over here, and my daughter, we said once she turned nine she can fly overseas with us, and she's a little romantic. She's like, daddy, I want to go to Paris. I want to go here, go there.

We were going to go to Paris but with everything that was going on we decided just to stay in London for an extra week, so we went to Wimbledon on Monday. That was my first time, as well, and she absolutely loved it.

Then we just did a lot of sightseeing and did the whole touristy thing with her. I played golf two of the days and practised one day and was literally being a dad, showing her around, having a good time.

Q. Where did you play?

PATRICK REED: I played at Queenwood and St. George's Hill.

Q. The 17th, what's sort of your mindset going into today? You bogeyed it, did well to actually come out with 4. What's your assessment of that and what was your mindset going into the hole?

PATRICK REED: Really just looked at kind of where the wind direction was. It was 129 flag after the uphill, and I think it was probably playing about 140, 142, so kind of hit a 140, 142-yard shot just left of the flag.

I hit the club and hit it how hard I thought I needed to, and it literally landed a yard short of being on top.

Just one of those that you just never know, depending on the wind. I've played that hole now three times, but the first two times I've played it I hit a flighted 7-iron and then I also hit a gap wedge to the back half of the green.

Q. What did you hit today?

PATRICK REED: Today I hit a pitching wedge and obviously it was the wrong decision. Probably needed to hit it harder than I did. I've practiced that bunker shot, just because if you hit a quality iron shot and the wind gets it, that's where it's going to end up.

It's not going to end up left or right. I'm surprised it spun as much as it did. To hit a good putt like that and it lip out it's just the icing on the cake on how the day was with the putter.

Q. Do you enjoy the holes that are really tricky this week, as Billy Foster put it, a monstrosity, but other people are really enjoying the challenge. It's sort of like the 17th at Sawgrass.

PATRICK REED: Yeah, I feel like there's a lot more creative things that people can do to par-3s to make them difficult rather than making them 300, 310. I think those are the dumbest par-3s on the planet, having those 280, 300, 310. What's the point?

Drop the tee box back and make it a par-4. Let's be honest, you have Sawgrass 17, you have Postage Stamp, you have this one. You don't need length to make a par-3 hard. All you need is a diabolical green, some hazards around some areas, and some wind. That'll be enough to challenge the top players in the world.

Q. Can you tell us a little bit about Jose and his game?

PATRICK REED: Yeah, it was fun. Man, that guy has got some speed. He definitely stays within himself and he plays his game. He doesn't try to go outside of anything outside of his comfort zone it seems like. Him and his caddie had a good game plan and I felt like they probably didn't execute a couple shots that he wanted to, but he was smart enough when he got in trouble he got himself out.

He took his medicine, and that's something that this golf course, especially with how the rough is, it's not horrendous, it's just wispy. So you feel like you can get a lot more out of it than you can, and he was just very smart when he got in trouble getting it back in play and not compounding the mistakes.

That's hard to learn that young, that early, especially as an Am. To see him do that, he got rewarded a lot of times with it. On all the par-5s I felt like he was out of position off the tee and he birdied every one of them because he got himself back in position and was able to capitalise.

Q. He said the one thing he learned playing with major winners like you is you can be aggressive in a smart way.

PATRICK REED: Yeah, that's the biggest thing is it's about being -- yeah, you're trying to be aggressive, but around a



major, it can really bite you if you try to bite off too much.

I always try to pick conservative lines and be aggressive on my conservative line.

I feel like that's what I've learned kind of especially these and The Opens is you're just one yard off left or right, the ball can just kind of bounce and go wherever. You try to play to the flat spots and let the ball work towards it.

Q. I think your major exemption is up --

PATRICK REED: After the end of this year.

Q. How much is that on your mind?

PATRICK REED: Not at all. World Ranking is a messed up system as everyone knows. I don't even look at the World Ranking system. But really just go out and play well this week and see what happens.

Like I said, winning takes care of everything. You've got to win this week, and it takes care of, what, five years? Five-year exemption into all the majors, even though I already have -- yeah, then I already have Augusta. Hopefully we go out and play well there.

Q. Going back to the Ryder Cup, obviously you mentioned it earlier, can you talk us through your thoughts and feelings when you hit your first tee shot in the Ryder Cup many years ago?

PATRICK REED: The hardest golf shot on the planet. I'll never forget Gleneagles. I stepped up on the first one, I was so amped and excited and getting ready to go and right when I walked out the tunnel on to the first tee it's like all the oxygen got sucked out, I was so nervous.

I think the hole was like a 3-wood, wedge, and I hit 3-wood, 3-iron because I skyed it. I was so nervous that I ended up tying everybody on the hole. We all made 4. The nerves were able to go away. That tee shot is not only nerves, but you get so amped up and excited and adrenaline is going through you, it's hard to swing within yourself on that first tee.

I obviously had nerves off the first tee at Augusta on Sunday, but I'd never had that, like, oh, my God feeling, where you step up at a Ryder Cup and you have all the people looking down on you, you have a country looking down on you, and you're like, oh, my gosh, here we go.

Q. Does that feeling change home and away?

PATRICK REED: It's the same. You're sitting there and you know when you're away that if you hit a bad one you're going

to get absolutely heckled; and when you're at home if you hit a bad one you feel like you're letting down your country. It's one of those that it's just -- you can't get off the first tee fast enough.

You absolutely love the feeling because you know how important it is, but man, yeah, there's a reason why after a Ryder Cup it takes you weeks if not a month to at least recover, and it's not physically, it's mental.

Q. At St Andrews some players, some of the English guys got sort of heckled. Have you sensed anything changed since the merger was announced between then and now?

PATRICK REED: Yeah, St Andrews there might have been one person that booed me all week. Besides that, the fans have been amazing.

Even this week the fans have been great. I don't know how they've been for all the other guys, but they haven't changed for me, and I feel like it's because of all the support I've shown the European Tour, being that American that has always come over and played, showing support through COVID and everything.

Because of that, I feel like it's not really any different. Haven't really played enough in the States, haven't really played anything but LIV events in the States, so can't really speak on that, but all the majors and everything over here --

Q. Do you feel like that part is sort of gone now?

PATRICK REED: Who knows. I don't know anything about the merger. Do you? Exactly. None of us know anything. I saw the hearing and I saw the CNBC first -- that's all I've seen. The guys are very tight lipped because they're still trying to figure things out, and I think that's the biggest thing. Once everything is kind of set, then we'll start to know more information about it.

But they're being pretty quiet about it to the players, as they should be, and until everything gets all figured out and then from there, we'll figure out what's going on.

Q. Was it strange to see members of the golf world in a Senate hearing?

PATRICK REED: Very. You know the Dunne man, though, in his line of work I'm pretty sure he's been in a lot of hearings and that kind of stuff. To sit there and think that you're going to have a hearing about a sport, about golf, is just like -- it's a little much.

But I get it. There's a lot of things they have to look at, anticompetitiveness, antitrust, what the merger is going to do for both sides, the monopolization of everything. There's so many things that are okay but aren't okay.

Government is obviously going to change it out and make sure that it's the right thing to do. I try to stay out of all that kind of stuff and all the politics of everything. My job is to go out there and play great golf and entertain people and the fans and go out and make a living for my family.

Q. Did you watch the whole hearing?

PATRICK REED: No, no, I was in London. I would have been staying up in the middle of the night to watch that thing.

Q. Was there anything that you heard --

PATRICK REED: I watched some of it. Not really. Let's be honest, really if there's a hearing like that you would expect the top three guys to be there.

You would expect Jay, you would expect Keith and Yasir. You would expect those three guys. That's who you want to hear in the hearing. Jimmy Dunne and who was the other guy -- I mean, okay. Cool. I've talked to Jimmy Dunne a thousand times. I already know -- he's been a part of the Tour for a very short period of time.

It's kind of one of those things that -- that's who we want to hear from. That's who we're waiting to hear from is from the commissioners and the heads. Once we hear from those guys, we'll be able to know what's going on. Just too early right now for all of us to really know what's going on.

Q. Some of the Tour players seemed pretty upset with management. Are you taking a different tack with LIV executives?

PATRICK REED: For me it's hard to really know because you hear one day it's a merger, the next day you hear it's not a merger, the next day you hear it's a collaboration, then you hear everyone is working in parallel, then you hear this ends the lawsuits.

Then you also hear people saying you can play everywhere. Let's be honest, right, whenever I got -- I heard about this merger, the next morning I get an email from Keith Waters and Keith Pelley suspending me through Scottish and fining me some more. Great merger, right? Still getting suspended and fined.

That's the thing is it's hard to feel happy or upset about any of it because we don't know what it is.

Until we actually know exactly what the merger, collaboration, whatever it is, means, there's not really anything -- you can't really be upset or happy about it because there is no information.

Now, if anyone has that information I'd love to let you know so I can let you know if I'm happy or upset about it.

Q. Would you want to play much in the PGA TOUR, DP World Tour?

PATRICK REED: I've always wanted to play and keep my European Tour status. I'm an honorary lifetime member. I take pride in that. PGA TOUR, yeah of course I'd love to play. The first year of LIV I would have played the minimum -- I already played the minimum on the PGA TOUR.

I have played every event on LIV and I would have played the minimum on the European Tour.

I was that one guy when they said no one can play all three. Well, I did it. Shocker.

But that's the thing. Where I play, who knows. If I play PGA TOUR, LIV, or if I played European Tour LIV. The biggest thing is there should be no reason why if we've qualified well we shouldn't be able to.

People say you can't make your cake and eat it, as well, but how many PGA TOUR players go over and play a European Tour for money? They're getting appearance fees. They're not showing up to play for competition. They're getting paid to do that.

It shouldn't matter as long as you play the minimum and do what you're supposed to, you play, and that's fine. If you play the minimum on the European Tour and you earn enough points to keep your card, you should be able to play.

If you play the minimum on the PGA TOUR and you have enough FedExCup points to keep your card, more power to you.

That's kind of how I look at it. If you've qualified and you've earned your right to play, you should be able to play.

Now, sponsor exemptions, everything like that, I don't expect handouts. None of us do. None of us expect a handout or a sponsor exemption, like oh, I should have been able to play there because of a sponsor exemption.

No. If you've earned the right to play and you have earned enough points and play enough events there should be no reason why you can't play anywhere.

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