

The 152nd Open

Mixed Zone

Thursday, 18 July 2024

Jack McDonald



Q. How was that for you?

JACK McDONALD: Yeah, it was good. Yeah, great experience. The conditions were pretty tough, especially going out, because usually going out there's usually a little bit of help with the wind, and then it's a hold-on on the back nine. But the front nine was playing pretty solid today, and then the back, it was a little bit easier, obviously, with it being downwind.

Yeah, it was cool, really cool.

Q. How did you prepare for today last night? First group out, early to bed, did you sleep much at all?

JACK McDONALD: I actually did. I was quite surprised. I managed to sleep until about 3:00 in the morning, which I was surprised at, so I managed to get about five hours, and then yeah, so I was actually okay. Coming into the round I felt fine.

But it was good to get up and at it. I think that was the main thing.

Q. Being in that first group, having a crowd to see you tee off, as well, that's why you play the sport, isn't it.

JACK McDONALD: Yeah, for sure. You play, you practice for those moments. Yeah, I was delighted to just be there. Like the feelings of the first tee shot and stuff were really cool when I was able to get it down there. It was a nice tee shot. I was just like, let's go.

But yeah, it was amazing. It was amazing.

Q. You played better than your score suggested.

JACK McDONALD: Yeah, I played really well tee to green, to be honest. Yeah, I had a few three-putts there, and then I missed a short one on 4 I remember.

I was slightly -- it was good that I kept going at it. I just kept committing to everything. The putting, yeah, it was just like when it started raining, it maybe slowed up a wee bit. I was a bit tentative on the putting.

It was maybe a wee bit of nerves, but that's understandable. Yeah, it almost felt like I just needed that one putt to go in, and then I just kept going. But still got a round tomorrow and hopefully get a nice under-par score.

Q. Talk about the difference of that front nine --

JACK McDONALD: Yeah, so it was basically -- it's usually just a 4- or 5-iron off the first and it leaves you maybe like 130, give or take, 140. But today it was a rescue I hit, and then it was 146, I think -- was it 146? It was 150-ish. It was like a knock-down 7. So it changes it.

Yeah, then it was kind of all the way out. But Troon, the way it does the wee angles on the way out, it was just a little bit different to what you would usually play.

Q. Have a nice chat out there with the boys?

JACK McDONALD: Yeah, it was good fun. Todd just kept saying to me, come on, knock this in and get the crowd going. I didn't do it today, but hopefully tomorrow I'll be able to do it.

Q. (On friends and family in the gallery).

JACK McDONALD: It was so hard to pick everyone out and I was trying to focus on what I was doing because, yeah, I feel like you could easily get distracted if you start chatting to people or something, so I just wanted to kind of get down and just play my golf.

Q. Jack, could you sum up the whole experience, expectation versus the reality of your round?

JACK McDONALD: Yeah, I was playing well coming in. It's really just -- it was just coping with the emotions, really, of actually playing a major championship. Then I felt as if I was able to do that, and I feel as if I did. It was just I kind of probably should have been maybe a few shots better, a good few shots better. But I suppose that's golf.

But it was that sort of -- I was just happy I committed to my lines and kept playing the way I did. It was good, and it was also just -- it was a phenomenal experience just to witness everything, those roars getting up and stuff like that. It brings it back to Walker Cup days, really. When I played in the



Walker Cup, you'd hear the roars, and it was just great.

Q. Did you have any nerves on the first?

JACK McDONALD: Yeah, it was quite -- it was an interesting experience. I just committed to it. I wasn't really thinking about outcome, and I was standing there and I was -- as I said, there's the line down to No. 1 in the back grandstand and just hit it. The outcome would have been what it would have been.

Q. (On the crowd support).

JACK McDONALD: Yeah, for sure. You see all the familiar faces in the crowd and stuff like that. It's kind of like, I wanted to go and speak to them, but I still have to play golf. But it was such a great -- standing on the first tee and you're just looking at the grandstand was pretty full all the way down the left side and at the green, and you're just like, this is brilliant.

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