

# The 152nd Open

Mixed Zone

Thursday, 18 July 2024

**Tom McKibbin**



**Q. A lot of good golf played out there today. I know maybe you're a little disappointed in the overall score. Can you give us your view on the day.**

TOM McKIBBIN: It was tricky. Didn't play great at all really. Especially the back nine, it was the harder nine. Just a few shots and a few silly decisions here and there.

**Q. You had the opposite wind that you usually have here. How did you find that?**

TOM McKIBBIN: It was different obviously playing the practise rounds. The whole dying off the right on the front nine and into and off the left on the back. For it to be in off the right and down off the left was just very different. A lot of different clubs off tees.

Then guessing the release on the greens was very hard. Downwind, some of the bounces were 15, 20 yards really.

**Q. You got it through -- you were still 1-under par going into sort of the back nine. That stretch, 11 and 12, is particularly tough off the tee, isn't it?**

TOM McKIBBIN: Yeah, it's tricky. I think 11 today was probably the easiest you'll get it, it was down off the left. But then 12 is much more difficult, just straight into the wind, long hole, very tight. You've just sort of got to hang in coming in.

Especially the par-3s as well, some tight pins with wind that's sort of pushing your ball away from the pin. Overall, I think the course is playing pretty tricky.

**Q. It's not going to get any easier out there for those guys. You've got a pretty good break with the weather.**

TOM McKIBBIN: Yes, obviously it was decent this morning, quite windy. Coming in there, the rain started to come on. Yeah, I don't think it's looking great for this afternoon. Hopefully not too far away.

**Q. What do you have to do tomorrow?**

TOM McKIBBIN: Don't know. Just play a bit better. Look and see what the scores are like after today. Yeah, just try and do

the same thing, play a bit better, that's all.

**Q. Was the drive today over on 16 by design?**

TOM McKIBBIN: No, normally just lay up there. It was downwind. Dave told me he thought it was worth it, and I trusted him and went for it, and it did not pay off. I got it over, but not in a great spot.

**Q. What pleased you about your play today? You holed a few nice putts here and there.**

TOM McKIBBIN: I scrambled quite nicely the first six or seven holes. I wouldn't say I had my best stuff, still hitting some nice shots. A few of the shots, I saved par quite nicely, holed a few nice ones on the front nine.

I think sort of coming in, my pace putting was pretty good. I had a few very long range putts I was sort of able to save putts. So that was pleasing.

**Q. You wouldn't be you if you didn't have a few butterflies on your first Open over the 1st tee. How did it feel walking over to the tee shot?**

TOM McKIBBIN: It wasn't too bad. It didn't really bother me too much. It was fine. I was thinking down off the right, it's just a 4-iron. Got on the tee and realised I have to hit a 2-iron here. That probably made me a bit more nervous.

Overall, it was fine. I've hit plenty of 1st tee shots before. I was just trying to make it another one of those.

**Q. What did you hit (indiscernible)?**

TOM McKIBBIN: I hit a 54 degree wedge. Pretty much straight off the left, but the green was quite firm. Had to play for a big one, maybe five or six yards. Hit it in nicely.

**Q. (No microphone)?**

TOM McKIBBIN: Yeah, I sort of -- I was 1-under, but I wasn't playing well. That's why I had to hang on for the back nine and try to put a few swings, which I didn't really do that well. It couldn't have been much worse, but 1-under after nine was pretty good. I think sort of trying to get under-par that first



nine holes was probably a good goal for the week.

**Q. Alex Noren with a 69. Did you get anything from your playing partners?**

TOM McKIBBIN: Yeah, Alex played really nice, just played very smart golf, hit the ball lovely. Yeah, it just looked like he had complete control of the ball. If he missed a green, he was pretty deadly around the green.

**Q. Just your general feeling around. You began pretty well. The putter got hot. Your own feelings, obviously back nine, and I know you know, is always going to be hard. What were your feelings on the back nine?**

TOM McKIBBIN: Obviously a little disappointed with the round. Obviously the back nine, as you said, it's the harder nine, but I just didn't feel like I hit the ball great, didn't really have much control over it.

So just sort of trying to hang in. It's a tricky one because you want to try to make a couple birdies coming in, but trying to stay patient is quite hard. Yeah, just sort of trying to hang in there.

**Q. You have the U.S. Open experience. You had a very early morning experience teeing off there. But the crowds kind of -- they certainly gathered, even from the 2nd hole onwards. What was it like an Open Championship, your first experience?**

TOM McKIBBIN: It was good. It was definitely a lot different than the States, a lot more clapping and less shouting.

Yeah, it was great. It was a good day. As you said, very early this morning, a lot of people out here. Yeah, it was a cool experience, just what I'd seen on TV before.

**Q. You don't get too high or get too low on a golf course, which is really a good thing. A round of 73. Something better than that tomorrow? Not too much better, and you'll make the cut probably. Is that the way you're looking at it?**

TOM McKIBBIN: Yeah, definitely. I think if I can shoot -- it will depend obviously, but hang around par, under-par would be nice. Try to get an under-par round in a major.

Yeah, hopefully better than today. Score-wise, it was okay, a little disappointing, but I didn't feel like I played that good. I feel like I could have played much better.

**Q. How did you feel out there in terms of staying with the big concentration task that is Troon, the way that it bites so much on the back nine? Is that something you put in the bank for the next round, hopefully the next two rounds?**

TOM McKIBBIN: I think sort of -- today was obviously different. It was very, very different than the practise rounds. The wind was in a slightly different direction, so your game plan almost didn't go out the window, but you're having to sort of work a lot more things out on the tee, where you wanted to land the ball and finish it just with the different wind.

Yeah, just trying to play a little bit better. Just the last couple weeks, I've found it quite hard on the links, growing up and haven't played much links in a while. So just trying to adapt to that.

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