

The 152nd Open

Mixed Zone

Thursday, 18 July 2024

Sam Hutsby



Q. Sam, it was a wet and windy afternoon here in Troon. How did it feel out there for you today?

SAM HUTSBY: It was extremely difficult out there, to be honest. It's a tough enough course as it is with no wind and with a bit of rain thrown in as well. I knew it was going to be a really tough day for scoring. I had to stay patient.

Yeah, I got off to a really good start. I think I went in tied for the lead standing on the famous Postage Stamp. So I kind of had to pinch myself a little bit on that tee, I thought. Wow, this is a little bit surreal.

I actually thought I hit a pretty good shot, but the Postage Stamp won today. It gobbled up my ball and left it there. I was panicking thinking I could be there all day really. It's such a daunting little hole over there.

I'm a little bit frustrated how I finished. I thought I played not too bad on the back nine, but it just shows how difficult the course is. I made a couple of poor course management errors, which you can't really do at this level.

Overall, I think it's been a huge learning curve at the same time, a pretty memorable day.

Q. Not only is it your first Open Championship, it is your first major as well.

SAM HUTSBY: Yes.

Q. You mentioned a pinch me moment there. But is it as expected when you first came in here today?

SAM HUTSBY: I'd be lying if I said it was. Like I said, I've never put myself in this position before. You just trust that all the preparation and training you do, you can kind of stay calm under these kind of circumstances, but I was obviously very nervous on the 1st tee here, didn't hit my best tee shot.

I thought I was on the back from tee 1 really, and then managed to find my ball, hit it out, hit it onto the green, holed a nice putt, and that was kind of my saviour today. My putting was really good. I'm normally a bit of a streaky putter. I'm normally pretty solid tee to green, and my putting is always the one I'm

kind of searching for.

Yeah, today I putted lovely. Hopefully I can keep that going tomorrow because I'm probably going to need it.

Q. Just tell us what it was like standing there on the 1st tee with a grandstand full of people there, something you're probably not used to, having not played in a major before. Give us an insight what that was like.

SAM HUTSBY: You try to recreate it a little bit in practise, but to be honest, I got up here quite early, travelled up here Friday, so I was here for the weekend. Every day that went by, I could feel the butterflies kind of going.

I've not really been settled all week, to be honest. I was actually amazed how calm I felt on the back nine today but didn't really score well. So it was a bit of a mixed emotions.

I was extremely nervous the first, say, like front nine, but I was actually playing quite good golf. It was nice to know that I can feel that uncomfortable and still kind of hit some good shots and play some good golf.

Yeah, like I said, it's been a huge learning curve. Just looking forward to getting out there again tomorrow and hopefully improve on today's score.

Q. Lastly, as little as two years ago, you were working in a golf shop, I believe. Can you tell us why? Did you expect to kind of be back here in this position too?

SAM HUTSBY: I'd be lying again if I said -- I mean, normally, I'm not the most confident. I think with any sport, if your performance -- is obviously massive, and if you're not performing, then it's easy to kind of lose confidence.

Yeah, I decided to do my PJ degree. I wanted to coach and try to give back. I really enjoyed it to be honest. It was great to help people. I actually learned quite a lot from it myself. I looked at the game a slightly different way.

I was still trying to play competitively, and I was having some nice scores locally, and that made me realize, okay, maybe I could give it another go. I managed to come through qualifying school at the end of 2022. So to have a full season on the DP



Tour last year was great, but again just didn't quite play the golf I know I can.

I worked really hard this winter, and I started the Challenge Tour really well this year. That was my main focus this year. This was just a little bit of a bonus to be here. 20 years trying to qualify for The Open, and I can finally tick that one off the list. It's amazing.

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