

The 152nd Open

Mixed Zone

Saturday, 20 July 2024

Shubhankar Sharma



Q. You seem really disappointed. Is that because of what happened at the 15th?

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: I'm not disappointed actually. We got a bad ruling there. We were put on the clock after there was a ball search and everything that happened, so that was why I was unhappy, but no, not because of the score. I didn't hit that shot that bad. There was no -- it was just a tough shot. Hitting it slightly right would have been in the bunkers like Sungjae went. One yard right, my ball, I would have had a clear shot. It was just in a very bad spot. It is what it is, but concentrating the good things, we made two birdies coming in, so I'm quite happy.

Q. That must have given you a lot of satisfaction.

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: Yes, absolutely.

Q. You almost had another on the 17th.

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: That would have been very special. Actually I wasn't trying anything. After the 15th I was slightly annoyed because I was playing so well, didn't deserve a double there. Just whatever shot came my way, I hit it and hit good shots coming in, and two putts went in, which were great. I'm quite happy.

Q. What were you thinking from the time you finished until the round finally ended yesterday?

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: I mean, when I finished I was 72nd. Then we went to 66, and I was like, nice, everything is good now. But then 68, 67 and in the end 69, and I was like, it would feel really bad to miss the cut now.

Thankfully it all came together. We made the cut. It was a very long day yesterday because by the time I slept, it was almost 12:00.

Q. Any thoughts ahead of today?

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: For today? No, I needed time to recover.

Q. I mean before the start of this round.

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: Before the start of the round? No, just woke up in the morning, woke up at the same, 6:00, had to leave at 7:00, got whatever sleep I could get last night, so everything was very, very fast yesterday, but it was good. I was happy.

Q. You made the most of the conditions after getting battered for the first two days.

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: Most of the conditions today, yes, absolutely, made the most of them. Hit it really well today. Got off to a hot start. Was kind of struggling with some energy because I was very tired after yesterday. After I finished on 5-over I could have gone back and slept straight away, but we were all very nervous.

So today was just getting my rhythm, being consistent with my process, and I did that today, which was good, and that's why I got a pretty good round. I'm happy. The back nine is not playing as easy as the last few days because it's been downwind. Downwind also is not that easy, but still, it's more gettable. Yesterday, today has been tougher, but I played really well.

Q. If you have to just look at all the 67 shots you played today, which one really stood out for you? Was it a putt? Was it a shot?

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: I would say today there were so many good shots. It's hard to pick one. I can pick three. The tee shot on 17 was brilliant, almost 240 yards into the wind, so it's playing like 255. Hit it to about 20 feet there, which was amazing.

Q. What did you hit there?

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: 2-iron. Very good 2-iron.

The first few holes I just hit regulation shots. The birdies that I made were quite good birdies. I don't know. I mean, I'm thinking 13th hole, the second shot from the rough, that pitching wedge, to control it to hit it to 17, 18 feet was good, and making that birdie was very good.

But I'd say that putt on the last hole has to rank No. 1. Just to make that putt on the last, trying to make birdie, it's quite



special.

Q. 175-odd yards from where you were?

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: 188 to the pin. I hit a 6-iron, controlled 6-iron.

Q. Six, seven feet?

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: No, more. About 12 or 15 feet at least. I'd say 15.

Q. Is it good to be nervous before a good weekend like this, a very important weekend? Sometimes being really relaxed --

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: Yes, but because we didn't know if I was going to play. I didn't know if yesterday I was supposed to get ready for the third day or relax and just mull over whatever -- I wouldn't have been very happy, so I'm happy that I made the cut. You can't do anything. Obviously right after you finish, straight away go to the physio, go eat, go sleep.

But if you don't know what to prepare for tomorrow, it's tough to sleep. By the time we got in, it was late, when I spoke to you, and we had -- then we could relax, get the energy down and then go to sleep. It's just tough to sleep straight away after coming from a high-pressure situation.

Q. If I have to ask you, the last round at Royal Liverpool and compare it to the two rounds that you played the day before and yesterday, was it as tough or tougher over here the first --

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: Tougher, tougher, 100 percent. Much tougher. I think the last round at Liverpool and here, comparable. Yesterday the first nine holes that we played -- it's hard to compare. I'd give them both the same. Yesterday the wind was twice as much as it was in Liverpool on the last. The last in Liverpool was decently windy but very wet. That was a challenge. But yesterday was 13-mile-an-hour gusts which is also a big challenge. Both are tough links rounds, which yesterday a +1 was as good as -1 in Liverpool on the last day.

Q. Just to give an idea to the readers of how difficult the conditions were yesterday, at least in the beginning of the round, what would you say where the yardages or some yardage that really jumps out, you hit a 4-iron which you hit 240 yards which went just --

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: It was crazy. Like on 6 I had 122, I hit a 9-iron, and then on the last hole, I had 156 or 150-odd something, but I hit an easy gap wedge. Completely different. You can't really -- this is actually the first day.

Yesterday was even more. Yesterday I think probably one of

the craziest holes that we played was the 5th. The 5th was absolutely bonkers, as they say here. It was straight off the right, 30 miles an hour. I think that was probably the shot of -- in terms of quality of stripe, probably the best shot I hit in three days, to keep it on the green, because people were hitting it 20 yards left of the green. It was a 2-iron from 210, 215. Yardage-wise it wasn't crazy, but to hold it up just enough was quite a special shot.

But at places there was a 40-yard gust, so you're hitting 8-irons from 120, 125 yards. An 8-iron is normally 165.

Q. Have you ever played a competitive round here before?

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: No, never. First time I'm playing a tournament.

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