

The 152nd Open

Mixed Zone

Sunday, 21 July 2024

Shubhankar Sharma



Q. Battled hard?

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: Yes, battled hard.

Q. Take us through the final round, the conditions. Better than the first two days but still demanding?

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: Yes, still demanding. Yesterday was probably the easiest day, but the first two days were very tough. Today also when we started it was quite windy so not very easy. But towards the end there were birdie chances. You still had to hit good shots. Pin positions were tough. It was gettable. I was hoping I'd get off to a slightly better start, one of those putts falling in the first few holes, and that three-putt on 7 not happening. Probably could have been slightly better.

But it's fine. I played well still. Lots of positives. Hung there, a couple of dropped shots coming in, but hung in and made some good up-and-downs. Good birdie on 14, great par on 13. So quite happy.

Q. What did you do on 13?

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: 13 I went just in the right rough, and from the right rough I was trying to hit a soft -- wind was all off the left down, so just trying to pitch something on the front but the club shot out and hit the grass and went straight left. Out of 100 balls I think I would have made one up-and-down. So made one up-and-down, which was great. So yeah.

Q. Overall I think you should be around tied 20th finish. Is this satisfying?

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: It's a good week. Obviously here and there a few shots first day could have been slightly better. Second and third day I played brilliant, so no complaints. Today could have been slightly better. Overall I played really well. I'm quite proud of myself. It's probably the toughest Open that I've played out of the four that I've played.

Hung in there, made some great putts. Quite happy overall.

Q. What's it about The Open? Can you call it your favourite major? Four out of four cuts, you always seem to play well.

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: I like The Open. I've always been very fond of the Open ever since I was a kid. Yeah, just brings the best out of me, and I kind of bookmark it at the start of the year that this is a tournament I want to play and I want to play well in. Yeah, it was quite special.

Q. How much hard work did you have to put in just before the Italian Open, considering that the Olympics is next for you?

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: Yes. I put in a lot of work, mostly just getting a few -- there are always some tendencies that a player gets into, and it's always important to get yourself, pull yourself out of those and get back to better hitting days, and before the Italian, that's what I did. I did it quite well, and that's why it was a good tournament.

But for The Open, it's always -- you have to strike it really good. You can't have errant tee shots. Your ball control has to be brilliant. You have to make a lot of par putts at the right time, up-and-downs. That's the nature of the game at The Open Championship.

You have to be very tenacious, which I was really tenacious this week. For me, I feel playing more tournaments always helps, so this is a big week, and I'll take a few days off before I go to the Olympics.

But I've been playing so the competitive juices are flying, so I'm looking forward to Le Golf National.

Q. Obviously you need to play well at The Open, but also you need to have a very strong mind at The Open Championship. That you must be really proud of, how you hung in there throughout, especially the first and the second day.

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: I'm very proud, yes, absolutely.

Q. Even the third day after the double bogey --

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: Even the first day I was 6-over after 17, which is quite a bad day normally in golf. But I just told myself no matter what happens, don't give up. You're playing well. Maybe one shot will make a difference. I birdied the 18th. Then the next day I played out of my skin to



thankfully make the cut, which I thought I deserved to make the cut, and yesterday was amazing, made so many putts.

Today didn't have the same feel that I had on the greens, especially in the first few holes, but then on the back nine made some good putts. It all leveled out. It was good.

I think one more shot, level par would have felt okay, like it was not a bad round. 1-over is not bad, but I was trying to get that one shot back in the end, but it's fine.

Q. How do you switch the focus to the Olympics now? What is the plan?

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: The plan is to just chill for three days. That's what I need. Once the chilling time is over, then go and do the Olympic opening ceremony. Like I said, I've been playing, playing, playing, and this is the highest level we play at at a major championship, especially when it's so tough and you think about everything. So I think I'm quite primed for the Olympics, as well.

The body needs a rest, which I will get the next two, three days, which will be great, and we'll see.

Q. When do you plan to reach Le Golf National? How do you plan to get ready for the Olympics?

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: Thursday I'm going home, then Friday most likely going to the opening ceremony. Maybe Saturday and Sunday I go and play one round, but the tournament starts on Thursday. So maybe I'll have a normal week, just go there on Monday and play. Don't want to play need energy.

Q. You know Le Golf National very well anyway.

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: I've played there many times. It'll be a matter of seeing how the course is right now in August, how it's playing, how they have maintained the rough. Just small things, how the grass is. Greens are different there, poa annua grass. Poa annua or paspalum? I'm not sure. Paspalum, I think. Anyway, it's not bent. Just get small, small things set up and it'll be good.

Q. This gives you the mindset that you need to go into the Olympics, the finish?

SHUBHANKAR SHARMA: Absolutely, it does. Like I said, in the Open you can't take any shot for granted, and that's what I would expect at the Olympics, as well. Playing is the best practice in golf, and I'm happy for that.

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