

# The 153rd Open

Mixed Zone

Thursday, 17 July 2025

**Lee Westwood**



**Q. You like this course, do you?**

LEE WESTWOOD: I do. That's part of the reason I tried to qualify. I love The Open Championship, and I love Portrush. I've been coming here a long time. It's one of the golf courses where, if it wasn't The Open and somebody said do you want to play Portrush this weekend, I'd probably go. There's not many golf courses like that.

**Q. You don't mind the conditions?**

LEE WESTWOOD: I'd prefer not to get soaking wet. I was asked whether I'd rather have wind or rain yesterday, and I said wind for sure. So somebody heard me, didn't they. We had a bit of everything. I don't mind hiding behind the umbrella and having to run a few in, hit four extra clubs on some yardages.

**Q. What's your attitude on a firm and fast course that's getting wetter in front of you in real time? How do you adjust your mindset?**

LEE WESTWOOD: Just use your experience really. Just because it's rained on it doesn't mean it stops any quicker. Sometimes it actually runs out further because the golf course actually doesn't get softer. It stays firm. Then the second and third bounce it's just skidding because of the water on the green. What might have stopped in 15 yards is now taking 25 yards to stop now it's wet.

**Q. What pleased you particularly about your performance today?**

LEE WESTWOOD: Everything really. Hit the ball well. Had loads of chances. Putted great. Short game was good when I needed it. Yeah, it was all around -- it couldn't have been really any more than 69, I don't think. Probably should have been 6- or 7-under through 12.

**Q. Cam Smith was in here earlier. He said he played with you recently. He said you were beating it as good as he's seen it the last few years. Would you agree?**

LEE WESTWOOD: Yeah, I think my form is probably -- I feel in control of my golf swing. Yeah, it's as good as it's been for a while.

**Q. Seeing your name up there in the lead, does it get the old juices going again?**

LEE WESTWOOD: Oh, yeah. Can't beat seeing your name up there on a Thursday. We'll talk again if it's up there on Sunday. (Laughter.)

It's nice to see it on the big yellow scoreboards, and it's nice to walk down the 18th here. I've always said that for a British player, it's the greatest walk in golf, especially if you're in with a chance on Sunday.

**Q. You've been in plenty of Opens where people over 50 have not just put their names on there but have stuck around. Is that sort of encouraging as well?**

LEE WESTWOOD: Yeah, links golf more than any golf gives you a chance when you're our age, shall I say?

**Q. Youngsters.**

LEE WESTWOOD: Yeah, youngsters. It's a while since I've been called that. Yeah, there's a bit more run on the ball. It's not a golf course where it's laid out where there's a massive advantage to carrying a trap at, say, 310 yards, which I don't have anymore. You've got to use the conditions and hold the ball up well in the side winds and cross-winds and be able to bring your ball flight down when you're going into the wind.

**Q. You've played in a lot of these. You've been away for a couple years. Do you have a different appreciation when you come back and play it?**

LEE WESTWOOD: Not really. I've always appreciated The Open Championship and playing in it and being in it. I said it earlier this week it's the greatest championship in golf for me. I'm slightly biased because I'm British. I guess Americans might say the Masters or the U.S. Open. For me, The Open Championship just has everything.

**Q. Helen's on the bag this week, how does that work itself out? How do you come up with that decision?**

LEE WESTWOOD: She wanted to do it. She loves the weather over here, the fact that she needs two pairs of hands and



sometimes three.

No, she caddied for me in the qualifying, and I prefer to have her caddieing for me whenever she can. We have a good record round here from finishing fourth six years ago. Yeah, it was an easy decision for me to make. Probably harder for her. She'd probably rather be at home riding a horse.

**Q. Is there a reason you didn't try the last couple years to qualify for this?**

LEE WESTWOOD: There was various reasons. I got various things booked and scheduled in. I was playing a lot of golf around that time. You got to weigh up the pros and cons, and this year there was a lot of pros.

**Q. How tough is 16 playing today?**

LEE WESTWOOD: Yeah, really tough. I lost grip of my club and slipped a bit at the same time. So that wasn't ideal. Anytime that's playing into hard off the left and it's raining and the pin's on the right, it's a tough shot.

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