

PGA Championship

Saturday, May 17, 2025

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

Quail Hollow Club

Davis Riley

Flash Quotes



THE MODERATOR: Davis Riley is with us now at the 107th PGA Championship.

We've got time for a few questions. We'll jump right in.

Q. Wondering, early this season, the first couple weeks were a particular struggle. I talked to you at AMEX and you felt like you were battling the swing. What has changed since then to have gone on this run?

DAVIS RILEY: Yeah, like you said, it was a pretty big struggle to start the year, and yeah, there was a couple tweaks I made in my swing trying to get back to some of my old DNA and seeing draws, really. So I'm starting to get more and more comfortable as the year has gone on. Starting to see the ball right and turn left.

I feel like I play my best golf, especially with my irons, if I'm hitting a little draw and just a small cut off the tee. I'm starting to see those shot shapes and trust it a lot more on the course.

At the beginning of the year, I was able to do it at home but never really got comfortable out on the course because I was trying to soften the draw a little bit and I was trying to tighten some start lines. But I've kind of figured out, I just play my best golf when I embrace a little bit of the draw. I'm honestly more and more comfortable on the golf course and trusting those shot shapes.

Q. On a day like today with it so bunched, just kind what have was the mentality and just overall your thoughts on how you played?

DAVIS RILEY: Yeah, I mean, it was really gusty winds today so I felt like you had to get really creative, had to hold it a lot of the winds, hit some draw shots and hit some cut shots up against the winds. You had to have really good control of your golf ball because the greens are starting to get pretty crusty and a lot of bounce to them, so you had to be really precise into the greens.

I was pleased with the day. I drove it pretty well and had pretty good control with my irons, and you know, when the winds are this gusty, you're going to hit some good shots and you're going to miss some greens. So you kind of have to make a couple -- there's going to be a couple times in the round where you have to just grind out some up-and-ins and know that you might not get the best break or the best gust into the green sometimes.

Q. Can you talk about the stretch of 8, 9, 10, the three birdies in a row?

DAVIS RILEY: That was what kick started the round for me. On 2, I made a bogey. Hit a perfect drive and just caught the tree and was left in a pretty awkward spot and made bogey there.

Then I missed out on a really good birdie opportunity on 7 being right in front of the green. I kind of misjudged the chip. But to snag one on 8 with it being drivable was huge.

Then to make a birdie on 9 was awesome. That's just such a difficult hole, but I hit a really good drive and really good iron shot and holed about a 15-footer. Yeah, those three birdies in a row kick started the round for me.

Q. You mentioned you embracing a draw was a big part of this. I guess like why are pros hesitant to do that and why do they tend towards fades as a result?

DAVIS RILEY: For sure. It's one of those things, I worked -- it's easy, us golfers, to get obsessive about neutral. So I spent a lot of the off-season trying to really straighten out my ball flight and almost even see a little bit of cut with my irons.

It was just tough because I came out early in the year and I was aiming really tight to these flags, or even like back left flags where I feel like I'm aiming at it or just right, and then I would kind of like make a swing where I bail out. It was just a really awkward spot for me.

So I feel like when I'm playing my best golf I'm seeing about a 5- or 10-yard draw with my irons and seeing that path around 1-1/2 to 2-1/2. I spent a lot of time in the

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off-season trying to neutral it out. With the longer stuff, I would say 7- to 4-iron, I can start seeing it curve too much. I was like, I need to zero this out, especially in right-to-left winds I kind of struggle, and I felt like -- I don't know, I got obsessive with being zeroed out and it didn't really work out for me.

Me and my coach, Jeff Smith, spent a lot of time at the beginning of the year reevaluating things because it's so easy to get caught up in the off-season saying I've got to be perfect, that when the year starts, I need to be perfect, instead of doing the same things and being -- enjoying the mundane of things and just getting back to that DNA.

I'm starting to see a lot of that proper curvature, and I think having control with my irons and the driver has been a big reason why I've been playing better.

Q. To be in contention for a major, on the final day, how do you go about preparing for that so you don't get in your own head and get too nervous? What are your plans tonight going into tomorrow?

DAVIS RILEY: Yeah, get some rest, first and foremost. I might go after, when I get done here, go hit a couple balls and just kind of recalibrate. We played in so much wind; it's easy for ball position to get back or little things like that. So just try to get on the range and check a couple boxes and make sure I'm back where I want to be so when I come out in the morning, I feel like I'm kind of right where I want to be. So yeah, go hit a couple balls, get off my feet and rest.

When the wind is blowing like this, you're crunching so many numbers, so many lines and things like that, so it's definitely a mental toll on yourself on a day like today. Hit a couple balls and get some rest and some good food.

Q. What is it like being in this situation?

DAVIS RILEY: Yeah, coming down the stretch on a Saturday, and that's what we work for. We want a chance to win these major championships. That's what I kept telling myself today; this is what you work for. Embrace it and have fun with it. I just try to go out there and compete and be really disciplined, and really just hit shots that I know are proper shots and not try to be safe or anything coming in. Because it's easy to say, oh, it's playing hard; I just want to make pars coming in. And pars are really good on this finishing stretch, but still, I feel like that can change your lines, and the next thing you know, oh, I should have been 15 feet further left and then I'm short-sided barely in a bunker when I didn't hit that bad of a shot.

More being really disciplined and treating it as if this was Thursday and what would I do if I were starting the round and how do I give myself a good look at birdie and I tried to do that coming in. The gusty wins were tough and I made two nice up-and-ins on 17 and 18 to kind of salvage the day and I feel like keep me in a really good spot going into tomorrow. Just continue to build on that tomorrow.

Q. When we spoke at Southern Hills in 2022, that was your best finish in a major. What do you draw on tomorrow?

DAVIS RILEY: Like you said, I had a good run in '22 at Southern Hills. I had two doubles on the back nine and ended up finishing, I think T-12 or something like that. I definitely had juices flowing there. I feel like really, there, and maybe the Masters this year were the only times I've been in contention in some of these majors, but it's a spot I'm comfortable in, and also like being able to draw from experiences from my win last year at the Charles Schwab and things like that are going to be huge. But really just trying to get into the process of the day and have good discipline with me and my caddie. Just enjoy and have fun with it tomorrow.

Q. How much do you want it?

DAVIS RILEY: Really bad. I'd love to be standing on 18 green holding that trophy. But there's a lot of golf left, and I'm just looking forward to the challenge. Regardless of what happens, I'm going to try my best and try to put up a good fight, and if I can do that and stay within myself, I'll be really happy.

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