

KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship

Harbor Shores

Benton Harbor, Michigan, USA

Thursday, May 23, 2024

Jeff Schmid

Quick Quotes

Q. Jeff Schmid with us now. Jeff, thoughts on your first round today?

JEFF SCHMID: I'm very happy. I played really well. Could have made some more putts, but I played really solid so it was a great round, great start.

Kind of like how you feel you should play every day when you play nice.

Q. What's your initial reaction to how good that round is?

JEFF SCHMID: I haven't really seen the other scores yet. I don't know how it is.

Q. You're two back.

JEFF SCHMID: Yeah, I knew that. The conditions are absolutely perfect. I drove the ball really well. That's key out here. So it's not an extremely long course. For a senior probably a little longer than average, so it leaves me a lot of short and medium irons.

I just played really solid. I just hit a lot of greens. I did make a couple putts. Made kind of a long putt on 16, par-5.

But just solid. I think I only missed two greens the whole day. So, yeah.

Q. What would you say was the best part of your game?

JEFF SCHMID: I think driving. I just kept the ball in play. That was the number one thing, yeah, I would say. I've been playing pretty well. Haven't been striking it really solid but hitting it straight. It's firm out here, too, so if you're hitting in the fairway you can chases it up there. Like I said, the course isn't play that...



The greens are firm, but if you're hitting short irons there it's not scary tough. The wind was a little bit here and there, but it's about as easy, benign conditions you can get. Just beautiful temperature.

Q. How do you birdie 17? What did you hit in there?

JEFF SCHMID: I had 186, which is about a perfect 6-iron for me. I hit it -- it was into the wind and I hit it really good. I pushed it maybe like ten feet. I had a 10-foot putt just right at the flag and just rolled in. It was a pretty straight putt, so...

Q. (Regarding 18.) That's playing really hard today.

JEFF SCHMID: I hit a drive just -- I was trying to fade one right at the bunker. Hit it right at the right edge. Stayed like two yards short. I had a perfect angle in.

Wind felt like it was kind of down and I was going to hit a 9-iron and I switched to 8-iron and hit it a little thin and came up short right actually.

That was one of the only greens I missed, so then I chipped it up to about a foot and a half and made it. I was surprised because we got up to the green and actually felt like the wind was into us, so...

But, yeah, it was good.

Q. Have you played here before?

JEFF SCHMID: I never have, no. I qualified in '20 and then the -- it was a COVID year, and then I did not make it the next time.

Q. So first time you've seen this course was this year?

JEFF SCHMID: It was, yeah.

Q. What do you like about this course? How does it fit your game?

JEFF SCHMID: Generally, I like Nicklaus courses. I'm a fader. I think this course is a fading course. Just every tee



box -- to me anyway. So that's one thing I like about it.

At first I'll tell you when I got here seemed tighter, as a little windier, so was a little more intimidating. Today the conditions -- it's a little narrow than a Nicklaus course. Greens are a little smaller.

But when you drive it good and have a lot of short irons in it just makes you -- any course is really, I don't to say easy, but manageable I guess, so...

Q. What you've been doing in Iowa? Former Iowa golfer and just kind of stayed around?

JEFF SCHMID: No, I've been around a lot. I graduated in '90. Played in Asia, South America, Canada, Hooters, pretty much everything. Quit playing in about 2006.

Then that's when I got on the PGA. Kind of quit playing for a few years after that. We moved around. I been Florida -- I been all over. Florida, Missouri and back to Iowa for my third time. Do a little coaching, college golf, that's teach. That's what I basically do. Just try to keep my game kind of sharp.

Still feel like I'm stupid enough to keep wanting to play.

Q. Did you play here as an amateur?

JEFF SCHMID: I never did, no. I tried qualifying one year but didn't make it.

Q. Whereabouts?

JEFF SCHMID: Is there something hills?

Q. Lake Michigan Hills?

JEFF SCHMID: Yeah, I mean, I can't even remember. That was so frickin' long ago. That was back in 1990 or whatever. Yeah, so I was an okay college player. Had some good experiences.

Q. Did you drive here?

JEFF SCHMID: I did, yeah.

Q. How far is it?

JEFF SCHMID: Only four hours is all. Kind of nice.

Q. Funny this thing. This has been here pretty much every other year. You've been qualifying for this event every other year but you don't hit it here.

JEFF SCHMID: I know. I played in Oak Hill, played in every one except this one the last five years I guess.

Yeah, I was disappointed. Yeah, I'm disappointed if I don't make it. Was a good player. I just didn't play well that particular year.

But it's nice having a course -- I drive a lot. I like to get in my car and get away. It's a lot nicer driving four hours than some of the other places I've gone.

Q. You made the cut last year in Frisco, right?

JEFF SCHMID: I did, yeah.

Q. What does that mean? When you go back to your membership, do you have a ton of questions?

JEFF SCHMID: No, it's cool for me. For me it's always -- making a cut, it's my goal. That's what I play for. I mean, I made the cut -- I always feel like -- especially I teach too, so it's all these levels you're trying to get, and I'm 55 years old and still trying to achieve things, goals just like my students.

Couple years ago I made the cut in the U.S. Senior Open at Saucon Valley. Really just got me to another level. Now I feel like I should make it.

And then last year, yeah, I made the cut. I played okay. I didn't finish strong, but you're playing against great players playing every day. Yeah, it's fun to achieve goals. That is my thing.

Q. Do you play a lot in your section?

JEFF SCHMID: I try to play but I work a lot, too. I try to -- like I literally didn't pick up a club. I had the U.S. Senior Open qualifying last week and then didn't -- I was in Frisco two weeks ago and didn't pick up a club for like four days.

And then we've had a really crappy spring and all of a sudden it gets nice and I'm just like busy, busy, busy. I try to manage my time. If I have tournaments coming up I try to take couple hours a day and try to work my game.

So it's hard. It's hard to manage everything. If you want to play a certain level you have to practice, you know.

Q. And at your club you're mainly teaching?

JEFF SCHMID: Yeah, basically. Yeah, so I am at a public course. Sean McCarty is actually playing. What did he shoot today? He's my knew boss and I teach and help out with some other stuff.

I was assistant golf coach for University of Iowa a for couple years. I still work with a lot of Iowa players and just all different levels of golfers.

Q. Did you get into the crazy weather back home?

JEFF SCHMID: Last week or couple days ago? Yeah, but I'm in -- I heard it was bad. I'm here, man. This is my thing. It's my vacation.

We've had a crazy spring. We had a really -- I mean, golf, as the PGA knows, is just nuts, especially where I'm at. It was packed through November, and then we got an early spring in February; it was packed. We opened and it's just never ending.

But then we had kind of a crappy March and April and all of a sudden couple weeks ago now we're getting the warm temperatures and that is when you get all the funny tornado crap and all that stuff. We get all that.

But you can't control the weather, that's for sure.

Q. So you say you come here and the goal is to make the cut. If you play this well and your game is on, you have the length, do your goals shift a little bit?

JEFF SCHMID: Well, I try to be humble. Yeah, I think that -- yeah, I think I could do a top 25. In the Senior Open a couple years ago I finished 33rd. Yeah, I don't know if I can win. I don't know. But I think I can play with these guys for the most part.

Without being cocky. Be nice to shoot four 66s and see how it goes.

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