

PGA Championship

Saturday, May 20, 2023

Rochester, New York, USA

Oak Hill Country Club

Michael Block

Flash Quotes

THE MODERATOR: Michael Block is with us here after his third round at the 105th PGA Championship. Another solid even-par-70 for you today. Can you maybe summarize your round for us?

MICHAEL BLOCK: You know, I thought at the beginning of the day, I told -- we were watching TV earlier and it was pouring rain and it was brutal conditions. The rough is sticky and tough.

I said to everybody sitting on the couches this morning, I said, if I can pull off another 70, which I think I can if I keep it in the fairways, we'd be in a good spot, and I was able to do that.

I was able to stave off that double bogey on the front nine, and then a really bad three-putt I had on I think 13, and that really upset me, and I was able to have a couple birdies after that and come in with even par. I'm thrilled with the day. These conditions aren't exactly my cup of tea. But I was able to get through it.

Q. What's the biggest check you've received for playing in a golf tournament?

MICHAEL BLOCK: \$75,000, 2014, Club Professional National Championship at the Dunes Club in Myrtle Beach. There was the 2001 California State Open for \$4500 for a long, long time, and when I got 75K in one tournament, I was very happy.

Q. If you finish in the top 10 this week you're going to make at least -- you don't want to hear it. The question is how do you block out all the -- no pun intended, how do you block out all of the what could come with this with a good round tomorrow?

MICHAEL BLOCK: I don't listen to what I did on 5 tomorrow, I don't listen about what I might make or could make or anything like that. I pretty much am putting my head down.

I didn't look at Rosey's face for the first three holes



because I'm a big fan of Rosey and I've watched him my whole life, and I knew it could get a little too intimidating, the fact that, holy crap, I'm sitting here playing with Justin Rose, and that might get too big for me, so I literally just kind of looked down, looked at his shoes the first couple holes, and got off to a decent start and went on from there.

Q. With all that, the gravity of this, the history you're making every single day with your place on the leaderboard, as you finish holes, how are you able to maintain this even keel? There is nothing more perfect par than three straight 70s. Do you do anything besides look at J-Rose's shoes?

MICHAEL BLOCK: No, honestly just played really smart with John Jackson, my caddie. He made a couple great calls on clubs, especially on that back nine. On 14 up the hill when I was doing the earpod thing for the television coverage. He had me take an extra club, which was just enough. I made a birdie there, and along with the next hole, the par-3, I took another club because of him and made another birdie. He was huge.

We plotted along -- I told him beginning of the day, I'm going to hit bad shots. When I hit a bad shot, we're going to play smart, get out, and then rely on my wedge game and putting to save my butt.

My putting my whole life has saved me for a long, long time. There's a reason why that putter has been in my bag for over 20 years, and these dreams and the loft in that putter are absolutely perfect, and it gives me a lot of confidence.

Q. Take a look at -- now it's off the screen. There's some big names that are just ahead of you on the leaderboard --

MICHAEL BLOCK: Yeah, I'm not looking.

Q. Have you learned anything from watching some of them this week?

MICHAEL BLOCK: No. I mean, if anything, I love Rosey but I can compete against these guys, to be honest. I can



compete against them. I can hang. I can post a 3- or 4-under tomorrow, especially if I get the fairways rolling again. It was kind of a bummer because I'm the short knocker out here, and I rely on roll, so I had no roll today, which made it ultra long. The first couple days I'm just loving my 50 yards of roll-out, right. I hit it 347 or something like that on 18 yesterday and I think I hit it 267 today. I'm hoping it dries out a lot. I'm hoping we don't get any more rain.

But yeah, being around these guys, what I've learned to do is commit, be confident and play your game.

Q. With all the energy around you this week, how difficult is it for you to stay down to earth?

MICHAEL BLOCK: Stay down to earth? Hmm. Have you met my wife? She will keep you down to earth more than anyone in the world. She's an Argentinian-Italian fireball that will tell me everything you don't want to hear, but yeah, she'll keep me down to earth like you have no idea. It's pretty easy for me. I grew up in St. Louis, I grew up in Iowa, kind of combination, Midwest roots. My parents would never let me get outside my box, right.

I'm just having fun. Everyone is so cool and the people are great. We go out to dinner, everyone is so awesome, and the fans have been amazing, you guys have been great, and I'm just having a good time.

Q. How much fun are you having this week?

MICHAEL BLOCK: I doubt if anybody on this entire property loves golf as much as I love golf. Period. I grew up my whole life waking up to The Golf Channel at 6:30 in the morning to watch the European Tour because that's all that was on, but I was like, I'm watching the European Tour. Colin Montgomerie was the man, and I was lucky enough to get paired with him in the 2014 PGA Championship at Valhalla, which was the coolest experience ever.

But I'm a PGA member that loves the game more than anything, and I'm sitting here right now absolutely blown away by this experience, but at the same time I'm blown away by how my game has actually shown up. My game that I've always had.

These guys, Pat Cantlay and Beau and these guys I play with, they know I have this game. They're always like, Blocky, what are you doing. I come out and I shoot 76, 77. I shoot 73 at LaQuinta Country Club to miss the cut this year at the American Express. It was horrible.

I'm finally here and I've finally done it, and honestly, this is

only going to give me more confidence moving forward.

Q. What's been the difference this week compared to past years, past tournaments --

MICHAEL BLOCK: I shot 73 last year on Friday at Southern Hills in like blowing wind in the afternoon on a really difficult golf course. Then I shot 65 at American Express the first round on the Nicklaus tournament course in the American Express this year. Then I shot 73 on the Friday at the Farmers in 40 mile-an-hour winds on the South Course.

My game has been going forward. I've been gaining confidence in it, and if I can do it at the South Course in 30-, 40 mile-an-hour winds and shoot 73, I can shoot 70 here in anything.

Q. Can you win tomorrow?

MICHAEL BLOCK: I don't know where everyone is at. I think 6-under is leading, I'm even par, I'm six back. They'd have to come back a little bit, but can I shoot 3- or 4-under? 100 percent, absolutely, especially if the fairways dry out a little bit. That would be a huge thing for me.

Q. As much as you block out the attention and the talk about what your paycheck could be, how far different is it to be -- you seem like a natural, to be walking up the fairway, doing an interview and dealing with the galleries the way you are? What is that about your makeup that you're capable of doing that and look comfortable doing that?

MICHAEL BLOCK: It's built-in club professional. You deal with 600 different personalities, right? You've got a lawyer telling you how to grow grass and you've got an accountant telling you that the burger wasn't cooked right. So you've got to deal with it and you know how to deal with everybody under the sun.

That's a natural thing for me. I don't have to try to do that. I'm just being -- like I said, I'm just being myself. That's my big goal. My wife used to give me so much crap because for the first 100 interviews of my life back in the day, not with you guys but much smaller interviews, I was very, yes, yes, mm-hmm, mm-hmm, kind of what I hear honestly with a lot of the guys here when I see them doing this. It's just like, dude...

I just became way more natural. My wife really kind of told me to do that, and it's worked out beautifully, so she was right.

Q. Could you envision doing an interview as you're

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

walking down an interview?

MICHAEL BLOCK: With Jim Nantz or Scott Van Pelt? No, not even close. Not even close.

Yeah, it's been cool. It's just been awesome. Scott came up to me right before I was teeing off today and expressed how much he enjoyed the interview I had with him on 14 the other day and how he had been around the game for a long time, and he had never kind of heard something like that, and I looked at my caddie and my friend, and I'm like, this is ridiculous. I don't even know what I'm doing. I'm just being myself, I'm having a good time. I play golf how I play golf, and if you guys ever came to Arroyo Trabuco Golf Club and you talked to everybody there, this is me, day in and day out, golf game, personality, everything.

Q. Whatever happens tomorrow, how do you think years from now you'll look back on this whole week, this whole experience?

MICHAEL BLOCK: I'll look back at it and I'll say, I'm glad you enjoyed it. I'm glad you enjoyed the moment. I've learned at this point to enjoy the moment, to sit back and relax and enjoy it because it goes by fast, and life goes by fast.

Before you know it, you're 60 years old and retired and look back at the videos on this and remember that was the best week of my life, and more than likely this is probably going to be the best week of my life. So I'm going to sit back as much as I can with my friends and family at the house we rented and watch the videos tonight and see all my new followers on Instagram. It's been crazy, it's been awesome.

Yeah, it's been really cool, and my biggest thing is just enjoying the moment for sure.

Q. You said yesterday that today the hole was going to look pretty big for you. Did it?

MICHAEL BLOCK: Yeah. I knew right away. I knew it on the putting green. A couple of the people just around the putting green, I made my first six putts from 10, 12, 14 feet and just dripping right in the middle of the cup, and I told my caddie John, I said, John, we just need to get on the green. That's all we need to do is get on the green.

Play smart. If we get in trouble, hit it out to 15 feet. I've got a 60 percent chance of making it from 15 feet right now. That's kind of the deal. Play smart, and it's kind of nice having that as a weapon.

Q. You've just spent four and a half hours in the

company of Justin Rose. What strikes you about him both as a character and as a golfer?

MICHAEL BLOCK: About Justin? World-class human, world-class golfer. Mr. McGinley talked about it last night on the television coverage how he would take me under the wing and take care of me, and he did. He was fantastic. Rosey and his caddie were fantastic. Couldn't have asked for a better pairing. Along with my first pairing with Hayden and Taylor on Thursday and Friday. I've had very nice pairings. I have no idea who I'm going to be paired with tomorrow. But I'll be sure that they have a good time.

Q. In what way was he fantastic?

MICHAEL BLOCK: Conversation, applauding good shots, whatever it might be. We talked family, we talked golf. He's super supportive, and couldn't have asked for -- he was like a buddy, just walking down the street. The coolest part in the world is to know that down the road I'm playing in the Farmers or American Express next year or maybe the PGA Championship that Rosey is sitting there at the players' lounge having lunch, I'll sit down with him.

Q. When you haven't spent your whole adult life in the middle of roars and ovations like that, is there a way you'd describe what they're like?

MICHAEL BLOCK: Yeah, I told my caddie, I go, if I make this putt on 18, this is going to be the closest thing I'm ever going to get to hitting like a Game 7 home run. I literally told my caddie even before I putted on 18 because I literally felt that man, if that putt went in on 18 for birdie to go to 1-under total, it would have been an experience unlike any experience I've ever had in my life, but the coolest thing about it was I still had that feeling and moment even without making it, which is even cooler.

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