

KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship

Harbor Shores

Benton Harbor, Michigan, USA

Friday, May 24, 2024

Richard Bland

Quick Quotes

Q. Richard Bland with us at the 84th KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship. Richard, 66 today to get he to 12-under. How you feeling heading into the weekend?

RICHARD BLAND: Yeah, pretty good. Yeah, probably wasn't as easy as it probably was yesterday. I kind of -- I struggled you a little bit on the greens with my pace; my strike was a little off.

So, yeah, I was kind of struggling to get it to the hole on a few putts. I'll work on that a little bit this afternoon.

But, yeah, tee to green there is no issues there. But I haven't really had any all year, so, yeah, if I can just get the putter warmed up a little bit, then hopefully there is a couple good scores in me for the weekend.

Q. You talked outside about the putter strike. What do you do to work on that?

RICHARD BLAND: You know, I think sometimes I address it a little bit at the hill. My tendency is always probably to slightly pull, which most right-handers do, then it kind of -- so I'm going to hit it out of the hill or left of center, and even on those sort of -- I'm not the most aggressive putter anyway way. I'm not someone that really racks the ball at the hole for it to go sort of two, three feet by.

So, yeah, if my strike is off, then I'm going to struggle with the pace. Yeah, I think I've just got to be a little bit more diligent on where I start -- where the ball was positioned in the club face. Maybe even if that's the tendency, maybe address it a little out of the tug.

You're talking millimeters. It's not like I've got to move the ball an inch or anything like that. It's just millimeters. Yeah, I'll do a little bit of work on that this afternoon. It's nothing serious. Just a minor adjustment.

Q. When you walk off the golf course, what's the mix



between maybe leaving a couple out there and being encouraged by how many opportunities you...

RICHARD BLAND: Yeah, I probably didn't hole 50-foot of putts to for 5-under, so I know that if I can hole a few 15-, 20-footers, then there is a low one. If I keep playing the way I'm playing.

But we know what golf is like. Probably start holing a few putts and the long game goes. That's what golf is.

But, no, yeah, my tee to green game has been pretty much where it's been for a while now. I don't really see that changing. Just got to tidy it up a little bit on the greens.

Q. Richard, how were the conditions today's compared to yesterday?

RICHARD BLAND: I think the greens -- the front nine greens are probably a little softer, which is probably to be expected. I don't know if they put any water on the greens last night or early this morning, but they were a little softer so you could be a little bit more aggressive with your yardages as regards to where you're trying to land it.

Then, yeah, the back nine you could see that they were firming up just as we were sort of coming in down the sort of last, five, six.

If you're hitting it from the fairway you're going to have pretty much good control of it. It's not like I'm hitting any medium to long iron into any of the par-4s. I am hitting short irons in most of time, so I should be able to have reasonable control of the ball.

Q. This doesn't surprise you as kind of the birdiefest that it's been out here?

RICHARD BLAND: Yeah, you know, there are some tricky pins. Like I've said, if you don't drive it in the fairway then you're going to leave yourself -- it's going to be tough to make pars because you're not going to be aggressive to flags. You could have 40, 50 feet with four or five breaks in it.



So it's important to drive it well. Yeah, then that allows you to be more aggressive. So, if you do drive it well, I would expect guys to be making some good birdies.

Q. Any change in how you approached round two mentally?

RICHARD BLAND: No, no. Just one shot -- the old cliché, just one shot at a time. Just each hole as it comes. Don't get too far ahead, like we always say.

No, it was just the same: just try and post the lowest score I could. I would like to be a couple lower, but it is what it is.

Q. Thoughts on it being the last year here, this tournament, this event?

RICHARD BLAND: Yeah, I heard that. Obviously it's my first year so I don't really have too much more experience than that. Yeah, it's a great venue. Obviously KitchenAid have been a tremendous sponsor of this event for it seems quite a while now.

Obviously before I was eligible to play. You probably don't look at who is sponsoring events and I don't really look too much at what the seniors were doing, apart from if I knew someone that was playing.

But, yeah, hopefully KitchenAid will keep sponsoring this event. It's a fantastic, well-run event. As every event is over here whenever I've played PGA TOUR or anything else. It's always so well run. Everybody right down to the volunteers are great.

Q. Going off how it is the last year here, was there something that sticks out to you about this course? Anything special, like a hole or...

RICHARD BLAND: No, not really. Yeah, it's just -- it just flows really well. It's just a really nice golf course to play, especially if you're hitting it well. Then you're not putting yourself under too much stress.

But there is some really nice holes.

15 is a really good par-5.

16 is a good -- it's a good finish.

17 is a good par-3.

And 18 is a good par-4 to finish.

Someone has to hit some good shots coming in on Sunday if they want to win. Hopefully that's me.

Q. What was your best birdie today?

RICHARD BLAND: Probably 5 because I dropped my first shot on 4. Kind of didn't hit a great shot in there and probably an up and down I would probably expect to make but didn't.

And then as I was hitting my tee shot, literally as I was starting my downswing, a fly came straight across the ball. I saw it and I hit it in the left trap, which for me that hole is -- I would've been reaching that, especially with it being downwind and off the right. It's just -- just send it down there, so I could have probably hit maybe even iron into that hole today.

So I had to up and down it from 130 yards for birdie, so that was a good to get the momentum back straight after the bogey on 4. That was pretty important.

Q. Just by human nature, have you been curious how you would do week to week against this group?

RICHARD BLAND: Of course, of course. It's not something on my radar right now to be playing, so, yeah, I want to play LIV as long as I can, but also I know -- I don't really know what I want to do when that ends, whether I do want to come and try and play out here.

This is the hardest tour in the world to try to get on to. I would have to go to the qualifying school as it stands right now.

But I will see. I will cross that bridge when I come to it, whether I decide to hang them up or carry on playing. My wife seems to think I'll never retire, but, yeah, we'll see. Even if I did win here this week, and there is a lot of golf to be played before then, I don't know if the PGA tour WOULD ALLOW me to play Champions.

Just going to play the best I can over the weekend and see what happens.

Q. Was going to ask you finally, golf is all about peaks and valleys. Scott Dunlap will come in here soon. Up there on the board with you. Just won. Hadn't won in ten years. I know you found something magical late in your career on the European Tour. What do you think you found that late?

RICHARD BLAND: I wish I knew. Honestly wish I knew. Yeah, people ask the question, what are you doing different? I haven't worked on anything different in 15 years really. I guess you get the confidence from winning, of course, so you get that belief that you know you can get

it across the line.

But yeah, I wish I had a dollar for every time I was asked that. I probably wouldn't be playing. Be sitting on a beach somewhere.

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