

John Deere Classic

Friday, July 5, 2024

TPC Deere Run

Silvis, Illinois, USA

Eric Cole

Quick Quotes

THE MODERATOR: 3-under today in windy conditions. How did today's round go and what are you looking forward to for the weekend?

ERIC COLE: Good overall. Would've been nice to get a few more and not bogey the last hole, but, no, it was good. Playing solid so hopefully keep playing that way the next two days and hopefully have a good weekend.

Q. We can hear the wind outside. How different did the course play today?

ERIC COLE: Yeah, very different. Obviously the wind is stronger, but I thought it was bouncing around quite a bit direction-wise. Made picking the right club really difficult. It was noticeably harder today.

But like I said earlier, the greens are still soft and very good, so it's still scorable if you're hitting good shots and really paying attention to the wind.

Q. Fairways firming up with the wind?

ERIC COLE: I wouldn't say -- they're firmer than yesterday, I would say that, but they're not firm. They're still pretty soft.

So we played the ball down today which I think was a good move because there wasn't a lot of mud on them. Still, the ball wasn't rolling anywhere or anything like that.

Q. Couple of bogeys there then bounced back with a birdie on 17. Pleased with the way you responded there? I know you talked about the bogey on 9. But just the way you put those two bogeys behind you.

ERIC COLE: Yeah, for sure. You know, the scores are low here usually, so to make two bogeys in a row isn't a good thing, so to kind of get one back right way was good.

You know, it's one of those things that happens. Sometimes you make bogeys, but hopefully you make enough birdies to offset them.



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Q. What's been going right in the game the last couple weeks?

ERIC COLE: Yeah, not really sure. Just been playing a little bit better. We've kind of been on a long stretch of playing really difficult courses and the margins are really thin on those courses. Results haven't been there but haven't felt like I've been playing all that badly.

If you're just a little bit off in some of those bigger events, stuff like that, it looks like you're playing worse than it is.

So I'm going with that.

Q. No swing change or adjustment?

ERIC COLE: No. Still working on the same stuff, just same stuff I kind of always work on. But, yeah, I just think the courses are a little more forgiving and I think I'm kind of trending in a good direction.

Q. You four spotted here in 2021.

ERIC COLE: That's right.

Q. The king of the minis. Do you pinch yourself sometimes to think about where you are and how everything came together last year?

ERIC COLE: For sure. I feel unbelievably lucky to be out here on TOUR. I think that's probably why I play as much as I do. So it's just a great spot to be playing, and I like I said, I'm very fortunate and lucky to be out here, so I try and play as much as I can.

Q. Do you dwell on the long journey to get here?

ERIC COLE: I don't think about it too much. I'm definitely, like I said, very thankful. I've played golf in a lot of places and taken a long road to be here, so happy to be here.

Q. Did you always believe?

ERIC COLE: I would like to think so, but probably some bumps in there where I was doubting it like anyone who plays golf does. It's a precise sport and at the professional level there is a very fine line between having success and

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not.

I think my career is a good indication of that. Yeah, no, I'm just like I said very happy and thankful to be here.

Q. 12-under heading into the weekend. With how the conditions are this afternoon, do you like where you're sitting heading into the weekend?

ERIC COLE: Yeah, like I said earlier, I would like to be more under par obviously, but if I'm going to be in the top 5 or top 10 or whatever it ends up being, it's a good spot to be. Hopefully just look to improve that over the next couple days.

Q. You went back to a mini tour event last year in the middle of your success. A, what motivated you to do that? And B, you got to be the poster guy out there for this can happen.

ERIC COLE: I played a couple mini tour events. Assume you're talking about the one in Pittsburgh?

Q. Yeah.

ERIC COLE: So that one was really impactful for me in continuing my dream of playing the PGA TOUR. So the guy that ran that tournament passed away last year and this is -- I guess two years ago, but last year was the last edition of it.

I thought it was really important to be there, and it had a huge impact on me continuing my dream of playing the PGA TOUR. With it being the last edition it felt like the right thing to do and an important spot to be.

Q. What's the reception like when you go back out there? The got to be a god to those guys.

ERIC COLE: I don't know about that. I think it's good. I'm still friends with a lot of guys that play mini tours. I check on their scores all the time and see how they're doing.

Hopefully they see how I'm doing and realize that it's not that big of a difference between what they're doing and what I'm doing now. Hopefully it's kind of like maybe some light at the end of the tunnel or something to where they're not that far from being out here and competing on the PGA TOUR.

Q. Talk about that fine line. What did you discover that made you say, hey, I can do this?

ERIC COLE: Yeah, I don't know if it was any one thing in particular. For me, it was more performing when I need to.

I felt like I always had the game to play out here and it was just a big barrier for me getting here.

So the biggest thing was just when you have an opportunity or a chance to compete in the tournament or Q-School, it's a little bit -- in my case, I needed to perform in that scenario and kind of finally got over that hurdle. Once that happens, things can start to happen pretty quickly.

Q. Did that experience -- how did you grow through those years?

ERIC COLE: Yeah, playing mini tour golf and maybe some bad golf in there teaches you a lot of things about yourself and everything like that.

So it's taught me a lot. Everything I am today is probably because of a lot of those experiences.

Q. To be Rookie of the Year in your 30s has to be an interesting feeling anyway. John Hamilton actually is from this area.

ERIC COLE: Oh, really? Nice.

Q. He was a little older than you.

ERIC COLE: Yeah, nice. Yeah, Rookie of the Year is a huge honor. You only get a chance to win it once in your career, so to be able to win it was, like I said, a huge honor and something I'm very proud of.

I got that little connection with my mom winning Rookie of the Year exactly 50 years before I did, so that's a really cool thing to share with her.

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