

Sony Open in Hawaii

Friday, January 14, 2022

Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Waialae Country Club

Russell Henley

Quick Quotes

Q. 63 today; holed out for eagle there on nine. Take me through another great round.

RUSSELL HENLEY: Yeah, started out with a nice, two great shots on 10 to about three feet with a wedge for birdie.

Really made some nice par saves. Hit a couple wrong clubs off the tee. Made good swings, but on the doglegs had to hit it through the dogleg and be in the rough, and from there you play defense out here.

Hit some poor chips and made some good par saves as well. Putter kept my round going on that side.

And then the front I started hitting a few more fairways and giving myself some good looks and executing there from 10 to 15 feet or less. Nice to finish like that. I don't remember the last time I had two eagles in the same round, but it's definitely exciting.

Q. Would you say you took advantage of there not being any wind again today?

RUSSELL HENLEY: I think so. It wasn't blowing what my app said it was going to blow, so it was a little bit of an adjustment. We got used to it.

And it wasn't blowing like it can out here. I think that was definitely an advantage.

Q. How long do you think it took that adjustment to take place? First couple holes?

RUSSELL HENLEY: I just guess the first couple holes it wasn't blowing too much and picks up to five, eight miles per hour, and starts making a little bit of a difference in your decision making on what to hit.

Yeah, but not a hard wind compared to what it can be.

Q. You talked about a number of par saves. Wondering how many of those were missing the green



and how many of them were maybe speed of chips or putts that were coming up short, running by?

RUSSELL HENLEY: You mean like how many of those par saves did I hit a poor chip?

Q. Or putt.

RUSSELL HENLEY: Yeah, I had very poor speed on No. 12. Hit it about six feet past the hole and made it coming back. I consider that a save. Wasn't an easy putt to judge the speed, but didn't hit a good putt.

And then 14 I went under my chip. Just hit a very bad chip. Made about an eight-footer.

Then on 17 I actually hit a pretty nice chip. It was out of the rough and was fortunate didn't go in the bunker. But hit a nice chip to about five feet. I would say that was a good chip.

And then holed the bunker shot on 18.

Q. That was for a three?

RUSSELL HENLEY: That was for a three, yeah. Actually made that same shot last year. It was kind of cool to do it two years in a row.

Q. Have to start aiming there.

RUSSELL HENLEY: I know, I know. My caddie told me the front of that bunker is actually better. I believed him that time; maybe I should believe him more often.

Yeah, so couple poor chips, couple decent chips, but making those five to eight footers was helpful.

Q. I would think especially given the conditions of rough here and the rollouts and whatnot, dropping a shot here doesn't feel like the end of the world like some courses, or does it?

RUSSELL HENLEY: I think depends on where you are in the tournament. I felt like when I was -- dropped a shot at



1, just a poor judgment on my second shot into the green, I hit it over, one spot you can't do.

A little disappointing, but considering I was 10-under par I didn't feel like I was panicking or anything. So I think it all depends how you're playing, but certainly without the wind you can make some birdies out here.

Q. I don't know how long it's been since you had the nice duel with Scott Langley for your first win.

RUSSELL HENLEY: I think it was like ten years ago. 2013, so...

Q. Almost ten years ago.

RUSSELL HENLEY: I'm not good at math. Add it up.

Q. Does it feel like it?

RUSSELL HENLEY: Kind of. I feel like it feels more like seven. Ten is a lot. I think this is my tenth Sony, so whatever that is.

Q. Feel like you been out here that long?

RUSSELL HENLEY: Not really. I look back at a lot of golf and the up and downs of the game, but doesn't seem like this is my tenth one, you know.

So crazy.

Q. You need a nap now.

RUSSELL HENLEY: I need a nap. I would love a nap.

Q. How stoked were you when the Dawgs won the national title?

RUSSELL HENLEY: Yeah, I just couldn't believe that. When Ringo had the interception and was running it back, all of us were huddled around the screen jumping up and down. Alabama is just so good. I don't really look forward to it that much. I kind of dread watching the game against them. They're all so good.

It was just awesome. I mean, Georgia really came ready to play and got one, so it was exciting.

Q. How does it feel to be out here in Hawaii but representing your home state and hometown?

RUSSELL HENLEY: Yeah, feels good. You know, I'm thankful I grew up on kind of the same sort of course like turfwise, bermudagrass, so definitely feel like I'm -- feels

kind of like I'm at home a little bit, but I know I'm really far away.

Yeah, it's cool to be from Georgia.

Q. Anything you're looking forward to in terms of the rest of the year? How important is starting off the year strong?

RUSSELL HENLEY: I don't know how important it is. I think out here you just have to try to capitalize when you're playing well. But there is a lot of golf to be played throughout the year. We play so much golf.

And so I'm really just trying to be consistent overall and just stay patient and not wear myself out worrying about it so much.

Q. Just wondering, is it nice that every year you start the calendar year you get to go to a tournament that you won right way in your career, and does it make the start of the year a little bit more enjoyable for you?

RUSSELL HENLEY: I think so. I mean, I've won three times, so not many tournaments I get to say I'm a past champ, so pretty cool. Place hasn't changed with the clubhouse and everything. Have a lot of really good memories, so, yeah, it's a cool start to the year for sure.

Q. Then you've talked a lot about how much you like this place, but it is also a fun course knowing you can go out and doing what you did on the last six holes and put these stretches of golf together like you did at the end of this round.

RUSSELL HENLEY: Yeah, I think so. If you hit the shots you can get rewarded out here. If you're hitting the ball straight and hitting crisp shots, you're going to typically get rewarded.

So I think just knowing that keeps me in it.

Q. You mentioned over there that you gotten off to some really great starts.

RUSSELL HENLEY: Yeah.

Q. Is there any common thread you've noticed in some of those instances you'll be cognizant of this weekend?

RUSSELL HENLEY: I think I've started to learn a little bit what my tendencies are with my swing when I get a little off. So knowing how to work on that, put the time in on the range with that.

And I don't think there is really any secret or anything you really change. The more you're there the more you can be comfortable with it. Still got a long way to go, but obviously just looking to keep believing in my game for the next two days.

Q. Last one. Having won in college a pro event, I think that's right.

RUSSELL HENLEY: Yeah.

Q. Nationwide and winning your first tournament as a card carrying member, if you think back, did it take you long to realize this is actually a pretty hard game or did you know it right away?

RUSSELL HENLEY: Didn't take me very long to realize it's really hard. Had a lot of up and downs my first year, second year, I mean, every year, so didn't take me long to realize it's really hard. After this first one, I remember thinking it might be easier than I thought.

But it's not. (Laughter.)

FastScripts by ASAP Sports