

THE PLAYERS Championship

Thursday, March 11, 2021

Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, USA

TPC Sawgrass

Gary Woodland

Quick Quotes

Q. How would you assess your round today?

GARY WOODLAND: It was nice. It was nice to get off to a good start. I've struggled getting off to starts for a long time, so to get off to a good start here -- the golf course is phenomenal. It's the best shape I've ever seen it. Greens are a little receptive right now, which I'm sure by the end of the week they won't be as receptive so it was nice to get off to a good start because the golf course is only going to get tougher.

Q. You mentioned the greens were receptive. Do you think that maybe 17 was a little firmer than other ones?

GARY WOODLAND: 17's definitely firmer. And that back pin, that's just -- it's back there again tomorrow. It's tough. But that green is definitely firmer than the rest of them. The wind's blowing a little bit and it is helping today, which makes it a little bit easier, because you got a little short wedge in there. But it's tough. I mean, like I said, the golf course is only going to continue to get firmer and that green's going to get firmer I'm sure like the rest of them.

Q. Do you think there's a reason why you've gotten off to some slower starts recently?

GARY WOODLAND: It's a confidence deal. For so long I was beat up and then I got in some bad habits, and now I'm trying to play my way out of them. That's the only thing I can do. It's great on the practice range, it's great in the practice rounds. I've just got to get out and play golf. I've rehabbed the body and the golf swing, now it's time to rehab the mind a little bit, but I'm happy with the way I started today and I'm happy with the way everything's going.

Q. The body is still feeling good?

GARY WOODLAND: Yeah, the body's great. I'm pain-free which gives me a lot of confidence. It allows me to continue to practice and prepare like I want to. So now it's just about playing and I got to get out there and play through it.



Q. Is it something that you're afraid that would sprout up again?

GARY WOODLAND: It definitely could. If it does, I'm going to go under the knife. So I've kind of -- I'm okay with that now. I'm not trying to fight it.

But the way my body's trending right now, it's as good and pain free as I've been in years. So continue to do what we do and hopefully it stays that way and I can go play golf.

Q. Unrelated to this tournament, I wanted to get you on next week. A lot of guys in our area don't play that, but there's a handful of you guys that make a point every year to be out there. What does it mean to you to play that? Why do you make sure that you're always in that field?

GARY WOODLAND: One, it's a great golf course. I like harder golf courses and it's one of the hardest golf courses we see. It's a demanding course, so great ball strikers' golf course. I think that sets up good for me.

Some guys don't like to stay at home. I like being at home. I like being in my own bed. Obviously we've got fans out now, which helps, so I'll have some friends and family out, but I like being at home. I like being in my own stuff. Honda allows me to do that. I always played Bay Hill before I moved down there, down south, and since I've moved down I've played it every year.

Q. What's your memory of that? You talk about the golf course, that's why a lot of people don't play. What is your memory of that golf course?

GARY WOODLAND: It's just a brutal golf course. Obviously the wind dictates most of that. It's usually in great shape and it's just hard. So you got to drive the ball in the fairway and then try to get off to a good start because the finishing there, the last six holes there, are as good as they get coming down the stretch. So whoever wins it earns it, and I love being down there contending.

Q. I wanted to ask you how you were feeling.

GARY WOODLAND: Yeah, I'm great. Pain-free. As good



as I've been. I put so much work, I just said, into the body and the golf swing, I need to put some work into the mind a little bit. I need to get some more confidence going.

Q. What was the issue?

GARY WOODLAND: I have a torn labrum in the hip, and that just transitioned everything else. My back locked up from that, and then I got in some horrible habits in the golf swing trying to protect the hip. That's where I should not have played last year. I honestly think if it wasn't COVID, I think Steinberg would have been out here and he would have pulled me off the golf course. I didn't have anybody around and I just played through it and got into some horrible habits and got into some bad places. It's nice to be pain free and allow myself to do what I want so now I just got to get confidence.

Q. Did you fix the labrum?

GARY WOODLAND: They wanted to. I have not done that yet. I just changed the way I rehabbed, changed the way I trained and so far I've been pain-free since January.

Q. If you had decided to do surgery, how long would you be out?

GARY WOODLAND: It would be six months. They don't want to do it now because it's healthy around it. They've injected it. I've had a bunch of injections. They don't want to continue to inject it, so hopefully I can avoid it with the way I'm training.

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