

Aberdeen Standard Investments Scottish Open

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North Berwick, Scotland

The Renaissance Club

Robert MacIntyre

Press Conference

Q. Tell us how you would rate the first six months of season.

ROBERT MacINTYRE: So for it's been really good, a lot of learning experiences. Obviously playing all the majors, WGCs, all the big events, playing against the best. It's not been easy but it's a learning experience as much as it is I'm trying to compete. So everything's been great. I feel like I'm competing now. I'm learning how to compete in the States.

Going forward, just play golf. Enjoy myself. I still am enjoying myself, which is pretty easy to do as long as I have the right people around me, stuff like that, I'll always enjoy myself, but just let what's going to happen, happen. Work hard and work smart and if I can do that, then I'm sure the golf will come.

Q. When you got the bad news you had to pull out of Ireland; can you take us through the timeline?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: Yeah, it was perfect timing. Sunday night at 5.00 I get a message. I didn't know if it was a joke or not but I waited about ten minutes and then phoned Stoddy, my manager. I said, "I think I've just been tracked-and-traced."

Yeah, we just had to do what we had to do. I straightaway phoned Mike. I had a word to Mike and he went, "Yeah."

And phoned David, as well, and he's like, "I had a phone call."

It is what it is. We had to just take it on the chin and I think it was four days, to isolate, done that, got tested, negative again, and just go about it again.

Q. Is that when you said you got a text on a Sunday night, was that the week after you got back from Torrey Pines?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: Yeah, six days. Just one of them



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unlucky things.

Q. So presumably, somebody, no real way of knowing, somebody on flight you think was possibly?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: Yeah, it had to be. When I go home, I literally don't move from golf course, house, my family. No one in my family's tested positive. So it's just literally on the flight.

Q. And having been through that, how nice is it to be a free man again with what's looking like a fantastic field in Scotland?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: It's great. Obviously disappointed not to play last week. Was going to use it as like a warmup for this week but it wasn't to be. It's a bit of a mad scramble the last couple days trying to get myself ready. But it's all part of the game just now and part of travelling life and you have to get set when you get hit with it.

Q. With what happened there in Ireland, getting track-and-traced like that, will you take extra precautions this week and next week to make sure you don't get pinged the week of The Open?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: Pretty simple. Don't travel with anyone. Don't be around anyone. Just literally spend it with friends -- not even friends, family. I mean, people that are going to be at your door at home. I'm literally not -- I was meant to go on the charter flight down but still -- although it's slim, there's still a chance. I'm not even doing that.

I'm going to jump that car and drive down, simple as that. I've got to take no risk now, unless I test positive, unluckily from whatever, filling up the car, but again, you sanitise after I do that just now.

Once you get hit with a bit of bad luck, you're always on your guard. Now it's part of it. I've just got to keep myself to myself as I always do. Just don't do something stupid.

Q. Are you at least sharing the driving with someone?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: Maybe. I don't know. It depends how this week goes. If it goes well, then I'll have to. If it doesn't, then I'll jump in the car and do the whole thing

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myself.

Q. Is it quite hard as a sociable person not being able to go for a drink or something like that?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: Yeah, it's tough. Some of my pals, even if I'm at home, if I've got two weeks off normal time and I've done my isolation and they are like, "Are you coming for dinner and whatnot one night?"

It's like, no, I'm not doing it because it's not worth the risk. You can't, just now for me with big events, I'm not risking what I can gain from my job with just going and grabbing a meal. I'd rather have one of the boys or one of the boys around for a meal at the house rather than go to a restaurant. I'm not the best good but a steak -- it's hard to burn a steak.

Q. Are you quite a good loner? Are you all right on your own?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: I'm not bad. I've got a PlayStation. Me and my pals are always on that. When I travel, I travel with a PlayStation, six o'clock at night --

Q. Not while you're driving?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: Not while I'm driving. I'm quite good at singsongs in the car on my own and putting on tunes back from 2000 and just sing along.

But there's only so much time you can spend on your own. I just get on with it. My pals keep me sane. My family, the same. If I can enjoy myself as much as I can just now, that's what I have to do.

Q. Jon Rahm spoke after he won his major and he obviously had that situation. He said he took the time and made it work for me. Is that something that you'll try and emulate?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: I mean, you're trying to. You're trying to stay positive. Everything I'm trying to do is be positive. It's hard to do at times but I mean, after kind of the Monday, once I got track-and-traced on a Monday, I was like, there's nothing we can do here. Told we can't travel, so just try and get on with it and get ready for this week, whether it was indoor putting. I couldn't hit golf balls over the balcony; the beach was too busy. We try to do our best.

Q. I was laughing there, Stoddy is a classic loner who sits in his car all the time. Obviously this week, you're going into The Scottish Open World No. 51. How do you handle expectations, your own expectations this

week, and the expectations of the others?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: My own expectations are zero. I mean, I'm here to play golf and enjoy myself like every week. I don't expect myself to do anything. Obviously I've got my standards. I'm not coming here not to try and win a golf tournament. Everyone that's in the field is trying to win.

But outside of that, what am I expecting from the week? I don't know. I just take what I'm given. I've put in the work. I'm still putting in the work. You just, yeah, let what happens -- let what hits you, hit you. Try not to get in your own way and get on with it; it's as simple as that.

Q. You've been handed one of the marquee groups with Lee Westwood and Collin Morikawa, you played with Rory and Rickie two years ago. What did you learn that day that now two years on you can use to your advantage?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: It's going to be good there's going to be crowds. So I mean, as we always talk about, you're in Scotland. There's not going to be many of them against you. Everyone's going to be trying to support you, or the majority of them are going to support you and what you're doing.

So you've just got to do that. Obviously playing with the better, or the higher-named, higher-ranked players is always good. They are going to play well and they are going to drag you along and vice versa; if you're playing well, you'll hopefully drag them along. Just mark your card and them fly they can mark a low score.

Q. You're the only Scot in the field at the moment in The Open. Are you slightly surprised at that? It's been a slightly different year with no Open final qualifying in Scotland, etc., before you slightly surprised to be the only one at the moment?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: It's tough. It's not easy to get in and I don't know if I would get in World Ranking-wise in the last few weeks but it's not easy to do it.

But obviously the qualifiers, a lot of guys didn't go and try and qualify through the qualifiers because it's clash of Ireland, one of the best events on Tour, and you can see why they didn't go and try that way, and there's where a lot of guys did qualify.

But there's spots this week, so I wouldn't be surprised if someone or a couple of guys get it this week.

Q. How difficult will it be to chill out this week and



relax and enjoy it, given although your own expectations are not great, there will be home expectations on you?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: What you guys or what anybody puts on me, I've not read a newspaper in about six years, when my dad used to come home on a Saturday morning. So I've not read a newspaper in five or six years. What you guys put on me is what you guys put on me. Why worry about it?

My biggest critic is my dad. So no matter what I do this week, he's going to criticise something, but that's just normal. But I'm just going to go and I can chill out. I'm one of the best people at chilling out. I could go and chill out for months, never mind a couple of days and a couple of hours, I can do that. I've got the right people around me to do that. I've got the good friends at home, I've got my good PlayStation that travels with me now during the COVID times. I'll be able to relax, even if it's not going to well sore if it's going really well, I've got something to switch off to.

Q. How good is it to have fans back? It's a wonderful event without fans but to have thousand of fans, just the atmosphere and ambiance, what difference does that make for you?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: It's brilliant. This is probably going to be the first event I've played in in Europe that's had fans since Qatar a year ago, so it's going to be brilliant. Especially being on home turf, they are hopefully going to support and help me look for golf balls. It's going to be brilliant. The Scottish Open, no matter what's going on is always good for us Scotts and it's going to be brilliant with fans back again.

Q. And of course, the top Scot at the tournament receives Jock MacVicar Memorial Trophy; that's a marvellous gesture, how special would it be to get your hands on that?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: It would be brilliant. Obviously not just that one, but the even bigger prize at the end of the week. But again, I've just got to take it one shot at a time, one day at a time. I've obviously been hard for two weeks so it's been hard to prepare, but we're as prepared as we can with what we've been given and we'll just get on with it and see how we go.

Q. I think it was this tournament last year that you and Mikey first got together, Scottish Open last year. Just wondering how that relationship has evolved, and what he brings to sort of Team MacIntyre?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: It's been brilliant, other than moaning about the umbrella being in the bag whether it's rain or shine, he's been great. He's brought a lot of maturity, not just to the golf course but to me. I'm a moaner on the golf course. I'm Scottish; so I'm to myself and he just blanks; doesn't bother him so he's thick skinned. The two of us get on great. And I think it's a good partnership.

So far, so good, and he's doing the right things. He's good at not just being there on the golf course and the range, he's there off the golf course. Like we've got a good relationship off the golf course that if something's not so well off the course, I'll speak to him, vice versa for him, and it's a good combo I think.

Q. I take it you've obviously been out on the course. There was some torrential stuff on the weekend, is that going to make much of a difference, take a bit of the fire away?

ROBERT MacINTYRE: It has been wet the last two days, as well. The golf course has softened up a little bit and the weather work doesn't look like there will be too much wind which is not the best. But it's what we're getting given.

But the course is great. There's a lot more -- I even spoke to Gerry yesterday when I walked off yesterday in pouring rain, I said there's a lot more definition on the golf course. Like you're standing on tees and it does look more daunting. And I think that's a great thing because you know you're not standing up there and smashing driver like you could before. Although there's certain holes where you were like, you know what, I don't mind hitting in there. It's a bit patchy in parts, but it's long enough that with an iron, a longer iron, it can wrap the longer stuff around the shaft and get you, but the course is looking really good this year.

Q. Did you think any of the tweaks were necessary after kind of 2019? There was a few kind of moaning about the test that was on offer.

ROBERT MacINTYRE: I mean, links golf, if you put the standard of field on any links golf course with soft condition, soft fairways and greens, they will more than likely rip any golf course apart, no matter which one it was, maybe a few like St. Lytham.

But links golf is designed for the wind and some sort of weather. But if you get that, then every links golf course will bite back and that's what you need. When it's flat calm and soft, you watch some of those tournaments and it's flat calm and soft, guys are just going to take dead aim no matter what club they have got in.

So this place is looking good. It's longer. There are certain holes with this wind direction just now are playing really long. So I'm looking forward to seeing what it's going to play like.

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