

U.S. Senior Open Championship

Thursday, June 23, 2022
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, USA
Saucon Valley C.C. (Old Course)

Paul Goydos

Quick Quotes

THE MODERATOR: Paul Goydos, 2-under 69. Great playing out there, Paul. Could you talk us through your round.

PAUL GOYDOS: Yeah, rain and right from warming up -- I'm from California. This is more rain than we've had in ten years, it seems like. We need this over there.

I'm really not a big fan of playing in the rain. I'm the guy who wants to play on domed golf courses and the whole nine yards.

Starting on 10, I hit a good shot on 10, got it on the green and had a good two-putt.

11, which is going to be a tough green to putt all week, I hit my first putt maybe eight feet by and made it coming back. If I don't make that putt, I'd probably shoot 75, and we're not talking here. You get in a bad mood and it's raining and whatnot.

I parred 12.

14 -- 13, hole couldn't have played any longer. I could not have hit a better drive and I could not have hit a better 5-wood on the front of the green. I had a 60-footer and made it.

And then the next hole, I hit it in the front right bunker and made that. So all of a sudden, I know the weather's tough and it's playing hard, and I'm having every good possible thing is happening.

I made the putt on 11, I hole the long putt on 13, and I hole the bunker shot on 14. At that point, the world is smiling at me.

I'll admit the rain kind of let up a touch around the turn, and I made some good solid pars, made a good birdie on 1. Drove it in the rough on 5, which you just can't do in the rain. You can't do it anyways, but in the rain it's that much



worse.

I just basically had a pitchout and made bogey, made a good bogey there, and came in with four really good -- made a good par putt on 7.

Really every hole out there, maybe you're seeing birdies on the par-5s, maybe you're seeing a birdie on 10, but that's it. There aren't any birdie holes out there that I can see.

If the rain keeps up this hard -- and rain makes it harder to some extent -- I would think even-par by the end of the week would be a good score.

Q. We'll have California sunshine the next three days. How do you think the course is going to change?

PAUL GOYDOS: I don't know how warm it's going to be. It's probably going to dry out a little bit, so this soaking rain is not helping that. The course is going to play long probably the entire week.

The greens will be quasi-receptive, but being receptive on this greens isn't -- there's a lot of ups and overs here. It would be nice to land it in the lower part and bounce it over to the back; can't do that now.

I think the golf course -- I mean, you would expect -- and what do I know -- that maybe with the forecast it might have been set up a touch easier today.

If this is easier, holy hell, it's going to be a long weekend.

Q. This is for the people watching at home that are not big golf fans or don't know the intricacies of the game. Why is it so much harder in the rain compared to when it's dry?

PAUL GOYDOS: The biggest advantage in the rain is having a really good caddie. This is where caddies earn their money. There wasn't a single shot I hit today where my golf clubs were wet, the grips.

I never felt like there was a drop of water between my hand and the grip, and when there is, you tend to not grip it as well, you tend to have a different feel, it tends to get slippery, and all of those things.



So Chris did a fantastic job. It's just hard to grip the club. If it's just drizzling here and there -- it rained pretty steadily for four hours, and when it gets to that point everything gets saturated, and your clubs can get really slick if your caddie isn't on top of things.

Chris stayed on top of things, and most great caddies out here do. But that's the thing that's the hardest.

Of course it plays longer too obviously. The rough is harder to hit out of. It grabs your club more. It's wet. It's heavier. And the golf course plays two clubs longer every hole. There's holes where you're hitting 9-irons and now I'm hitting 7-irons and things like that.

Q. Obviously the weather was pretty miserable. Did you have any problems at all with focus?

PAUL GOYDOS: At 58 years old; you always have problems with focus. That's just part of the deal of playing the Champions Tour, or senior golf.

No, in that sense, I would actually argue the opposite. The bad weather tends to keep you a little more focused. You get very microfocused on what's this next shot.

Again, you get that a little bit more here. Every once in a while you're playing a golf tournament and you've got a 50-yard wide fairway, and you may be at 90 percent instead of 100 percent.

The USGA doesn't allow that. Their golf course setup is to penalize the guy that loses that little bit of focus, and I would say the weather kind of makes it a little bit easier to make sure you're there on each shot.

Q. One other question I had was what are your impressions of the golf course?

PAUL GOYDOS: It's hard. It's just hard. Again, I was a little -- they moved a few tees up today but not many. It's long and it's got difficult greens and it's got a lot of rough.

I would say this is as thick of rough as I played in a Senior U.S. Open, and this is my seventh or eighth one. I think it's a hard golf course.

Again, unless something funny happens, again, I think even-par is going to be a pretty good score playing the back nine on Sunday.

Q. You've been playing pretty well your last three tournaments. Anything that's kind of come together in your game?

PAUL GOYDOS: I hit the ball nicely. I hit a lot of fairways and a lot of greens today. I might have missed a couple of fairways and three or four greens, I'm not sure exactly, so that's not good.

To me, the better you hit it -- this is going to sound counterintuitive -- the easier it is to play away from the flag.

To me, if I know I'm hitting it where I'm looking on a tucked pin, it's much easier for me to hit the ball in the middle of the green and accept the 30-footer, which is what the USGA demands of your game.

When you're struggling tee to green and you're aiming at the middle of the green, you don't know where you're going to miss it sometimes so it's harder to aim -- in a sense to play safer. It's counterintuitive.

But the better I hit it, the easier it is for me to play safer, for lack of a better word.

So I came in feeling pretty good about my game. Part of that is just things are working out. I holed the bunker shots today, I make the 60-footer, I do the things to kind of keep the rounds going. I make the putt on 11 instead of miss the putt on 11.

When things aren't going well, those three things don't happen and I shoot 75. It's just kind of I'm on a pretty good run. Maybe things are working out for me, and I'm taking advantage of that. That's really it. I've driven the ball well. I hit it in the short cut once and hit it in the long stuff once today, I think, but when it gets wetter it does play wider for lack of a better word.

But I'm just kind of doing everything okay, and that's really what I need to do.

Q. You mentioned 11. When that gets drier, how much tougher will that green get?

PAUL GOYDOS: It's not often that I've sat and played a practice round -- we played it twice, played each nine twice -- but I couldn't figure out where the pin was going to be. I really couldn't find a spot that wasn't going to cause a backup.

That morning off of 10 they were just teeing off when we walked up to the tee, and I would imagine that's going to continue.

These old school golf courses have that. They were built when the greens were 8 or 9 on the Stimpmeter, not 11 on the Stimpmeter. There's a piece of me that really likes like. We used to go on TOUR and play Westchester, and they

had some crazy greens.

It makes for think, it makes you hit good shots, and sometimes bogey is good. Sometimes three-putting is okay. It's a different kind of test. We talk about testing your driving or iron play or putting. USGA tends to test your ability to cope with problems, ability to cope with what may seem unfair or may not seem right. The definition of unfair would be moving the pin for each group. They're not.

So they do a good job on these courses of testing all facets of the game, including how well you cope -- how well you problem solve. That's an important part of what we do. And that green's going to be four days of problem solving. What can I do here?

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