

U.S. Senior Open Championship

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

Rocco Mediate

Quick Quotes

THE MODERATOR: Rocco Mediate, 3-under 68. Rocco, talk us through your round today. Obviously no bogeys.

ROCCO MEDIATE: Yeah, I've never done that in a major before that I remember. I'm probably pretty sure I didn't. So that was cool as heck.

In these events, as you guys know, pars are good. Then you throw a couple birdies in, which was good. But par -- this golf course is good. It's hard. There's nothing happening. It's just dead still.

It's good. It was good. It was fun, definitely fun. Grind, that's what it's supposed to be. I'm tired. But I feel good. Be good in the morning.

Q. Do you think you got lucky with the draw going off in the afternoon?

ROCCO MEDIATE: Oh, sure. I love late-early. When I was on the regular Tour I loved it because you'd just keep going. I was hoping for one this week because I was busy early in the week and I was a little tired and I got it, so I got lucky. Absolutely.

Absolutely a good break because this morning obviously was nasty, just rain, rain, rain.

Q. The weather is supposed to improve tomorrow and into the weekend.

ROCCO MEDIATE: Yeah, supposed to be beautiful.

Q. How do you think the course is going to change and play?

ROCCO MEDIATE: Shockingly there was no mud. I got no mud. I hit it in all the fairways but two. I hit the first cut and then a rough. There's no mud so the place drains amazing, so it should firm up you would think.



They're obviously soft, but, what did he say, we got a half inch of rain? Hopefully it keeps firming up, firming up. You guys know how you like it. Just keep going. I know it's not supposed to rain anymore.

Q. Was there any particular hole or particular shot that kept the round moving forward?

ROCCO MEDIATE: Yeah, I started out okay. I hit it in the rough on 13 -- I think it was 13. I hit it out of the rough just over and short and I pitched it up -- it wasn't that hard a chip, but still, you have to do it, and I pitched it up stiff pretty much and that was my closest.

I made some good par putts because you hit it 25, 30 feet, which is good, you're putting over some interesting things. I made a lot of nice par putts today. You have to.

But I played away from a lot because with the clubs I was going in, it was no good to shoot at them.

Q. I think I overheard you say coming in here you've never played a bogey-free round in a major.

ROCCO MEDIATE: I'm pretty sure. I would bet anything on it that I haven't.

Q. So making that putt at 9 --

ROCCO MEDIATE: Huge. Yeah, huge. If I would have missed, still, I played as good as I -- I played nicely today, but it was better. It was better.

Because I just overcooked a 4-iron and that's what I -- it was a hard two-putt. Just a little shocking that it stayed short, but it was a hard two-putt, so I was fortunate there.

Q. At this stage what are your career goals?

ROCCO MEDIATE: I still want to keep playing. We pieced some things together the last couple days because I've been a mess for a while, golf swing wise we'll say.

My wife Jess, she goes, why don't you just go play? Don't you think you should have muscle memory over 37 years on this Tour? And I'm like, that's a good point.

Then a couple buddies of mine, Brian and Bill Perry and



Murph who's caddying for me, they know me like, so we just worked on some stuff that I used to do, and I went right on the golf course with it. It kept me in there.

I was in it today a lot. A lot of good tee shots, a lot of pretty good iron shots. It was kind of -- kind of have to. You can't really fake it here.

Q. Define mess.

ROCCO MEDIATE: Mess. Just not really feeling -- I don't know how to explain it. Obviously we're older but I'm in better shape than I've ever been, so that's not an excuse, right?

It just didn't feel like it used to feel. Now, should it? I don't know. Maybe I'm over -- maybe I'm thinking I should be better than I am. I don't know. But with the game I am now, I can get it around -- we can get it around anywhere. I never hit it far. I still hit it normal, far enough still, kinda.

So but it's fairways and greens here, every week, but here especially. I enjoy that.

Coming here, like I said, I wasn't real comfortable, and I hate that because these are my favorite events. This is my favorite event, whether it's this Open or the kids' U.S. Open I call it (laughter), the kids.

But it was always my favorite. It would be cool to keep the momentum going and keep hitting fairways and greens, because, yeah, you're going to miss some but you've got to miss them in the right place. I did one today and I pitched it stiff.

You're just piecing it together. But Jess' comments, they're correct, obviously. Just play. If it doesn't work, it doesn't work. It's not the end of the world. But we feel like it is the end of the world sometimes. I think all of us do.

But it's just like I said, it's been uncomfortable. Putting, and pitching has been amazing for me, and if I can just hit more than -- I'm averaging like 10, 11 greens a round on Champions. That's pathetic. I used to be better than that. That's what I mean by a mess.

Today was better, so I'm on the right path. We'll see.

Like I said, this brings -- this shows you your weakness. This is the kind of event that says, well, if you don't got it today, kid, you're going to find out quick.

That's what I love about it, even playing crappy how can you get it around here, but today I played nicely and we'll see what happens tomorrow.

Q. Just to follow up briefly, you're so excited to be here. You're just exuding. When others maybe walk in here, yeah, it's okay to be here, I'm not excited about playing some of these courses that we're on. But you're all --

ROCCO MEDIATE: It's our national Open, man. Think about it. It's the senior national championship. What else do you -- if you put it out in the street out there, I'm playing. I've never been one to go, oh, my God, this setup is so -- we all have to do it.

I never understood that. But I love the United States Open, period. It's my favorite event. The setups are my favorite. The difficulty is my favorite. It's a mental battle. It is.

But if you play good, you can play good. That didn't really make any sense, but know what I'm saying? If you hit the ball in these fairways -- I'm back on a lot of the long par-4s hitting 3- and 4-iron, so pars are wonderful.

There it is again. Pars are phenomenal. Since when did par not mean things? It always used to. Well, here it does. I don't care how perfect the weather is. What leads, 4-under? So that's an amazing round. It's afternoon but nothing going on. The wind is not going to blow all week it looks like.

But it's just my favorite event and it's our national Open. You guys make us earn it. What's wrong with that? Nothing. I've always felt that way.

Q. You mentioned about being in the best shape of your life. Do a lot of people ask you how you've lost the weight? And how do you keep it off?

ROCCO MEDIATE: I'm so stubborn that once I do something I just do it. Like I quit alcohol five years ago, and Janzen was joking, of course you did. Of course you just stopped the next day because you want to prove everybody wrong.

That was a huge part of it. But I just pay attention. I have a seven-year old little girl, and she definitely didn't deserve to grow up with an alcoholic father.

Well, no one does. But that wasn't going to happen, so I went, you know what, I've had enough, and that was the end of it. It's like, we have a bad habit in our golf swing we want it gone yesterday. It was a bad habit. Thank God it was just a habit. It came from pain all those years. I just watch. I don't diet, I don't count, I don't know what I weigh. I have no idea. I just watch what I eat, and that's it. No secrets.

When you tell guys -- people ask why I quit drinking, they're like, whoa, I can't do that. Well, that's okay, too, but that was a huge part of it. Huge.

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