

U.S. Open Championship 2021

Thursday, June 17, 2021

San Diego, California, USA

Torrey Pines Golf Course

Brooks Koepka

Flash Interview



Q. 2-under 69, talk about how important it is to get off to a good start at a U.S. Open.

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I mean, you can't win it today but you can definitely lose it. It was nice to get off to a good start, putted well, drove it well on the back nine, my front, but missed a couple fairways there, which wasn't -- I missed them on the correct side, which is what you've got to do, depending on where the pin location is and get lucky enough where you've got a decent lie and get it there.

Pretty pleased. Not the best, but I'll definitely take it.

Q. How were the conditions compared to what you saw during the practice rounds?

BROOKS KOEPKA: It's definitely blowing right now. I thought the wind picked up quite a bit right where we were around 16 to 18, making that turn. I thought the wind picked up a lot. You've got a lot of crosswinds out here. You've got to be able to drive it well and put it in the fairway. It makes it a lot tougher with the crosswinds.

Q. This is four U.S. Opens in a row now for you where you're -- I know it's only one day, but still, good start, good rounds. Obviously completely different golf courses. What do you put it to that you're able to keep doing this?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I've just got a good game plan, focused, I know what I'm doing, and I don't try to do anything I can't. It's just all about discipline in a U.S. Open. That's I guess the gist of it.

Q. Obviously you missed Winged Foot with injury last year; do you remember where you were in the process with the injury? Were you close to being able to return them or were you a long way away, and what was it like? Did you watch?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I didn't watch a shot. I was actually out here in San Diego just doing rehab. I was right up here in La Jolla, rented a house for two and a half months, something like that. But yeah, I didn't watch any of it, but I

don't watch too much golf in the off time. It's just -- yeah.

Q. You talk about sort of this major mentality that you get into in these events. Is the third hole kind of an example of that where you limited your mistake or is it sort of the opposite? Did you walk off that feeling like you had given one away?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Oh, yeah, I gave one away. That was probably the worst swing, club choice, I don't know what it was. You've got to miss that right of the flag. That ball started off 15 yards left and was drawing and the wind is off the right so it was never going to be any good. Look, you're going to make mistakes out here. You can't make double bogeys. If you can limit those to just bogeys, you're going to be all right.

Q. When you talk about a game plan, how much of it is geared toward a U.S. Open game plan and how much of it depends on the course?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Not too much. It's pretty simple. It's a lot simpler than what guys make it. Yeah, I think a lot of guys make it more difficult than it needs to be. Just got to understand where the flag is, what you're doing and where to miss it.

Q. On 8 I want to say, really good par save, what stood out, just a roundabout way of asking about your health, but it looked like from that lie and getting out of the bunker there was very good movement. Are you feeling anything at all leg-wise?

BROOKS KOEPKA: No, it feels good. I felt great. My movement is as good as it's ever been.

Q. Good shot, too, by the way.

BROOKS KOEPKA: Thank you. Movement is as good as it's ever been, strength is just getting stronger and stronger every day. It's not going to be anywhere near 100 percent for a while, but it's just creeping up closer to that number every time.

Q. After round 1, what part of your game are you



happiest with and what part of your game do you think is close but not exactly where you want it?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Happy the way I putted the ball. I putted it, I had a lot of confidence in it. Started pretty much everything right on line where I wanted to. Like I said, I'm not the most comfortable with poa. I don't enjoy putting on it, just because the ball can bounce off line so many times, but I'm not very pleased with the way I drove the ball on the back nine. Everything just kind of leaked a little right and then overadjusted on 7 and hit it left.

Shouldn't be too difficult, just go figure it out, whether it might be alignment, ball position. Usually something pretty simple.

Q. Were fans or were wind a bigger factor for you today?

BROOKS KOEPKA: The wind, yeah. I mean, the wind affects the ball, the fans don't affect it, but it's nice to have them out.

Q. How nice was it to play in front of them?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I always enjoy playing in front of them. It's nice. It's nice to see California open up and to have so many people out there early in the morning following. Probably more than I thought, but it's nice to see them out there. They're always supportive, so it's always a good thing.

Q. A couple weeks ago at the Women's Open Mel Reid said she talked to you about playing majors and said she's trying to be more like Brooks. What do you think "be more like Brooks" meant?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I have no idea but yeah I text with Mel quite a bit. I enjoy hanging out with her. She's an incredible player. She's a lot of fun and hardworking. She's got so much talent, and I don't even think she's come close to realizing how good she is and her potential. Anything I can do to help her, I'm willing to do.

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