

U.S. Senior Open Championship

Thursday, June 27, 2024
Newport, Rhode Island, USA
Newport Country Club

Steve Stricker

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Please welcome Steve Stricker to the interview room after a 4-under 66 during the first round of the 44th U.S. Senior Open here at the Newport Country Club.

Steve, that bogey on 10, how did you kind of refocus to finish strong with three birdies in the last five holes?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, and it was a bad bogey at 10 too. I was just right there on the fringe 18 feet away, 15 feet away. It was actually a good birdie opportunity, and I ran it by three feet and hard lipout on the high side.

That was disappointing because I was going along nicely, a little tougher conditions this afternoon. To give one away like that kind of hurt.

I just kept my head down really and just figured, if I could -- at that point, I was now 1-under. If I could get it to 2 or 3, it would be a good start to the tournament.

Birdieing the last is a nice way to finish. Yeah, it was a good, solid round. Hit a lot of good shots, drove the ball well, and gave myself some opportunities.

Q. Didn't miss a fairway all day. You said driver was the biggest catalyst to the round?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, and you know what, I didn't always hit driver. I played pretty smart off the tees. I hit 3-wood on 18, just the widest part of the fairway for me. It was a 3-wood, 8-iron.

Just played smart. Got it on the fairway to give myself some opportunities into the greens. The greens are soft, you know what I mean? We practiced for three days with conditions that were unlike what we had today. So you kind of had to adjust on the fly.

Q. What is that like practicing in a vastly different golf course than what you ended up seeing today?



STEVE STRICKER: It was, it was weird. Thankfully, the wind direction was the same, and I think tomorrow it switches on us a little bit. Yeah, the wind direction was the same, but you could be a little more aggressive off the tees. You know it wasn't going to run out as far as what it's been doing.

Yeah, but into the greens, it was hard to control the spin. On some shots you knew it was just going to be coming back. That was the adjustment you had to make.

Q. Yesterday you talked about using a new putter or a different style putter. How did that go today, and how did it feel for you?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, it actually went really well. Hit a lot of really good putts. Even the one I missed at 10, it was like a 90 degree lipout. I felt like I hit it right on my line. Probably hit it a little bit too firm.

I didn't know what to expect today, but it was a good start. I felt like I hit a lot of really nice putts. Left a couple right in the middle of the hole short. I thought I left the last one short right in the middle, but it ended up just the last roll getting there.

It was definitely better than what I've been doing.

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