

U.S. Senior Open Championship

Friday, June 28, 2024
Newport, Rhode Island, USA
Newport Country Club

Steve Stricker

Quick Quotes

THE MODERATOR: Please welcome Steve Stricker to the interview room here at the 44th U.S. Senior Open at Newport Country Club. Steve, another 4-under 66, second straight day. How did you find the course today?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, we played it -- again, it was what I was talking about yesterday. We came out with soft conditions yesterday. Well, today we came out with completely the opposite wind to what we've seen the course in. It was a north wind all the way around. I thought at some point it may change for us, which it's supposed to do again this afternoon, come out of the south.

But haven't seen this course in this wind before, and it was pretty steady wind right out of the chute for us today. It was a challenge. There are some holes that played a little bit easier, but some of the holes that played easy yesterday were difficult today.

You just kind of have to put your nose in that yardage book and trust where you're going and different clubs off the tees today than I hit yesterday, so it was a little bit of a school room atmosphere. You just really had to kind of pay attention and figure out what you needed to do.

Q. You birdied your last hole for the second straight day. Today it was the ninth hole. Could you talk us through that one?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, good hole. Yesterday hit 3-wood off the tee; today it was a driver, and I had I think 121 yards, and it's a tough green. But it was a hole location where you could get aggressive with it, and I got it on the right level and below the hole. I had a nice right to left up the hill putt at it and put a good stroke on it. Puttered well again today. Yeah, it was a good way to finish.

Q. You mentioned yesterday kind of that strategy off the tee with different clubs. Same thing today but just different clubs?



STEVE STRICKER: Different clubs, yeah. It was a complete -- there were holes yesterday where I hit 3-wood off the tees, and today were drivers for sure. It was probably just the opposite. Whatever I hit yesterday, I just hit the opposite club today. Just playing a totally different wind.

It was probably 5 to 10, maybe 15 miles an hour, especially early on. We had a pretty good breeze right away early on.

Just tried to be patient.

Q. Going back to 9, you had about 120 in?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, 121.

Q. Would you say it was 10 feet?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, it was probably 10, 12 feet, right up the hill, breaking to the left. On that green it was probably the easiest putt you can get. It's a tricky green, a lot of levels to that green, and just getting it on the right level gives you a birdie opportunity, but it's hard to get it on that level with these soft conditions.

It's easy to spin it back, and it's tough to get the correct yardage going up the hill. But I was able to do that.

Q. You probably got off to the start you wanted where you birdied 11 and 12. Can you talk about that start.

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, it was a good start. Again, played pretty cautiously off the tees on those first few holes just to get it in the fairway. I knew they'd be short irons in my hand.

Then really, I think the key to the round was 13 and 14, I got off to those two quick birdies, but then hit it in the left bunker on 13, hit a bunker shot out there to probably eight, nine feet and made that, and then hit it in the bunker again at 14, where that hole yesterday was a birdie hole, and today we're hitting a 4-iron in there, and I blocked it out in the right bunker and hit a nice bunker shot down there to about three or four feet and made that.

Those two up-and-downs out of the bunkers probably were more important than the birdies really. I kept the round



going.

Q. 13 was playing about 230?

STEVE STRICKER: It was 230 today, yeah. I hit a 3-iron, just didn't commit to it really. It was blowing pretty good right to left when we were there this morning and had to get it out to the right of the bunker almost, and that's tough to do when you know that bunker is dead if you hit it in it.

Kind of pulled it and then bounced over into the left bunker, and it was a good up-and-down.

Q. You're either going to be in the lead or right there going into the weekend. Mentally how do you get into the next phase of this championship?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, it's a long ways to go. We're halfway, or at least I'm halfway done. There's a lot of golf left to be played. Who knows, I haven't looked at the conditions or the weather report going into the weekend. But I think that's going to be the story here.

I think that's the part that you've got to kind of manage the most around here.

Then get some rest this afternoon and get ready to go tomorrow.

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