

U.S. Senior Open Championship

Friday, July 3, 2026

Columbus, Ohio, USA

Scioto Country Club

Henrik Stenson

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Here with Henrik Stenson after a 3-under 67 round. Henrik, a near perfect round for you, a couple birdies. Can you just talk about what was working?

HENRIK STENSON: I hit the ball a little bit better today. Yesterday I was still happy with that round. I hadn't played hardly any competitive golf since end of August last year. I played two tournaments in April. So I'm coming in here with fairly low expectations.

I don't think it would be fair to put the bar too high when you haven't competed and haven't practiced as much as one probably should have, but there was definitely some good stuff out there yesterday.

There were some unforced errors and so on, but all in all, I think I made five birdies and six bogeys yesterday. That was taken on not the easiest of days.

Today I gave myself some more chances, and when I didn't hit my best shots, I got away with long range two-putts and kind of kept the scorecard tidy and a couple of good saves. Just nearly a very nice 2 on the last there on the 9th there.

Had a nice knock-down iron to about eight feet and hit a good putt, but it kind broke up the hill a little bit more and nudged out.

Yeah, I'm pleased with the two days work.

Q. First Senior Open for you. Can you just talk about what the course setup was been like compared to some of the other USGA Championships you've played in your career?

HENRIK STENSON: Yeah, there's familiarity for sure. But still, having played my first U.S. Open in 2006 and having played most of them other than the last couple years. I played probably played 15, 18 of them, so I'm fairly experienced.



Still, it is a Senior. It will be a bit shorter. I'm still kind of young, so I don't feel like length-wise -- there's a couple of holes here that I feel makes it tricky because it's like a layup off the tee. Both on No. 5 and No. 8 you potentially have to hold back a little bit, and it kind of leaves an even further second shot.

No, still got some teeth out there for sure. As soon as you get a bit of wind and the green starts to dry out and you get bigger bounces, then it's getting a little trickier. But playing in the morning today, I feel like the greens were more receptive, as I kind of expected compared to yesterday afternoon. Yeah, I think you just can give yourself a little bit more -- a couple of more looks for birdies when you're playing in the morning.

Q. What does your preparation look like going into the weekend? Is it rest? Is it getting back on the range and hitting more shots?

HENRIK STENSON: I will not step outside the AC more today other than going to my car and from the car to the hotel. No, I think it's conserving energy. I'm not really going to become any better by spending another hour out in the heat. I'm playing with what I have this week and trying to do my best.

For me, this is like the startup tournament really of the season for me. I'm going to try and get into some good processes and hopefully get the game a little bit sharper as we go along in the fall.

Q. How physical do you have to be out there? How many times do you find yourself saying it feels like it should be... (No microphone).

HENRIK STENSON: Yeah, I don't have a lot of experience around this course. I walked around it back in 2011 maybe for a U.S. Open qualifier that I ended up not playing. I'd seen the course. But other than that, my longtime caddie Gareth, who's caddieing for me this week, he was here on Monday and kind of formalized a plan. Then we tried that out over the two nines that were played on Tuesday and Wednesday. I came in fairly late Monday night.

Yeah, we're just trying to stick to the plan. Combined we have a lot of experience of playing this type of golf.



Sometimes you feel like you want to go a little bit further on one hole to get a better angle. Sometimes you see a few guys kind of hitting it further, and you just go, like I don't see the point of doing that and lay back.

If I'm on form, clearly my kind of mid-range iron play from 4-iron to 9-iron has been the strong suit over the years. So I'm not afraid of laying back and taking a little bit longer second shots sometimes to give myself a bigger chances of hitting from the short stuff.

No, so far I think we played the course fairly sensible. It's just tricky on a couple of tee shots as well like 10th. There's a couple that sits in between on my clubs, my 3-wood is pretty long and my 5-wood is kind of there's a big gap between those two clubs.

Then you want to ideally leave it up on top. 3-wood for me is most likely going to trundle over, but if I hit 5-wood and don't quite catch it, I'm another 20, 25 yards further back than I would like. You've just got to make your choices on a few of them.

Q. When you talk about the heat, obviously this tournament tests you so much mentally, and then you add in the heat and just have to battle. How much of a test was it out there today to just block out the fact that it's so dang hot out there?

HENRIK STENSON: I almost felt like I had a little cold going on yesterday. They say you can sweat it out, and I think I did that. I felt a little sharper today. All in all, I feel like I'm in pretty good shape even though I'm not one that loves 100 degrees and this high humidity, but I still feel like I can battle through it.

Now it's more about rest and getting enough electrolytes and water down you to kind of be back to square one for tomorrow.

Q. You mentioned you had low expectations coming in. In a USGA Championship, how good maybe is that mindset to have, just to take things one step at a time?

HENRIK STENSON: Yeah, I think that's ultimately the easiest cliché in golf is one shot at a time, but it always tends to be the hardest thing we can do. I think it will help a little bit, especially when hitting a bad shot, and I feel like I can be a little nicer to myself than I would have been if I'd been out there 100 extra hours hitting balls and having higher expectations.

So we'll just one swing at a time, and we'll see where it puts us.

Q. I don't know if you feel old at 50 or not, but can you imagine Jay Haas, 72, Olin Browne, 67, still being out here and shooting decent scores at times?

HENRIK STENSON: Absolutely. That's something for me to see over the next five years, three years, two years. How much golf do I want to play going forward? Do you want to smell the roses, or do you want to be out there bashing balls or a bit of a combo?

I mean, a lot of us have had long careers. I've been a professional since -- yeah, for 28 years now. It's starting to add up. When I came out earlier on TOUR and you're playing with guys who played for 10, 12, 14 years, you're thinking, oh, my gosh, and now I'm sitting at 28 years as a pro touring around the world playing multiple Tours and all the travel.

Yeah, good for them if they enjoy it and still want to keep on playing. It's in our DNA to keep on playing golf and keep practicing. Yeah, it's fun to see those guys as well still at it at that age.

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