

Constellation SENIOR PLAYERS Championship

Thursday, July 12, 2018

Mike Small

Quick Quotes

Q. Tell us about your day.

MIKE SMALL: Yeah, I made a lot of birdies and I made some great saves. When I got out of position, I made some really good saves, and that's what kept it going.

Q. I know you've won like 100 tournaments in Illinois here, but what would it mean to win here?

MIKE SMALL: Well, that would be great, but there's a lot of golf to go. So yeah, that would be awesome. That's what we're here for. Everybody is here to win.

Q. How much have you played here?

MIKE SMALL: I played here this weekend for the first time. I enjoyed it. The course was different today. It was a little different from the southwest wind than it was northeast when we played it before.

Q. A lot of low scores today.

MIKE SMALL: Yeah, greens are soft, receptive. No, it's going to be some low scores all week. We'll have to play good all week.

Q. How much have you played this year?

MIKE SMALL: Since the season ended, I played in two Champions Tour events and the National Club Pro, and Senior Open qualifying. So eight, nine rounds. Nine competitive rounds. And then I played in Tucson in March. So that's 12 since last November. But I coach, so that's what I do first.

Q. But today, any particular highlights, any shots?

MIKE SMALL: No, I just played solid. I didn't hit it -- I hit it close a couple times. Played the par-5s well. But like I said, I missed a couple birdie putts early. I three-putted No. 1 for par and then I missed a short one on No. 3 for birdie, but I made a great save on 2. I got up-and-down out of the bunker for par, and to start off three-putting for par and a bogey on 2 would have been a bad start, but that save on 2 was big.

Q. I know it's only day one, but were you aware of that 20-footer for birdie you had there was for the outright lead?

MIKE SMALL: Well, yeah, I knew that, but I was just trying to get the right speed on it. These greens are hard to read. I had that thing going left, and it didn't go left at all.



Q. You said your back was acting up a little bit.

MIKE SMALL: It's tight. It's tight. It's been tight all day.

Q. Any injuries?

MIKE SMALL: No, it's a chronic back, but it's been feeling great. It didn't really hurt when I swung as much except when I moved around, so I'm going to get some work done.

Q. That's just something you've had for a while?

MIKE SMALL: Yeah, that's just part of me. It's who I am.

Q. It's the state of Illinois, but Northwestern is nearby. Do you feel local advantage or like it's enemy territory?

MIKE SMALL: Northwestern loves me. Why would anybody at Northwestern root against me? No, I feel great. A lot of orange out there today, a lot of orange and blue.

Q. There's always a big sea of orange --

MIKE SMALL: Yeah I enjoy it. I'm kind of like the rude I out here. I'm not supposed to play well. I'm a coach, and even when I play those TOUR events or majors, I'm the underdog. It is what it is, but I played well the last two events out here. That's how I got into this event. It's kind of nice to get into this event by the way you played and earned it, so I'm excited.

Q. Luke Guthrie is leading on the Web Tour, as well.

MIKE SMALL: Is he? That's great. That's awesome. They're all doing well. Scott is doing well, and obviously what Nick and Dylan did at John Deere. It's going to be good.

Q. Be fun to root for those guys --

MIKE SMALL: Oh, yeah. Well, I'm vested, you know. It's a big deal with those guys. We're family.

Q. Your expectations for the week?

MIKE SMALL: I'm going to get my back worked on and I'm going to get some dinner and obviously come out tomorrow and enjoy the ride and see if I can keep going and keep trying to make birdies. Who knows. It can go either way, but we'll see.