

The Senior Open presented by Rolex

Quick Quotes

Friday, 26 July 2019

Darren Clarke

Q. A pair of 68s and you're in great position going into the weekend. How much does links golf bring out the best in you?

DARREN CLARKE: I enjoy it. It's what I grew up playing, using the ground and trying to make your ground the friend was the way I was brought up playing golf. When I get a chance to get back on links again, I enjoy trying to do that.

Q. Tom Watson, Bob Charles, Gary Player. You could be the fourth if you won this week to win The Open and the Senior Open. What would that mean?

DARREN CLARKE: Yeah, it would be huge obviously, but listen, it's Friday. There's a long way to go yet. When you mention Tom, he did incredible and just played beautiful all day, made the birdie on 17 and the great 4 on the last. It's always a pleasure to play with him.

Q. How inspirational was that playing alongside him?

DARREN CLARKE: Any time you get a chance to play with a proper legend in the game and tomorrow is up there as we all know, a wonderful man to play with, 70 years old and as determined now as he was in the heyday. He's a pleasure to play with.

But my putting, I missed everything today. Kept giving myself opportunities and just not making anything. Particularly frustrating, whenever I give myself those chances and not take them, and hopefully that doesn't cost me at the end of the week. Tee-to-green has all been pretty good. I got off to a bit of a dodgy start today, but after that I played nicely.

Q. Is there any solace you take away from today that maybe you had your B Game and you're still right there?

DARREN CLARKE: I played nicely. Just the start was a little bit so-so but I kept giving myself chance after chance around the back side, didn't really make any, and then unfortunately missed a short one on the last which always stings a little bit. The way my swing feels and the way I'm striking the ball, I'm very pleased with.

I've been hitting it well now for quite some time but



putting -- I've been trying to work away at it and get a feel and knock a few in. It's frustrating when you come off the golf course and you feel as you've taken as many as you possibly can and you left four or five out there and that's what I do every day, which somewhat frustrating, but that's professional golf. That's the way it is. You have to keep working at it and one of these days I'll have a hot day on the greens and everything will be wonderful again.

Q. Anything from a mental strategy side change for you heading into Saturday and Sunday?

DARREN CLARKE: Not at all. I love links golf. It's what I was brought up on. I've played a lot of it and I enjoy using the ground and trying to make the ground my friend. Unfortunately I don't think we are going to get too much wind at the weekend, maybe a little bit but not too much. I enjoy this form of golf.

Q. You say "unfortunately." You want that wind?

DARREN CLARKE: I'd love a little bit of wind, but I don't think we're going to get any.

Q. We hear this a lot on all tours: You have to be patient.

DARREN CLARKE: I ain't got that.

Q. We're talking strategy, not your personality?

DARREN CLARKE: Ain't got patience nor strategy. Next question -- carry on, go on. Come on.

Q. How would you define patience on this golf course?

DARREN CLARKE: By not getting as frustrated as I did. There's some holes where you want to be aggressive and take on, and there's some that you've got to play smart. Depending upon the wind direction, you're trying to take bunkers out of play. But around Lytham, there's so many of them, if you want to take one out of play, there's another one waiting for you at the angle that you're going across.

So Lytham is a very difficult golf course to try and plot your way around, and the 18th, for example, you never quite know what to do. You try and hit the left rough off the tee, which I tried to do, but if you go out the right, there's bunkers there and you have them staggered going up the right, as well and you have them staggered up the left going the other way. It's trying to

fit your shot, shape your shot into whatever shot is required, which is somewhat challenging at times.

Q. Sounds like you have to be patient, so maybe you are being patient out here?

DARREN CLARKE: Close my eyes and hope for the best.

Q. Didn't get off to the best start but five birdies, satisfied?

DARREN CLARKE: It's never that nice when you make bogey on the last hole. That's never pleasing. But overall, from tee-to-green, I played so-so at the start but then played really nicely all the way around the back nine. Kept giving myself chances and not making any. It's nice to shoot 68 again, but somewhat frustrated coming off the golf course.

It's a run that I'm going through on the greens, and I'm doing my best. I'm trying to stay patient, not very well, but I'm trying to stay patient, and I'm hitting good putts, and maybe they will start to go in as opposed to staying out. That's golf. That's our sport. That's the nature of it. Sometimes you get on a run and everything goes in, and sometimes you don't. I could hole everything on the weekend.

The forecast is pretty good for the next few days, as far as not too much wind or whatever. It will be good. It's a nice bunched leaderboard, so I'm sure it's going to be a good weekend. I'd like to be a few shots better, but where I am is pretty good.