

The Senior Open presented by Rolex

Quick Quotes

Sunday, 28 July 2019

Tom Watson

Q. What were your emotions as you walked the fairways for the final time?

TOM WATSON: Well, my emotions were -- had a few flashbacks here and there from past Open Championships. You know, playing this golf course again. It's always a struggle for me to play this golf course. I never played it particularly well and I proved it again today.

Q. Was it a struggle because of that emotion that you talked about?

TOM WATSON: Not really. I was good with my decision quite a long time ago. It was just the right time I thought to make that announcement; that this was my last Open Championship. But apropos place; Royal Lytham St. Annes is one tough golf course. Got the best of me, but I got the best of a few other courses in the rotation.

Q. Five-time Open Championship winner. You won this Senior Open three times. Playing in these championships in front of these respectful and knowledgeable fans, how much has that impacted your life?

TOM WATSON: Well, I hope that I've given a little bit back in the sense that I've played the game the way it should be played. I learned from my dad. I learned from Jack. I learned from a lot of people.

The game is bigger than the individual, and everybody who plays the game of golf has the same passion. They have the passion for it and they -- you know, I go back to when I was a kid. When I was a kid, I was just trying to show off. When people asked me if I ever got nervous playing in front of people, no, I was trying to show my skills, is what I've tried to do.

As I said yesterday, my toolbox is closed right now. I don't have tools to do it anymore, so my skills have diminished quite a bit and now it's time to ride out on my horse.

Q. You said you will still play some. What's the decision-making process on where you play?

TOM WATSON: It's up in the air right now. I might play just a very few select events.



Q. Tell us about playing in your last Senior Open.

TOM WATSON: It really wasn't that tough at all because I had already made the decision quite a long time ago that this is going to be my last.

I played the round as I always played the round; as tough as I possibly could, trying to get the best score I possibly could. Unfortunately I didn't even make a birdie today. I made three bogeys and made 15 pars and it wasn't a great day on the golf course for me.

But ending my career here was a planned event and I'm really happy that now doing something a little bit different with my life. Being with my wife, Hilary, who loves to ride the horses, and I love to ride the horses, and we're going to do something different now.

Q. Will you miss the support of the crowd?

TOM WATSON: I'll always remember it. I'll never miss it because I'll remember the support of the crowd; the wonderful -- the fans have come and watched me for all these years, I owe them a great deal for pumping me up a lot of times when I was playing this golf tournaments.

There's a lot of other people to thank in this; all the sponsors that put up the enormous sums we play for, like Rolex here; the committees of people who run the golf tournaments behind the scenes, they never get enough credit. We get to be inside the ropes, but the people outside the ropes are the people, they deserve the credit a lot more than we do.

Q. Was it emotional coming down the 18th fairway?

TOM WATSON: It was. I didn't shed a tear. I was struggling -- again, I keep hitting in those fairway bunkers on 18. All you see out there is just fairway bunkers there, there, there, there, there, there, there, and there, and I didn't negotiate them very well this week. I kept on hitting the you go bunkers off the tee and blasting out and getting my third shot on the green.

You know, the crowds there, they were very warm and appreciative. The crowd that ended at the ninth hole, which was the farthest point on the golf course, that went all the way out there to watch my final hole, that was very, very special.

Q. You'll be very badly missed on links golf. I hope

we can see you again.

TOM WATSON: You know what, there will be other people who will take the reins and they will do what I did. Life is full of passages, and I've passed through my career here, starting in 1975 to here in 2019. It's amazing. I look back at it, and I say, man, that's a lot of golf over a period of time. It's just a passage, and there will be others that will play great golf and excite the crowds.

I'll always respect the way the game is played over here. The game of golf is played here with a passion, unequalled, and it's part of the fabric of life that people have when they play golf here in the U.K. That's what I've always appreciated.