

U.S. Open Championship 2018

Saturday, June 16, 2018

Brooks Koepka

Flash Interview

Q. How would you sum up your afternoon?

BROOKS KOEPKA: This afternoon was very tough, obviously, with blowing 20 and a lot of crosswinds. The ball was running out so far on these greens, and, you know, some of these putts, there's just no grass around the hole, so it's hard to stop it. Especially when you get it downhill, downwind, you have no chance of stopping it.

Some of them you're just trying to get in a three-foot circle and hoping you've got an uphill putt. Well, you will have an uphill putt in the next one.

Q. You and Ian both had tough bunker shots on 15. The ball, as you said, sort of got away, got away. Can you talk a little bit about that specifically and how that hole plays out right now?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I don't have anything nice to say about that green and the pin location, so I'm just not going to say it.

Q. Brooks, Scott said that the course has gotten away from them and that it's become just -- it's luck now who is scoring well. What is your reaction as someone who has managed to remain among the leaders?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I'm glad I'm in the position I'm in. I feel like, you know, obviously, going off the morning was a little bit easier. Guys are spinning the balls on the greens. I don't think there was this much wind. I'm not really quite sure. But it definitely got difficult.

I'm sure it would have been nice to go out and -- let's put it this way. If they'd have shot 4 under this afternoon, it would probably have been the best round of golf anybody's ever seen.

Q. Talk about the thought process with the chip shot that you had on 14. You didn't go anywhere close to the green and made the putt. Can you talk about that?

BROOKS KOEPKA: The line in the first cut was pretty good. Just being downwind, if you land it at all on that downslope, you're back where Poulter was, beyond the green.

There's a bank up to the right, but I couldn't really use it. It's going to end up kicking left and going straight back down there. And these greens, if the ball was going at all downwind, it rolled out an extra five, six



feet.

So we just -- sometimes in a U.S. Open, you've just got to take your medicine. If you can eliminate double, you're fine. Bogey, you'll be all right. That's kind of the goal, to be honest with you. And sometimes, it kind of rewards you for playing the correct shot or playing it how you should instead of being so aggressive, because it's -- you can't be aggressive here.

Q. To be out there, have a round like that and still just be one off the lead to put yourself in such good position, just talk about the position you're in.

BROOKS KOEPKA: I feel really good about the position I'm in. I think to be one back, maybe two, you know, tied with it, it's a nice feeling. I feel like -- like I said, there's nobody more confident. I won this thing last year. I feel really good. My game's in a good spot. I feel like you got to kind of take it from me, to be honest with you.

Q. Berger said there wasn't one gettable pin in 18 holes, and he didn't strike it that good, and the only way he was able to do that was by running in a lot of putts. In some ways, has it come down to that, where you just have to get lucky and have some putts fall in?

BROOKS KOEPKA: He played somewhat in the morning, so imagine the afternoon.

Q. He said a 66 in the afternoon would be like 8 under, and that was beforehand.

BROOKS KOEPKA: Maybe more.

Q. Brooks, you're 18 holes from, perhaps, becoming the first back-to-back winner since Curtis. Do you allow yourself to think about it, and what would that mean?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Not really. I've got almost 24 hours before that even comes into the equation. I think I'm just thinking one shot at a time. Just keep plugging away, keep doing what I'm doing. I feel really good. I feel confident. Like I said, it's you just got to eliminate double bogeys. If you can do that tomorrow, you'll be just fine.

Q. How hard is it to sort of discipline yourself to

play the kind of golf you're going to have to play likely again for 18 more holes tomorrow, as

opposed to what you do week in and week out?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I enjoy it. I enjoy firing away from pins and having to be conservative sometimes and just finding a way to get through it. I mean, my track record is pretty good in U.S. Opens. I feel like the harder the golf course, the better. It's already going to eliminate so many guys. Some guys get down on themselves. You can eliminate them pretty much right away.

You can't get frustrated. You just got to keep plugging away. I think that's why I've done so well.

Q. Jim Furyk said he thought the course transformed from hole 1 to hole 18 in the course of his time out on the course. Did you feel the same way?

BROOKS KOEPKA: No it was pretty tough from hole No. 1, starting. There was no break. I mean, you can't lay off the gas pedal at all. You've just got to keep going, keep firing, play to your spots, play to the center of the green. Sometimes the center of the green isn't very good on some holes.

And then you get out there -- and especially downwind. You start putting downhill, downwind, you've got no chance.

Q. What do you expect to see tomorrow with the conditions and the setup?

BROOKS KOEPKA: You know, hopefully the golf course is able to keep some moisture in the afternoon. I feel like, from how it played early on in the day to now, I mean, it's so much different.

I don't think -- it's not far off, to be honest with you. I think the golf course is very close. Maybe those greens, if they just had a little bit more grass on them. But then again, you know, I don't know how much they thought the wind was going to blow. But a little bit more grass would have been nice in the afternoon because, I mean, I had a putt that kind of bounced like six inches the other way towards the end because it was just trickling, hitting spike marks, things like that. No grass for it to stop, thankfully, rolled about a foot closer.

Q. Do you think about an event in which there was such a great disparity between morning conditions and afternoon conditions on the weekend?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Don't really care, man. I don't know. I'm not really focused on, you know, what it was like in the morning. I mean, I know obviously there were some good scores. But, you know, you got to -- comes down to winning a U.S. Open, you got to have some grit, some heart. I mean, I've won one, so why

not win another?

Q. Thanks, Brooks.

BROOKS KOEPKA: Thanks.