

U.S. Open Championship 2017

Thursday, June 15, 2017

Paul Casey

Flash Interview



Q. Many congratulations. If I'd offered you 6-under par at the start of the day, what would you have said to me and how do you feel?

PAUL CASEY: I would have snapped your arm for a 6-under. I watched Rickie this morning. I love watching the golf early mornings on major championships, and this morning was no exception. I'm a Rickie Fowler fan, and the golf he proposed this morning was beautiful.

I was hoping and praying if I could get the same kind of conditions and hoping and praying I would be half as good as Rickie Fowler, so to be right behind him I'm ecstatic. I never started off with an eagle before at a U.S. Open Championship. I really enjoyed it. Great crowds. Love the whole experience.

Q. What are some of the things you picked up on that telecast about the golf course setup?

PAUL CASEY: Don't be past the pin on 15. It's the little things. It's trying to see -- you know, we've got the pin positions -- USGA don't give them to us that early. I knew where we were. I was trying to read putts and trying to capitalize on hole locations and when to beware, and really just confirming or -- confirming the game plan that I already had set up with my caddie. And then just enjoying it, I like watching it.

Q. What did you do well today?

PAUL CASEY: I drove it really well. There's been a lot of talk about how wide these fairways are, and I know there's a big distance between fescue to fescue, but you've still got to drive it well. If you drive it well these greens are actually -- can be pretty small, areas, quadrants here and there you've got to hit to. And it's such an advantage if you're going in with a shorter iron from the middle of the fairway.

And then from there -- because we've seen golf balls roll of greens 30, 40 yards away -- sorry, 14 would be a good example of that. You get a run, who knows where it's going to end up. Driving it well, great iron shots, and I didn't do anything daft. I just stuck to the game plan, and the game plan was very, very good.

Q. Do you prefer this kind of U.S. Open venue and setup?

PAUL CASEY: From a setup I prefer this. From an architectural point of view, it doesn't bother me but I prefer a golf course where we can make some birdies,

for sure.

We're all interested to see where the pin positions are going to be tomorrow and if there's a knee jerk reaction. I thought it was spectacular. It's got a U.S. Open feel to it. The grounds are spectacular. It's going to be incredibly difficult come the weekend, just because we've had the deluge yesterday and the days leading into this. It's pretty benign and receptive. It's not going to last. If the sun shines and the wind blows, it's going to dry out. It will be treacherous.

Q. Are you the kind of golfer that can watch someone go low in the morning and embrace that challenge or is there a --

PAUL CASEY: I like watching guys make birdies. First of all, I'm a golf fan. And if I like to think if somebody else is making birdies that means they're out there.

Tiger was probably the only guy that did the impossible that I've seen the last 20 years or so. It was fun of this watch Rickie this morning. It was a bit of a clinic and it displayed where you need to position on this golf course. I'd like to think we learned a little bit and thank him for that this morning.

Q. You've had some really low rounds. Where do you put this one?

PAUL CASEY: I shot 66 at Oakmont, way back in '07 on Friday. But scoring that day was ridiculously high and it was a whole different kettle of fish.

This was a fun low round. There were errors in there. I don't boast it as a truly great round of golf, even though it's really low because I still made errors. And I feel like you look at the leaderboard, there are a lot of guys that had opportunities and made a lot of birdies. It was just a really fun round. You don't get many -- I haven't played that many -- I don't know that I've ever played a U.S. Open where I've had that much enjoyment.

Q. Talk about how you got off to an excellent start. Talk about that.

PAUL CASEY: It certainly takes the pressure off. I was very calm on the first, anyway, looking forward to this week and today's round. Wonderful drive off the first, which was good, considering I'd only played one practice round, and I snapped into the junk down to the

left. It was a better tee shot than I would have hoped for. I got a beautiful read off of J.T., who hit a chip down there. Showed me how fast that chip was.

Birdie on 2 was great. Nice little bump up the hill. I was a little bit gutted not to make the birdie on 3 to get to 4-under.

But from that point on I felt like I could be aggressive and show to myself that the golf course is there for the taking, if you hit world class shots. It was there. Also if you got it wrong you could get it very wrong.

Q. This seems like only something a mountain biker would love.

PAUL CASEY: It's not hilly enough for me, not dangerous enough. It's a great piece of land. It's a joy to be here. It's good to be back in Wisconsin.