

U.S. Open Championship 2017

Saturday, June 17, 2017

Brian Harman

Press Conference



BETH MAJOR: Greetings from the media center at the 2017 U.S. Open at Erin Hills. Very happy to welcome Brian Harman, who shot a third round, 5-under 67 today. Now stands at 12-under for the championship and holds a one-stroke lead over Justin Thomas, Brooks Koepka and Tommy Fleetwood.

The 12-under is the lowest 54-hole score in relation to par in championship history, second only to Rory McIlroy's 14-under at Congressional in 2011.

Can you talk about the scoring and where you are at this point.

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, the rain obviously softened things up just a little bit today, made it a little longer. Some of the pins were a little easier than they've been. But the course held the water beautifully.

When the wind is down like that, guys are going to shoot some low numbers. So I was glad to hang in there, especially that last group. It's tough to see everyone doing well and be wanting to do well. It's hard to stay patient, but I was proud of the way I did that.

BETH MAJOR: You have the opportunity to become the fourth in history to win both the Junior Amateur and the U.S. Open. Do you let that sink into your mind or are you just focused on playing and getting through the round?

BRIAN HARMAN: No, I don't think that's a productive way to think about it. I think the most productive way is to first enjoy my time at home tonight with my family and get some sleep and come out and make a plan for tomorrow.

Q. What would have surprised you the most at the start of the week, that you'd be leading the U.S. Open, that you'd be leading at 12-under or that there would be five guys at 10-under?

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, 12-under, I'd have about a ten-shot lead in most Opens.

No, I think this week the scores have been low because the weather has been so good. And I think that's a testament to the setup of the golf course, that when you set up a golf course in a fair manner and the weather is good, the scores are going to be low.

But tomorrow the wind is going to come out of the north, it's going to blow, and the scores could be a good deal higher tomorrow, if the weather comes to what they're predicting. It could change in a heartbeat.

Q. At Wells Fargo on Sunday night, we talked about you playing with maybe a little bit of a chip on your shoulder. Do you do that now with this big a stage?

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah. Yeah, I do. I'm not going to delve into the things that I derive my motivations from, but I'm certainly motivated.

Q. Along those lines, there's some talk about this being a bomber's paradise coming in. And there's a lot of talk about the top 3 players in the world. How much does that sort of stuff motivate you coming into a major championship?

BRIAN HARMAN: I'm more motivated by the fact that I've made a plan and I've stuck to the plan so far. Obviously I have no idea what tomorrow holds, but I'm more motivated by the way that I'm striking the ball. It's the best I've struck the ball in a long time. And my short game is pretty good. I've been putting it pretty good. So I'm excited about all those things.

Q. Obviously a great junior career, college year, Walker Cup career. What is it, do you think, that's held you back at majors, is it just putting too much pressure on yourself or what?

BRIAN HARMAN: Well, I haven't been in a lot of them. It's hard to play well when you're not in them. It's hard to qualify for these things. This is the first one I've been exempt for -- first Open I've been exempt for, I've had to qualify for. I think being exempt and coming in a little early and not having it be so hectic the week of has definitely helped. But at the same time, it's taken me longer to adjust to professional golf than it did to junior golf and amateur golf.

Q. If you can't tell us why the chip is on your shoulder, can you tell us how long it's been there?

BRIAN HARMAN: I think since my dad dropped me off at football practice and told me to not be disappointed if I didn't get to play at all (laughter). I played a lot.

Q. When you look at what Justin did today, how far back is too far back going into tomorrow

considering how packed the leaderboard is?

BRIAN HARMAN: Well, it just depends on the weather. These things, they -- someone could get out early and shoot a low score. Justin did it today. It's out there, for sure. There's no telling how low. I could not be leading the golf tournament by the time I tee off tomorrow. That's a very real possibility.

Q. How much harder did the course play today considering what Justin did with a 63? And beyond that, how are you going to prepare mentally overnight and tomorrow?

BRIAN HARMAN: Like I said, I'm just going -- I'm going to enjoy my time tonight with my little girl and my wife. We'll probably watch some TV and hang out.

I've got a good plan for this course. I've seen it playing -- I played it in a couple of different wind conditions. I have no idea what tomorrow is going to be like. I could wake up with a neck ache. There's no telling. But I'm confident that I am prepared for whatever happens, whether something bad happens or something good happens. I'll just rely on that confidence.

BETH MAJOR: Brian Harman, leader after three rounds at the 2017 U.S. Open, 12-under. Look forward to watching you tomorrow.

BRIAN HARMAN: Thank you.

Q. I'm just curious if you've ever read a description of your game that was accurate? And if you did, what did it say?

BRIAN HARMAN: I can putt. I can putt. I've always -- everything I read says that I hit it super short. I don't think I do. Maybe I do. I don't know. Ends up where it ends up.

BETH MAJOR: Thank you all very much.