

ROUND 2 INTERVIEW: SCOTT McCARRON
Saturday, August 29, 2015



PHIL STAMBAUGH: Scott, seven better today, 64, and right now you're tied for the lead. A few thoughts about the day. Did the course play any different, talk about that.

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, I drove the ball a lot better today. Yesterday I only hit four fairways so I was scrambling a lot from the trees and the rough. I played a good round yesterday just to shoot 1-under. Today I was able to drive the ball better, more in play and that gave me some more opportunities. I had a lot of looks for birdies today from 10, 15 feet. I was streaky with the putter. I made quite a few good putts and I left quite a few short right in the heart. So it could have been better, but I'm very happy because 8-under is a great score around this golf course.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: Can you just sort of talk about the birdies and eagle at 12?

SCOTT McCARRON: Yeah, I got off to a good start today, drove it down the middle of the fairway, hit sand wedge in there about eight feet or so, 10 feet, and made that for birdie. Made a really good par save on 2. I actually made two good par saves on 2 and 3, and then was able to come back with a nice birdie on No. 4, hit 9-iron in there about two and a half feet. No. 5, I hit a good drive again in the middle of the fairway but hit a poor second shot, was able to get it up and down from well left of the green. And No. 6, hit a really nice drive there and a good sand wedge in there to about 12 feet, made that for birdie. No. 11, hit a good drive right down the middle of the fairway, hit a very good 7-iron in there probably about 15 feet just left of the hole and was able to make that for birdie. Got a good read off Bob Gilder who chipped in right behind me, so got a good read off Bob. No. 12, hit another nice drive right down the middle of the fairway, hit hybrid in there about 12 feet, made a real nice putt there that was breaking about six or eight inches for eagle, so that was kind of nice.

Then a bunch of pars, and made a really good par save on 15, hit it in the right bunker kind of close to the lip and hit out short, had a really difficult two-putt from about 15 feet short of the green and left it about 15 feet short and made that for par. That was kind of a real nice round saver, par saver right there. And then 17, hit a nice 6-iron in there about 15 feet just right of the hole, and my caddie and I were able to guess the right way it was going to break and made that for birdie.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: Any difference overall the way the course played today versus yesterday?

SCOTT McCARRON: I thought the course played about the same. It's amazing to me to come out here on the Champions Tour and the tees are all back. This plays exactly the same as it did when I played on tour for the B.C Open. For people to think we play out here on the Champions Tour with tees up, they're crazy. It played a full length today and it's tough.

Q. When was the last time you were knee deep in it with a round to play?

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, I played just at Calgary, my last time -- I played the final group on Saturday with Colin Montgomerie.

Q. Before that.

SCOTT McCARRON: Oh, before that.

Q. I'm sorry.

SCOTT McCARRON: That's a great question. It's been a long time. I finished second at Wyndham when I came back from elbow surgery. I finished fourth at McGladrey one year, 2011, '12, something like that. Web.com in the finals one year was leading after the first couple rounds in Indiana or somewhere. It's been a long time. And I learned a lot just being in the final group with Colin on Saturday at Calgary. I definitely was a little bit quicker, was a little bit nervous, all those kinds of things, so all those feelings were coming back. It had been a while since I had been in there. So I didn't play as well, I think I shot even that day, but I learned a lot from that round. I'm looking forward to wherever I end up today going into tomorrow. I feel very confident in my game, and I'll tell you what, I'm having fun. When I'm having fun, usually I play all right.

Q. Is that a change? Had you not been having fun?

SCOTT McCARRON: Yeah, when you don't get in tournaments on the PGA TOUR, you play once a month, once every two months, and you miss every cut by a shot, that's not a lot of fun. Being out here, knowing there's no cut and I know when I'm in events, I'm having fun playing golf again. And this has been something I've been looking forward to for two and a half, three years since I was on a major medical on tour and then only got so many starts because I was in the veteran member category. I just couldn't get out of that category, so it was a grind. I still had that sight of playing on the Champions Tour in my mind when I was going down and playing Web.com. So to be out here finally after two and a half years waiting, you know, yeah, I'm having fun.

Q. How's your body feel after overcoming some injuries and being in the thick of it these last two tweaks?

SCOTT McCARRON: I feel good. I had elbow surgery in 2006 on my right elbow. That took a year and a half. Then I had thumb surgery in 2012, '13? I can't remember. 2012 in the summer. I had a bone spur on the top of the left thumb and that one hurt quite a bit, that was tough to get over.

It's funny, I keep thinking about writing a letter to the doctor, Dr. Shin, to thank him for my surgery on my thumb, but I keep forgetting that I even had surgery because it feels so good.

He did a wonderful job and he's done a lot of work. Spencer Levin he's helped. My body feels good. I'm healthy, I'm happy and I'm in better shape now than I've ever been. My girlfriend back there's a trainer and she keeps me -- she's a triathlete so I work out with her and train with her, so I'm in better shape now than when I was 25.

Q. (Inaudible) transition from the regular tour to the Champions Tour and maybe this round of what you've done, is this because you're more relaxed, don't have to worry about a cut?

SCOTT McCARRON: Certainly. The transition, you know, from the PGA TOUR to the Champions Tour, I went from playing Alabama my last PGA TOUR event right before I went to the British Senior open, I played with Charlie Beljan and he was outdriving me by 40 yards every single hole, so it was demoralizing. You're out there, I still feel like I can play, but I'm playing with these young kids who just absolutely bomb it. Flip side, I go over to the British Senior and I'm playing with guys where I'm knocking it 20, 30 yards by them, so I got very confident quickly. I felt like wait a minute, I can play with these guys. Someone said to me when I got to Calgary, how do you like it up here, and I said I really do, I enjoy it. It's amazing. He said yeah, it's just like a time warp, like you're back in 1995. And that's when I first came on tour. The same guys that I teed it up in '95 with, the same guys I competed with for 10, 15 years until they transitioned over to the Champions Tour, so I feel very comfortable out here. Most of these guys out here I've known for 20 years. These guys were my mentors when I first came on tour. Peter Jacobsen, Mark O'Meara, John Cook, these are the guys I hung around with, learned from, went to dinner with, played pro-ams, did outings, so it's nice to be out here with those guys again.

Q. Besides the golf, do you get a chance to do anything outside the golf course here that you look forward to?

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, last night, I mean, I was amazed last night to have Sam Hunt and Lady Antebellum here. That was awesome, and to see 30,000, 40,000 people come out here to support that. To me, that was one of the most amazing things I've seen on the PGA TOUR and the Champions Tour. That is so cool. The town just supports this event, and that was the young thing I remember when I used to play here, how supportive this city was of the golf. To come out here again as we're Champions Tour guys, we're so appreciative that people still want to come out and watch us play. So my hat's off to the tournament director and everyone that does a phenomenal job here at this tournament to get everyone to come, and to get that concert last night, that was just the coolest thing.