



ROUND 3 INTERVIEW: PATRICK RODGERS
January 28, 2017

DOUG MILNE: Patrick Rodgers, thanks for joining us for a few minutes. Off to a great third round, bogey-free 5-under 67 puts you right in the position you want to be in heading into tomorrow's final round of the Farmers Insurance Open. With that said, just some thoughts on the round today and being in the position you're in.

PATRICK RODGERS: Yeah, it was nice. This is what all the players come to San Diego for is weather days like today. The golf course was perfect, so it was just really pleasant to be out there. I mean, how could you not have a good time looking at all those views on almost every hole.

But as far as my game goes, I drove it great today, I had a lot of chances to score, a lot of chances to be aggressive with the greens being soft and it was really nice to get a blemish-free day in today and hopefully carry that momentum into tomorrow.

Q. You had a number of pretty good chances coming in. Didn't look like you did a ton wrong, that's just the nature of the greens. How do you prepare yourself for tomorrow knowing that we're on a surface that can test you?

PATRICK RODGERS: Yeah. I probably let a few opportunities get away from me there coming down the stretch, especially having 4-iron into 18 and short-siding myself a little bit. Like I said, as well as I'm driving it right now, I have a lot of chances to score and a lot of chances to be aggressive with the greens being soft and so I'll just try to keep doing that tomorrow.

But as far as the greens go, I think patience is the ultimate key. I have a new putter in the bag this week. It's a cool story. It's a brand new Toulon putter by Odyssey and it's named Indianapolis, which is my hometown, which is really cool, so it was a nice fit for me. It's a good time to change putters and it's nice to see if you go in, but I'll have to be patient tomorrow and just trust in it.

Q. Why did think name is the Indianapolis?

PATRICK RODGERS: It's based off race car technology. So really cool for me growing up around racing and the 500 to have a putter that's like this. I think it looks great and hopefully it's going to help me make a few more putts.

Q. So if they named it Daytona, would you be using it?

PATRICK RODGERS: Maybe, who knows. Probably leaning it a little bit more since it's called the Indianapolis.

Q. Were you a big race fan when you were growing up there or is it one of those things where you almost have to be?

PATRICK RODGERS: Yeah, my grandpa was a part owner of a race team just totally by chance. He just was a race fan and ended up being part owner of Bettenhausen Motorsports. So I grew up around the event all month traveling with the IndyCar circuit. So racing's a big part of my family and it's cool to have a little racecar on the back of my putter, always reminds me of home.

Q. Did you ever drive, race?

PATRICK RODGERS: No, it's too dangerous for me. I'm a little bit of a wimp. I see those hang gliders out there over the ocean and I don't know what the heck they're doing.

Q. Why are you driving it so well?

PATRICK RODGERS: For me it's kind of always been a staple of my game. I feel like it's what got me out here. I feel like I've always been a pretty good driver of the ball. I feel like I can compete with some of the elite drivers in the world and I've got a driver in my bag that I'm really comfortable with. Callaway's new Epic is really nice. It's going a long ways and it's a huge advantage out here. Obviously this golf course is good for me hitting it high and far even if I'm driving it in the rough, but especially if I can get it down there in the fairways, there's a lot of chances to score, which is good.

Q. Patrick, the whole learning curve of being a pro and getting out here on tour, how has your patience been tested and how ready do you feel to win?

PATRICK RODGERS: It's been tested, it definitely has been tested. I mean, I can't sit here and say it hasn't been hard at times to see -- I mean, obviously these are my best friends so I'm happy every time they have success. But on a personal level, I mean, those are the guys that I've always competed with and so it definitely tests my patience to see them have success and it's incredibly motivating. So maybe seeing Justin play so well here to start the year has motivated a couple of us to get it in gear and get up there with a chance to win.

Like I said, they're my best friends so I celebrate just like that do, but on a personal level it's very motivating to try to get the job done myself.

Q. Patrick, we've heard a lot about the Nike guys who had to find clubs and find a new way to play with stuff in their bag. How did that process go for you, and obviously you mentioned a few things that you feel like are benefiting you?

PATRICK RODGERS: Yeah, last summer was very unexpected I think to all the Nike guys but it's been a rewarding process for me. It's given everyone a lot of freedom to play whatever equipment we want really without any -- for any financial reasons and so it's cool

to see what the Nike guys are playing because it really is just what they feel like is the best clubs for their game.

So for me I felt like from the very get-go Callaway did an incredible job just following through and making sure that I have 14 clubs and a ball that I feel I can win with. Just the testing process was constant. I felt like they always gave me stuff that I felt really comfortable with. They've continued to follow through and work with me, listen to my feedback and I have equipment that I feel great with now and that's really nice.

Q. When did the putter actually make it into your bag and what is it for any golfer, not just a pro golfer, but what's the magic of getting a new putter in your hands that just seems to --

PATRICK RODGERS: Yeah, I've never putted with a mallet in my life so that was a big change. It was two Mondays ago and I was just down at the Callaway fitting center, their headquarters up in Carlsbad and I had seen some prototypes and this is the finished product. I was very excited about it obviously for the name, and then I got on the SAM PuttLab and measured my stroke with it and it was much better, the face was more stable, I hit it more in the center of the face, started it online more. So just see seeing that data and having maybe a little bit if you think I looking putter that I feel comfortable with was all the confidence that I need and I just had to get used to the pace.

Q. One more on the putter thing here. Did you like see the look of the putter and like it and then fall in love with the name or did the name make you take a look at the putter?

PATRICK RODGERS: A little bit of both. Mr. Toulon handed it to me and said this is a really cool putter and I think you'll like it. I looked at it and it looked pretty sweet to me, but I had never putted with a mallet and he kind of told me the story behind it. I think he actually went into Chip Ganassi Racing, like the Target team, and talked to the crew chief, who I actually know from Indianapolis, and together they developed the technology to make the face really stable the same way they keep the front nose of a racecar really stable. So I kind of bought into the technology and then the name just happened to be a cool perk.

Q. Secondly, when you talk about, you mentioned a couple times Justin giving you a little motivation. I'm not sure I understand from the standpoint that were you not motivated before? I'm sure you are, but how do you get like extra motivated? It's a hard game.

PATRICK RODGERS: No, of course. You're always looking for little nugget to keep pushing you to work hard and practice hard and develop the areas of your game that are weak. I mean, I always work hard, but it just kind of gives you that extra push knowing that one of my best friends is having unparalleled success out here on tour right now. So I'm just motivated by that. Like I said, I'm super happy for him but I want to be in that mix, too.

Q. Forgive me for not having looked it up, but do you have any track record here from Junior World or anything?

PATRICK RODGERS: My first time playing both golf courses was last year. I decided to start my year here last year, which was maybe a little bit of a challenge. Trying to fight off some rust on the South Course isn't maybe the best decision. So I played an event before coming here this year. I've always felt like it's a golf course that would suit my game really well and thankfully it is so far this week.

Q. Why does it suit your game, just fit your eye?

PATRICK RODGERS: Yeah, I feel like driving it long is a huge advantage, being able to carry it a long way, whether it's like today on 13 being able to get it overall the bunkers up the right, just little stuff. Everyone's going to miss fairways, I don't care how straight you hit it. It's a lot easier to get to the green from 150 yards in the rough than from 200 yards in the rough and I've taken that confidence and swung pretty frequently all week.

DOUG MILNE: Real quick, if you wouldn't mind just 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, run us through your birdies, just clubs and yards.

PATRICK RODGERS: Yeah, I sliced the crap off the sixth tree and got really lucky. It was probably my worst drive of the week but it carried the hazard and was over there pretty close to the green since I hit it so far right. Drew a decent lie and was able to get it in the front bunker and hit a good bunker shot to about eight feet and made that.

Hit a good drive just through the fairway on 7, hacked it out to the front middle part of the green and made about a 40-footer, which was nice. It was probably the only decent length putt I've made all week. It was nice to see one go in.

No. 9 was maybe my best drive of the week. I had hybrid in and hit a just short right of the green but chipping straight up the green, chipped it to a couple feet. Hit a good drive on 10 and hit a little shoulder-to-shoulder gap wedge to about 10, 12, 15 feet left of the hole, good spin control and knocked that one in. And then 13, drove it overall the bunkers. Even though it was right it was a decent lie and I didn't have very much in. Hit a 5-iron to the middle of the green and two-putted.

Q. (No microphone.)

PATRICK RODGERS: I had 215 to the front.

Q. I can't tell from this if he made the putt, but Brandt has a putt of maybe 13 feet that would give him the lead. Does it make any difference to you if you're tied for the lead, if you're second? And also, have you been in the final group out here before on a Sunday?

PATRICK RODGERS: Yeah, final group, I'm not sure. I don't know. I feel like I've had chances to win so I don't know if they've been in the final group or not. And then no, I can't control what anybody else does. It's been a little bit of a process for me mentally just to focus on the things that are under my control out here. I'm going to have to be really good at that tomorrow and hopefully be playing my best golf and whatever happens, happens.

DOUG MILNE: Well, Patrick, we wish you the best of luck.