

ROUND 3 INTERVIEW
1 December 2018

RYAN FOX (-3)



Q. Mate, just talk through I guess the round. Got away to a bit of a flyer, I guess. Is that important around here?

RYAN FOX: Yeah, I think you can -- there's a lot of -- we have a lot of tricky holes around here and if you've got some in the bank, you can sort of get away with making a bogey here and there. With the greens how they are at the moment, they're pretty grainy and tough to read, so you're not making a whole lot of putts, you're not making a whole lot of birdies out there. So yeah, it was nice to get off to a fast start, you know, carry it on for most of the round.

Q. We know that you like to play aggressively. Is it a course that you have to kind of temper it a little bit or do you think you can attack this and take the good with the bad?

RYAN FOX: I think if you're on, you can all-out attack it. I've been fighting it a little bit the last couple of weeks. There is some places you can hit it around here that are really ugly. I managed to find a couple of them over the last couple of days. So taking a slightly less -- slightly more conservative strategy than I probably normally would and that's just on, you know, me fighting mainly the lefts, to be honest. There's a few holes which there's some trouble left, so I laid back off the tee and tried to keep it in play that way. But if you're on and feeling good, you can definitely take the golf course on.

Q. When do you feel like -- two birdies in the first three, is that a bit of a signal or do you kind of have to feel something a bit different?

RYAN FOX: It's more the feel of the golf swing. Yeah, as I said, I've been fighting the lefts. So stand there and -- I didn't hit a whole lot of bad drives today, but I didn't hit a whole lot of good drives. The majority of tee shots I missed sort of down the left-hand side. Never in trouble, but you're always, say down 10, you're always standing there going, well, I don't want to hit driver because if I pull it, I'm in trouble. Same down 9 and a couple other holes like that. So I actually laid back a little bit to just have a bit more control over it today. Seemed to work, and thankfully a couple of putts went in, which they sort of haven't done or didn't get going yesterday.

Q. What happened down 7?

RYAN FOX: No. 7, I blocked it a little bit right. I actually landed on the cart path and almost went in the hazard, and then --

Q. Way down?

RYAN FOX: Yeah down on the right, yeah. It wasn't that bad of a tee shot, it was just right of -- just right of the fairway, on the right edge of the fairway, landed in the rough, one bounce on the path. I seem to be pretty good at that this week, I've -- God knows how many cart paths I've hit, but it would be a good four or five on either the -- on the fly or on the first bounce. Normally when you're doing that, it's not pretty where it ends up.

Q. 4 under, do you think do you expect the guys this afternoon to gap you a little bit or do you think you're still within -- do you think you're within reach?

RYAN FOX: I bogeyed the last, which didn't help. I dropped back to 21st at 3 under, but I would expect if the breeze gets up like it's supposed to, I think it will be quite tricky out there. I wouldn't expect -- I wouldn't expect anyone to run away with it other than maybe Leish or Smithy. If one of those guys gets going, obviously they're world-class players and you can see them even in tricky conditions shooting 4 or 5 and getting a decent gap on the rest of the field.

As you've seen with the scoring the last couple of days, if you shoot anything under par, it's actually a pretty decent score out there. It's a little bit different than other years, there's still a low one out there, but it just seems to be a little trickier this year for some reason.

Q. Just one last one. I'm asking some of the boys their earliest memory of their first ever round of golf. Do you remember the first time you had a hit and where you were and who with?

RYAN FOX: The first one I really remember was actually playing Royal Auckland with my dad I think on corporate day. I reckon I was probably 10 years old. I know I played a little bit of golf in Fiji before that, but I don't have a whole lot of memories about that out at Denarau Golf Club. I think I remember that round with dad and I think I remember it because I had my first birdie. I think I holed a 9-iron on a par 5 for my fourth shot.

Q. How did you get a start, did he just say he's coming with me?

RYAN FOX: Dad used to do that a little bit when I was younger, just go jump in the cart. And I would never play the whole thing, but I would play a few holes and try to keep out of trouble, at least as an 8, 9, 10-year-old. I could always hit it, so in that regard I could get away with playing a few holes with the old guys. Yeah, it was a bit of fun.

Q. Off school as well for that?

RYAN FOX: School holidays. Well, I can't remember. I played so much golf since then, it's kind of hard to remember that.

Q. You remember when the old man let you day off school to play golf, huh?

RYAN FOX: To be fair, that didn't happen very often. I did used to -- my school, my high school, the last couple years I was at Kings College, which was right next to Royal Auckland where I was a member. I somehow managed to work my last three periods twice a week were free and that went over lunchtime as well. So I literally had -- I think we finished at 11:00, third period, and then fourth period was from 11:00 to 12:00 or something like that. So I would literally have my golf clubs and a set of golf gear in the car, and the car park was literally adjacent to the golf course, not even a fence, just some bushes. I would check everything on, get changed, wander over, and it was always pretty dead in the middle of the day at Auckland and I can go out and play 18 holes in sort of three, three and a half hours. Get back, change into my school uniform just as school finished. And I thought I got away with it, but my housemaster actually let me know that he knew about it but he just didn't care about it.