

BRETT RANKIN

Q. (No microphone.)

BRETT RANKIN: You know what's funny about that, actually I had more than \$1.97, but the day before I called my dad and I was like, "Mate, can you just check my account?" I didn't have that banking on the phone. I said, "How much money do I have in my account?" He said, "You've got a \$1.97," but it was a different account. The other account had like \$400 or \$500 in it, so I was all right. It wasn't much more, but I had just enough there. I did have to borrow some money from my brother, and now he seems to borrow a lot of money from me since then.

Q. Ten years ago, it was a long time. What's happened since then, but to be on the leaderboard at the Australian Open?

BRETT RANKIN: It's always my favourite tournament of the year. The last sort of three to four years it always seems to be my best event that I seem to play. I seem to always play well here in Sydney. But I've played really nice the last couple days. It's nice to be on the leaderboard, but obviously there's a long way to go.

Q. (No microphone.)

BRETT RANKIN: Yeah, I think I birdied 6, 7, 8 and 10. Yeah, had a good little stretch there. I didn't get off to the best of starts. I holed some good par putts from about eight to 10 feet in the first three or four holes and it just sort of calmed the nerves a little and just kind of got me going. Once I had a couple looks at birdie, I holed them and just got it going after that. It was a nice day, but it was a lot easier today than it was yesterday.

Q. (No microphone.)

BRETT RANKIN: It's crazy to go back that far, what's happened. I wish I was playing on the main tour overseas, that's for sure, but the game's come a long way. A lot of changes. It's been great, yeah.

Q. I remember you saying at the time that your old man was going to hit you up if you ever made a fortune. Have you given him anything?

BRETT RANKIN: Not yet, no. Not yet, no. I haven't even given him lessons at this point. He's always sending me videos and asking for advice. I'm like, "Dad, you're almost 70 years old, you can't change anything, you're too old as it is. Just go out and have some fun, have a couple beers or something, stop asking for advice." He's always said, "Yeah, first million

dollars is mine." He's definitely not getting that.

Q. What is it about this event that you do love?

BRETT RANKIN: Well, it's our national championship. I don't think there's a bigger event in Australia that any Aussie growing up wants to win. I don't know, I just seem to get -- be in a good mental space for this event.

I think, too, we usually have a bunch of events leading up to this event, so it's always good playing those events. By the time you get to this tournament, you feel like you know where your game's at and what you're doing well and what you're not doing well. So I think timing and just that I love playing the Australian Open.

Q. (No microphone.)

BRETT RANKIN: Absolutely, for sure, much deeper. Are you a Vikings fan?

Q. I went over there for the X Games this year.

BRETT RANKIN: Yeah, I'm an Eagles boy, so we beat you guys last year. I saw the hat and I was like, oh, I've got to say something just in case you are.

Q. (No microphone.)

BRETT RANKIN: No, but it's funny, that week I played with Appleby and Parry. Four holes in Appleby goes to me, he goes, "You know, the beauty of playing with Adam Scott is that usually you can spot a few good-lookers in the crowd." He goes to me, he goes, "So far I'm not seeing a whole lot of game from you." I'm like, "Sweet, thanks, mate, appreciate that."

Appleby was amazing. He obviously knew I was in a pretty -- like I had never been in that situation before and he sort of calmed me down pretty early actually. He's like a bit of a kid, Appleby. Good bloke.

Q. How tough is it to stay -- you know, to keep making a living out of golf?

BRETT RANKIN: It's pretty tough. Yeah. If I had a family and kids and stuff, I would probably have a job now at this point, but luckily enough I don't have anyone to support so I can keep doing what I'm doing. Especially here in Australia, we don't have -- we've got a lot of good players coming through the system and a lot of guys playing this week, like quality players should be playing the U.S. tour, but it's just really hard to get out of here. Unless you've got sponsorship, there's not a whole lot of money here as well, which is a little bit of issue. To keep your card on this tour, you've only got to make 35, 40 grand. Like take out expenses and you're not making a whole lot of profit. It's tough, yeah, it is tough.

Q. There are quite a few opportunities to get to Europe.

BRETT RANKIN: Yeah, absolutely, for sure.

Q. Q-Schools, a lot of exemptions into WGCs, majors.

BRETT RANKIN: Definitely the last few years with the Aussie Tour going towards the European Tour, all the co-sanctioned events there, it's opened all the doors for a lot of Australians here in Australia, but we would like more. Like if we get three or four more big events through the year where we make a bit more money, then we don't have to rely on winning an event to get over to Europe, we can go to the Q-Schools and, you know, have a bit more money in the bank so to speak.

Q. What keeps you going, the belief that it's there?

BRETT RANKIN: I just love it, I just love playing. I've always said as long as I love playing and I'm paying my way and I can make a living off of it, I'll keep doing it. When I can't, that's when I'll obviously stop. I just love what I do.

Q. (No microphone.)

BRETT RANKIN: It is, it's good, but it has its down points. Like last week I had to fly back from Spain after missing the final stage of European Q-School. Had to fly back, got back Wednesday morning. That's 30 hours in planes and airports and you've got to tee it up the next day and it's just like where am I, what's going on. The body feels horrendous obviously. It is fun, but most of the time when you're at these events you're not doing a lot of sightseeing or partying or things like that. You come to the golf course and spend most of your time at the golf course, and you go back to your hotel, you're pretty tired from the day. It's not as glamorous as everyone thinks it is, to be honest.