

NATE LASHLEY (-14)

JACK RYAN: We'll go ahead and get started here with our 36-hole leader, Nate Lashley.

Nate, how confident were you coming into today's round after yesterday's 63?

NATE LASHLEY: Well, I was definitely a little nervous. You know, it's not easy backing up a 63, so first few holes were a little iffy. Hit some bad putts early and then kind of settled in once I made a couple putts and got my round rolling around 16, 17 and played the front nine solid.

JACK RYAN: You come into the week ranked 132nd in the FedExCup standings. How important would a good result be this week for the rest of your season?

NATE LASHLEY: I mean, like you said, 132nd, I need a good week and move up into that Top 125. To do it this week comfortably would be great. To be able to kind of relax the last few events of the season would be really nice.

Q. Can you tell us exactly when you got the word that you had finally got into the field? And, I mean, were you confident you were going to get into the field? Obviously you stuck around, so you thought there was a chance?

NATE LASHLEY: Yeah, it was Wednesday, I don't know, around 11:00 or noon, somewhere in there. I kind of had an idea that I was going to get in. We had talked to a guy that was -- David Berganio that was not going to play, so I kind of knew on Tuesday once there was a couple withdraws and I was the first alternate that I was most likely going to get into the field.

Q. What are some of the holes out there that are really tricky for some of these guys and yourself that you look at and you're like, those are going to be difference makers this weekend?

NATE LASHLEY: You know, I don't know that there's a whole lot of tricky holes out there or really overly difficult holes. If you hit the fairways here, you can really score. I think that's, you know, the name of the game. If you hit it in the fairway, you're going to have a lot of birdie putts.

But the greens, the greens do have quite a bit of slope, some of them around the holes that have a lot of undulation. If you get it on the right spot, though, and get it in the right tier, you can make a lot of birdies.

Q. Is it one of those things where you just keep everything in front of you?

NATE LASHLEY: Yeah, you keep it in the fairway. Like I said, if you hit a lot of fairways, you're going to have a lot of opportunities.

Q. What was your reaction, if you had one, to Champ's day before you started, and what do you think it's going to take to win this tournament?

NATE LASHLEY: Well, I saw Cameron started 7 under through seven and I knew going into today that there was going to be a lot of guys past me. I knew that. I just wanted to go out today and play well and hit some good solid shots and make some putts and play some comfortable golf out there. After a few holes, that's what I felt like I did.

Q. A lot of people talking about the scoring this week. Obviously very low, the cut's 4 under. Is this something you guys enjoy, going to places like this where it's kind of a birdie free-for-all?

NATE LASHLEY: Yeah, it is. It's nice when you have one of these weeks at a course you can score on, and if you play well, you get rewarded. Some of the weeks the courses are so tough, people don't really realize it. You could hit good shots all day and shoot over par. A lot of the weeks the courses are really difficult, so it's a nice change coming here. You hit good shots and you can shoot a good score.

Q. Is it less stressful playing coming into the week and knowing you're not going to deal with knee-high rough?

NATE LASHLEY: Yeah, it's definitely less stressful. Off the tee here there's not a whole lot of trouble. Like I said earlier, if you get in the fairway, you can really score. Yeah, there's not a whole lot of trouble out there. As I say, if you hit good shots, you're going to have a good day.

JACK RYAN: Nate, with this being a first-year event, there's a lot of enthusiasm from the crowds. Big crowds out there. Can you comment on the experience of playing in Detroit in a first-year event like this?

NATE LASHLEY: Yeah, I think they're doing a good job. I've never been to Detroit, nice city. I would always love to come back. When I'm playing like this, it would be tough not to come back. So I'm enjoying the course, enjoying my time here, so hopefully can continue to do that through the weekend.

Q. Detroiters love an underdog story, last guy in, now you're leading after two days. You'll probably get a bandwagon of fans. Are you starting to feel that people are starting to look, oh, who's this guy?

NATE LASHLEY: Yeah, there were some people out there rooting me along today, that

was nice of them. Had some people come out and follow up. Like you said, being the last guy in the field, it was a nice feeling. Last week I ended up actually first alternate, so I didn't get in the tournament. So getting in this week was a nice feeling. You never want to be first alternate, that's not any fun. It's nice to be in really, and to play well is just a bonus.

Q. We're looking at your ex-teammate at Arizona, Ricky Barnes won the U.S. Amateur here up the road. Did you by chance play in that event, or did you have any memories of Rickie's accomplishments? How great a player was he? How much did you compare yourself to him at that time in your career?

NATE LASHLEY: I didn't play in that U.S. Amateur. Playing with Rickie in college, he was a couple years older than me. He was probably the leader of our team for those couple years that I played when I was a freshman and sophomore. He was a good player. He was a lot of fun to play with.

I'm not really sure how similar our games are, I guess. I haven't played with him in quite a while actually. I guess I played nine holes with him a while back. We have some similarities, but, you know, I'm not exactly sure what they would be, per se. I haven't played enough golf with him.

Q. As you mentioned last week, being the last guy not in and just missing it and to get in, how much more did you kind of come into this week wanting to play with a little extra chip on your shoulder, that you wanted to prove that you should be out here every single week?

NATE LASHLEY: Yeah, I mean, last week I didn't really expect to get in, just kind of last minute. There were a couple withdraws and I think there was a guy or two that weren't there so I went into first alternate spot. Even just being close is not a lot of fun. Like I said, getting in this week was really nice. You know, the way I'm playing, yeah, I feel like I should be out here every week. Like I said, hopefully I can just continue this good play through the weekend and see what happens at the end of the tournament.

Q. Just to follow up, Woodland credits his basketball background with a lot of his confidence as an athlete and he says that translated to golf. Did you find it the same way with your high school career as good as it was? Did you find when you played other sports and particularly this one that you had maybe a bravado that came from maybe your accomplishments there?

NATE LASHLEY: Yeah, I think playing other sports is always great when you're growing up; you know, as many as you can. Yeah, like you said, if you're good at them and you have a lot of fun with them and you get some confidence rolling, it can definitely roll into other sports and help you.

But I think growing up as an athlete and playing different supports has definitely helped me in golf as far as just learning how to adapt and play golf and not get mechanical out there.

Q. What would have been your favorite basketball achievement either as an individual or as a team? Is there one thing you think about a lot that really brought you a lot of joy?

NATE LASHLEY: You know, I had some good, fun games in high school where we pulled out some wins. Probably my senior year winning the Player of the Year in my class was probably my biggest accomplishment, but I kind of knew all along that basketball was more for fun. I played against some guys that were a lot better than me, so I knew I was going to have to stick with golf.

JACK RYAN: All right. Nate, we appreciate the time. Best of luck this weekend.