

**ROUND 1 INTERVIEW**  
**November 21, 2018**



**WEBB SIMPSON ( -7)**

---

**Q. Webb, nice playing out there today. That bogey on your second hole today, you bogey that par 3, but since then you really tore it up. How was the golf course?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** The golf course is great. Davis and crew did a great job, you know, with what they had, they made it even better, so it's a fun golf course. The green complexes can be challenging, but they also can -- you know, balls can funnel to the hole and I was able to take advantage of it a few times. Like you said, not a great start. Hung in there and made some birdies coming in.

**Q. What was the difference for you, just rolling in some putts?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** I think our reads early on, I was a little off and I hit a couple shots into greens and missed it on the wrong side. So a little bit of a combination there, but started to see the reads a little better and started going in.

**Q. You had a great weekend a year ago and you've played well here. What is it about The RSM Classic and Sea Island that just really seems to fit your eye?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** I grew up going to the beach in Wilmington, so I just love anytime I get close to the coast here, or Hilton Head, I just love it. That combined with enjoying the golf courses, my family's coming, so it's a good week for me.

**Q. After this week, take a little break?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** Well, I only have a week off before Tiger's tournament and we leave from there for the Presidents Cup, so I've had my time off. I've been home a lot lately, so it's nice to get back at it.

**Q. Play well the rest of the way and great playing today.**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** Thank you, appreciate it.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** I was 1 over there through about five holes and playing with guys who are making birdies, it's hard to stay patient. But I was able to do that and started making some putts on the back nine.

**Q. Talking with J.J. Henry yesterday, he was saying there's a lot of Hilton Head**

**elements to the Plantation course. Davis Love won five times at that golf course. How much have the changes here reminded you of that other place that you had some success?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** Yeah, I mean, it's usually windy here like Hilton Head so you've got to keep your ball on the ground. You have plenty of holes that are crosswinds, so that can be challenging. There's water everywhere, so there are some similarities.

But I love the redesign, he did a great job. There's a lot of slope in the greens now, so you can really use those slopes to help you and get the ball in the hole.

**Q. Less than a month away from the Presidents Cup, a lot of intrigue. Tiger replaced Brooks Koepka with Rickie Fowler. How would you describe the state of the team in terms of confidence going into Australia?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** I think everyone's very confident. You know, it's a little -- it's a little different than last year having this much time off or time between when the team was decided and the Presidents Cup, but I know guys have been playing and practicing and gearing up for it, so I think everyone's confident.

It's sad about Brooks not able to be on the team, but happy that Rickie gets to join. I've played on many teams with Rickie, so should be a great week. It brings back memories of my first team event there in 2011, so I love that golf course and look forward to it.

**Q. (Inaudible) then under par for your last 13 holes, what triggered there?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** Nothing really. It was nice to get that birdie on 15 to kind of, you know, kind of get me back to even par. I was about to get frustrated, but I knew I had to stay patient. It's not easy when guys are making birdies that you're playing with and you're not.

Got it going a little bit, nice birdie on 18. Then yeah, just started filling it up. My reads were better on the second nine and it was just one of those nine holes where everything seemed a lot easier than the first nine.

**Q. Great finish obviously. That's a lot of momentum heading into tomorrow, but you've always played well here. What is it about this property, these golf courses, maybe just the environment here in the Golden Isles that suits you?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** I've always loved playing near the coast. I grew up going to Wilmington a lot throughout the years, so I love the beach, I love the coast. I think I'm a little calmer here. There's a lot to do here besides golf, so I think it's probably good for me to do other things other than golf this week, so I think I just stay relaxed.

On top of that, I do love the courses. They look good to me. Some courses don't, but these couple here look good to my eye. Yeah, I just have good memories here. I never won here,

but some good finishes.

**Q. Before we let you go, that's your first competitive round on the Plantation course since they've done the renovation. Obviously it looks very different to us. From a playability standpoint, what's the biggest difference after the changes? How has it changed tee to green?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** Not a ton tee to green. A little longer, but I think what matters most is kind of how your approach come into the greens because the greens have significantly more slope. You can use the slopes to help you, but also if you miss it on the wrong sides, it's hard to get the ball close to the hole because the slopes are so severe.

It's definitely a golf course that requires more thinking I think now than it did before, but I think tomorrow, especially with less wind, you're going to see some good scores.

**Q. Webb, you got off to a bit of a slow start, but you got a pep talk from Paul Tesori, your caddie. What did he say to you?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** Well, he told me, you know, no matter how I started out or whatever stress I had throughout the day, to stay patient. I think he knew that scores would be pretty good over there even though it was windy. Still played tricky at times, we had a lot of holes that were crosswind. But it helped me, it helped me to kind of weather the storm. Not birdieing the par 5 14th was kind of a tough moment, but, you know, the birdie on 15 really kind of got me back to thinking about one shot at a time and not everybody around me's making birdies.

**Q. Very solid round, but to finish it the way you did with a bomb on the last hole for birdie and the outright lead, how does that make things better tonight?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** It was nice. I actually thought before I made a long putt there sometime in the last couple years, so it was nice to think about that. I didn't remember it until I was on the green. I think I had a similar putt. So it was a great way to finish birdieing the last three. More than anything, just to hit shots where I wanted to see them go on the front, or my second nine. I would say we were having a little trouble reading the greens on the first nine and second nine we kind of tightened it up a little bit and the ball started going in.

**Q. I know you don't want to get ahead of yourself, but you've done everything but win on this golf course. You've had a second and third. What would a victory mean?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** It would mean a lot. It's been, again, a while since I've won. I've given myself chances and that's -- starting the week all I wanted to do was give myself a chance on Sunday, because I do feel comfortable on this golf course. Yeah, I just, I want to be in the mix come Sunday.

**Q. You've had a lot of time off this fall. Did you use that time to work on anything or**

**change anything or do anything differently?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** Yeah, I mean, I saw Butch Harmon in October, I guess it was, right before Vegas, so had a lesson. A lot of the stuff is stuff Paul and I have been working on, but he kind of helped us figure out a plan to how to work on it. So I did do a good amount of work.

Short game work with Pat Goss, I continue to do the same stuff we've been doing. I feel like I've been on this plane for a while now of where I'm trying to get is very clear and the way to get there is pretty simple and it's just a matter of continuing to do it over and over.

So there's no big changes or overhauls at all to speak of, it's just a few things with putting, a few things with chipping, a few things with full swing that I've just kind of tried to consistently get better at.

**Q. Was that your first time seeing Butch?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** No, I've seen him before.

**Q. How long have you worked with him?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** So, I would say a few years now, probably four, five years. I tend to go see him once a year. He'll come by when he's traveling, check out a couple swings here and there. So kind of Paul's my swing coach week in, week out. When we are out west, we'll go see Butch and we'll send him swings, he'll help kind of along the way from afar. It's been a great help.

**Q. You mentioned it's been a while since you won. It's been a little more than a year. Does it feel longer, though, because you've been so consistent than the drought where you went through all the putting stuff and all that? Not feel longer, but did it feel like a long time? Does that make sense?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** Yeah, it makes sense. I feel like I'm getting to that point where I've been -- it's different because this time I've been playing better, so I think I've been happier with my finishes, so there's less of that pull to win.

Although I want to win, I just feel like last year, JT Poston shoots 62 at Greensboro, Rory 61 at Canada, so I felt like I had good chances to win and guys just went out and played great. So they weren't that hard to lose, those tournaments, knowing how well they played.

Yeah, I mean, that's the goal, but I think more than winning, what I wanted to become was someone who's consistent because I know if I'm consistent, I'm going to have more chances to win, I'm probably going to win more, so that's kind of the thought.

**Q. What was the key for you today?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** Honestly, I think the key was staying patient early. I was 1 over through five holes, should have birdied 14, the par 5. There was enough wind to make it tricky today, but there's a lot of birdie holes over there. I think tomorrow with less wind you're going to see some really low scores over there.

**Q. Was it easier to stay patient just because you had some time off so maybe there is some rust?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** I think more the guys I was playing with, Patton was 3 under through four or something and Austin was a couple under through five, so when you're playing with guys who are making putts and making birdies and you're 1 over, that's when you start -- you feel worse about your 1 over, so that was probably more of it.

**Q. News yesterday about Rickie. Would he be the kind of guy you would want to play with? You've been on teams with him.**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** Yeah, Rickie and I go back to '07 Walker Cup.

**Q. You were paired together?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** No, but on the same team, so I feel like I've been on teams with him a lot. We've never played together. I believe like we're good friends, but I don't know. I mean, we send who we want to play with to Tiger. They do all the maneuvering and then we get back kind of what we can expect.

**Q. What are your memories of playing Royal Melbourne in '11?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** Great memories. Being my first team event, I didn't know what to expect, but I realized afterwards like, man, I didn't realize how bad I wanted to win my matches or the whole Presidents Cup for the team. It was apparent right after that it was a lot more important to me than I realized.

These team events, they just bring something out of you that a regular tournament doesn't, I think, just because it is a team event and we're not used to that. So you want it for other players more than any time of the year, so it was really cool.

**Q. Have you ever thought about added distance or trying to or --**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** Yeah, I mean, I need as much as I can get. I hired Cornel Driessen two years ago and our game plan was I need to get longer. That's where the game's going but I've got to do it the smart and right way. So he took a really slow, safe approach. And I've gotten faster. I've picked up probably one and a half to two miles an hour of clubhead speed the last two years, so a total of three to four, which if I can keep that up for another two to three years, I would be really happy with that.

**Q. Do you weigh more then?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** Yeah.

**Q. How much more?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** I'm 10 pounds probably from when we started.

**Q. How much has that been -- how much has that contributed to the last two years?**

**WEBB SIMPSON:** I think a lot. I think it's allowed me to swing more consistently, my energy's been better, he's helped me with nutrition. So I've scaled down on tournaments, I'm playing less tournaments, but I've felt like less up and down at tournaments energy-wise, so I think all of what he's doing has been helping.