

CHRIS STROUD (-6)

Q. Chris, how would you characterize your round out there today?

CHRIS STROUD: It was a lot of fun. Today, that's what you practice for. The weather was awesome, the golf course was in really, really good shape. I figured honestly this morning would be a lot easier than the afternoon, but with as warm as it got, the greens stayed in pretty good shape, which I was surprised being poa.

But no, it was a solid round. Mark Hubbard's one of my dear friends and we've been playing a lot of games at home and today we had a little game and it was neck and neck. He almost made a hole-in-one on 9 on me, so that would have cost me, but that was fun. It's nice to be able to play with friends, play well.

For me, it's really just trying to get my back healthy and stay healthy. Tomorrow's an early morning, so I'm going to get up a little early and get the body moving a little bit. If I can stay healthy, I should be fine.

Q. How has that kind of affected you, the back problems you've had? As you say, tomorrow morning you've got to get up earlier. Is it kind of just the process you have to kind of go through with this thing?

CHRIS STROUD: You know what's been tough? That's a good question. I've been fighting a little depression because of it. It's not super heavy, it's just because I can't get in the gym like I want to, I can't get my body to do certain things. And I really can't say "can't" anymore, it's really I'm doing it, I've just got to get through it, you know what I mean? I've got to positively keep thinking the right thoughts, keep rehabbing, but it's been tough mentally for me. I've never really been injured in my career and all of a sudden last August I got hurt and it's been just slow, slow, slow, and just nagging. I have a lot of respect for guys out here that go through injuries. It's amazing how they figure out a way to play well. So I'm doing the same thing and just trying to keep my spirits up and just be real easy on myself and try to rehab and get stronger.

Q. How hard is that to do when putting a score on a scorecard is so important to you guys? You might play well, you might feel well, but then that score doesn't maybe pop onto the card like you want to. How hard is that, battling a little bit of depression because of that?

CHRIS STROUD: It is, it's a very easy hole to fall into, especially, I mean, I've never seen the Tour so talented as it is now. I mean, every single week there's more guys that can shoot 6, 7, 8, 9 under. I've never seen lower scores than we're seeing. It's incredible.

You have to find a way to just be your best, try not to compare to anybody else, run the marathon day after day and just put your program to work and just trust in that. I've been playing very nicely since I've come back at Hilton Head. We had a two-hour rain delay on Sunday and it cost me, I just couldn't get my body right, didn't feel right. So this week I want to keep putting myself in position, get myself in those top-10 positions so you can have a chance to go at it on Sunday. It's deep, the fields are deep. You've just got to keep pushing, keep making birdies and be aggressive when you can and try to make as many putts as you can.

Q. You've been out here for a long time. Does the golf you see played out on Tour, does that invigorate you? Like you said, at Hilton Head you played well. Does that kind of continue to invigorate you more and more to keep working hard?

CHRIS STROUD: Absolutely. I mean, I see there's definitely a few guys that are older than me; they've been out here for 18, 19, 20 years, this is my 13th. It's definitely taken a toll on the body, but it's tough trying to keep up with these young guys that hit it so far and you've got to find a way to beat them. the only way to do it is to work on yourself and continue to make yourself as good as you can and that's what I'm trying to do right now, just stay within myself, try not to get ahead.

I think that happens to me a lot, I think I get ahead of myself wanting to push for that win. You can't do that, you've just got to let it fall in place, do your best every single shot and literally, like you always hear, just take it one shot at a time, and if you do your best and everything goes your way, you'll have a good chance on Sunday.