

**RUSSELL HENLEY (-8)**

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**Q. You had six birdies and an eagle, solid round of golf, 8 under. That putt at 18 was moving pretty quick, but it dropped in. Thoughts on the round?**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** Yeah, definitely glad it hit the hole. I lost a little focus there. I think everybody's about to pass out at this point, it's so hot. Yeah, after three weeks off obviously I feel really excited about my score. I was a little bit rusty with the swing but had a few good breaks, but also didn't capitalize on a few holes that I was hitting it well. So overall I feel like encouraged and feel like hopefully I can be a little cleaner off the tee tomorrow.

**Q. You played well here last year, I think you were ninth, all the rounds in the 60s. Are you more confident the more you play this golf course?**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** Yeah, I think so. I mean, you've just got to hit it straight and leave it below the hole. The greens are great. Today was a good example of how I hit it close a lot of times inside 10 feet but was above the hole and had to play a little bit of defense, so just ball control. And I feel more comfortable now. Still some tough shots, though.

**Q. Forty-sixth in the FedExCup points standings as you come into this event. Your thoughts on the Playoffs, and obviously a great week here, you can move into the Top-125.**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** Yeah, my goal at the start of the year is to make the TOUR Championship and win and I haven't done either one of those yet, but going to keep trying my best. I've had a couple tournaments slip away from me a little bit that I feel like I should have finished better than -- I feel like I should be closer to maybe 30 in the FedExCup now based on my year and how I played, but that's golf and it's just hard and everybody's good, and I'm just trying to keep my head down and just play well for me.

**Q. Russell, clean card today, bogey-free 62. What helped you get to that today?**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** Definitely my short game. Had a couple holes where I put the ball in a terrible position and managed to get the ball up and down. Feel like I putted pretty well, made the putts I needed to make and made some par saves. Other than that, just, I don't know, I feel like I played solid.

**Q. You mentioned over there that people are about to pass out from the heat. How do you manage the heat out here?**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** Yeah, I don't know, I'm trying to figure that out. Maybe I need to drink

more Gatorade. It's hot out there and there's a couple tee boxes where there's no air flow. Growing up in the south, I guess I should be used to it.

**Q. Walk us through that stretch of golf you had, 5, 6 and 7, you went eagle, birdie, birdie. What was clicking during that stretch?**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** Yeah, No. 5 I feel like if you hit a good drive, then you can attack the hole pretty well. I only had 180 to the hole, so didn't really feel like it was as great of an eagle, but I had one chip-in, one long putt and hit it close one time. Just kind of things got going there.

**Q. You should be clear through to the Playoffs next week, but what are your goals to keep this momentum going from today?**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** Yeah, I mean, there's just so much golf to be played. I can't count how many times I've teed it up on Sunday and I'm just like, I can't believe I have to play another round. I just feel like we play so much golf and you've just got to be patient, you've got to just stay rested and try to just stay confident in your game plan.

**Q. What have you been doing the last three weeks?**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** I went to the beach with my family some of the first two weeks. Just put the clubs up and just went down to Florida and hung out with my kids and let them play in the sand. It was great. Then this last week I started practicing again.

**Q. The stats say your ball-striking was really good, but you mentioned the short game as the key.**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** Yeah. Well, I feel like there's a couple holes where I got away with the ball-striking off the tee. Hit a very poor 3-wood on 4 and then I hit it short-sided long right or long past the pin, the one place I can't go, and I hit a flop shot to about five feet and made it. I could have made 6 back there, it's really tough, so I was really excited for that. Then 9 I hit it way right off the tee and had an opening in the trees and chipped it onto the green and, you know, made par. But I just think about a few shots that were a little bit off. You've got to stay in attack mode out here. Obviously shot 8 under and a lot of things went my way, but I just feel like it could be a little better.

**Q. Anything you learned about yourself from the experience of being in the lead at the U.S. Open that might help you this week?**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** I think just from everything I've learned over all the golf I've played is you've got to keep attacking out here and you've got to keep giving yourself a chance to do that. Keep attacking and keep trying to play a great round. I feel like at the U.S. Open I was not as committed to a few shots that really cost me and didn't feel -- felt like the nerves were kind of making me feel a little bit tentative. Just know that I can play under pressure and just

keep committing to my shots.

**Q. Russell, this is going back a lot of years now, but you once told me that it was either a text reminder or a mantra or something where you would tell yourself "I'm the best putter in the world."**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** Yeah.

**Q. Okay. good, I'm not making that up. Do you still do stuff like that?**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** Yeah. I have one on my phone right now that says "I'm a great putter." You know, it's weird, the first years I was on Tour, my ball-striking was kind of inconsistent and my putting was, I think it was top-10 the first couple years. It might have been 1 in overall putting my second or third year. So I kind of figured out what works for me with my swing and I've started to hit it better the last few years and my putting slowed down, so I started working with Ramon Bescansa and he's just really helped me. We just work on really simple things, but I'm starting to feel more confident with it over the last year.

**Q. Is that just like an alert that comes up that says that?**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** Yeah, I just have a reminder. I don't have many reminders, but that's one of them.

**Q. Does it pop up at a certain time every day?**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** Yeah, it pops up I think like mid morning, yeah. I don't know, I don't know. I turned it off for a few years because it was making me mad because I wasn't putting well, but I put it back on recently. Maybe I need to keep it there.

**Q. I see you're fourth in approaching this year.**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** Yeah. It's tough to be really highly ranked in putting I feel like when you're hitting it well, and I feel like I've hit it well this year, so that's my excuse. I actually have no idea if that's real or not.

**Q. What was the best putt you hit today?**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** It wasn't on 18. I would say the best putt I hit was I would say on 11. I made birdie and I had a double breaker. So it broke off the side of the fringe and then the grain at the hole was going the opposite way, so I saw it perfectly and broke both ways and went in. That was pretty cool.

**Q. What's the mindset like for you this week when there's so many guys here like playing for their job and there's a lot of pressure on those guys. What do you feel?**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** I want to make TOUR Championship and I want to win. I haven't won in years, so I feel like as well as I've been playing, I feel like I've underachieved a little bit. So I'm just excited to compete and play, and maybe this week doesn't go that well the next three days, but my kind of mindset is I feel if I can play my game, play my normal game, then I can maybe give myself a chance and that's kind of where I'm at.

**Q. Can you spell Ramon's last name?**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** I think it's B-E-S-C-A-N-S-A. It's the first word I've ever spelled in an interview and I think I probably got it wrong, too.

**Q. We can Google that and --**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** He invented the Perfect Putter, yeah.

**Q. I assume you use that, too?**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** I do, I do. I use it for my practice. When I'm here with him, he usually sets up everything for me, but when I'm at home, I use it, yeah, and it's been helpful