

ROUND 3 INTERVIEW
November 20, 2021



DENNY McCARTHY (-9)

Q. Denny, how would you kind of assess how the whole day went? Got off to such a hot start there on the -- your front side.

DENNY McCARTHY: I'd say it was a pretty good day. Obviously I had a lone hiccup there at the end, but it was just a good day. I've been kind of waiting for something like that. I've been playing a lot of really good golf. Usually putting's my strong suit. It's actually been pretty cold lately. I feel like my ball-striking's been really good and just haven't really made the putts. Today I came out with a pretty light attitude, playing with a good buddy of mine, Joel Dahmen. Hard not to be fun and positive when you're playing with him, so we were joking around from the 10th tee. I just had a really good picture of the shots and the putts today and I was just really relaxed. I was just having a lot of fun out there. Just being really decisive. My caddie and I -- Derrick -- did a really good job of just picking shots and going and just being really committed. It was just a lot of fun today.

Q. Does it help when you get on conditions like this, you can kind of play not freer, but also kind of be a little more creative a little bit more?

DENNY McCARTHY: For sure. I love the wind. I've probably said it to you guys before, I love playing in the wind. I think it was really my only chance to get back in the tournament was a day like today, cold and windy. If the conditions were calm, there's probably no chance for me to get back in the tournament. A day like today, though, if you do something special and the leaders don't really do that much, you can put yourself right back in it. I made the cut on the number, I was 9 or 10 back going into today, there was absolutely nothing for me to lose. I just tried to come out, stay light and have a lot of fun and I did that.

Q. I'll run a couple thing by you. Have you ever one-putted eight greens that row?

DENNY McCARTHY: Yes, I have. I've done that probably a few times, junior golf, amateur golf. Like I said, my putter's usually my strong suit and I've gotten on some hot runs before, so I was waiting for a day like today for a little while. It was nice to have my putter warm up a little bit. It felt hot in my hands.

Q. What about seven 3s in a row?

DENNY McCARTHY: That was pretty cool. I made bookend 4s, I noticed that. After I played that nine I was like, I was like writing my scores down, I finished up on 18, I was like man, that's a lot of 3s I just wrote down, 3s are always good. They don't add up as fast as the other scores.

Q. It's hard enough putting Seaside course on a day like today, so from a putting standpoint, was it maybe even better than --

DENNY McCARTHY: Yeah, I mean, I think it took a day like today where, like I said, I've been struggling a little bit with my putter, maybe being a little too technical for me. I like to pick spots and free it up and kind of see stuff to putt around. Today with the wind, you're playing some wind more than break. The greens being really slick, you're playing a lot of wind on putts and I just had -- I don't know if there were ball marks just meant to be right in my lines today, but I saw ball marks in spots that were -- you know, I looked at my putt once and I really liked a ball mark and that was the ball mark I looked at. You know, like I said, I was just having fun. I was trying to be really decisive and committed and I did a really good job of that today.

Q. Are you into strokes gained? Do you look at the stats at all?

DENNY McCARTHY: A little bit, yeah. Obviously I had two really good years of putting, I was strokes gained first. Last year I had an okay year putting and I've kind of -- I've had some nice results this fall, but my putting actually hasn't quite been there. So if I keep doing what I'm doing with the ball-striking, I know my putting is going to come around. It's the club I trust in the most. If I just keep doing what I'm doing, good things are going to come my way.

Q. Your front, the back nine, it was something like 4.8 strokes gained just putting, which if you doubled it, it would have been the greatest strokes gained --

DENNY McCARTHY: Yeah, I think I made --

Q. -- even by your standards?

DENNY McCARTHY: I think I made three 30-ish footers in a row and I made one on 11 as well, so I made four. That gains probably a shot to a shot and a half. I don't know exactly how much that is, but make four 30-footers in a nine-hole stretch is usually pretty good.

Q. Is that the hottest in a nine-hole stretch? Can you remember a hotter stretch than that?

DENNY McCARTHY: There were a couple junior tournaments, amateur tournaments I've played where I think I played a U.S. -- maybe it was a Maryland Open where I birdied -- I played the back nine, shot like 1 under and turned around birdied 1 through 7, parred 8 and birdied 9 and I made a ton of putts on that little stretch, but maybe not feet of putts. That was pretty cool today. It was like there were a couple putts I was trying to make 'em, but I had like a slippery one for eagle on 15 back downhill, downwind. It's not one I was trying to ram in, it was one I was trying to coast down there after making a couple in a row. To see that one just go right in the middle perfect speed, it was like, man, this is pretty fun today.

Q. You mentioned you were trending a little bit, but you improved your finish the last

three weeks. Besides putting, is there anything else that you're pretty confident in?

DENNY McCARTHY: I like this place. I've played well here before, I feel comfortable on it. This is my fourth week in a row. It's a little tiring on the body sometimes, but sometimes that's when I get some really good golf out of me. You know, maybe the first week doesn't quite click, find something for the second week, find something, take some momentum into that third week and it helps me. I know what to work on after each week, something I maybe didn't do so well the week before and I really focus on that the next week and combine that with everything I was doing well. If I focus on those things I didn't do so well, like I said, it's tiring four weeks in a row, but I also like it because I feel like I can get in a little bit of a groove playing tournament golf.

Q. Did you use the green book today?

DENNY McCARTHY: I did, yeah. I use it pretty frequently. I look at it a lot for second shots. Honestly, really wasn't that helpful today just because -- just because of the wind really. I had some putts that were clearly left-to-right putts and the wind was blowing 30 miles an hour off the right and I played it -- I just used my judgment. I actually played some of those putts outside the right or pretty straight. I know they're going away. I'm going to use it until they do go away.

Q. What's your putter?

DENNY McCARTHY: Scotty Cameron Golo. I've used it since college, it's my trusty guy. Thought about maybe putting a backup in this week, but I felt like it had some made putts in there, so I kept it in for this week.

Q. Have you always been a good -- was that one of the first things you knew you were excellent at when you started --

DENNY McCARTHY: I struggled at it a little bit as a junior. I've always -- I played a lot of sports growing up. I've always felt like I had good hand-eye coordination. I played basketball all the way through high school, a really good 3-point shooter, so it's just something kind of point and shoot to me. I just visualize things really well. I have my own kind of art form, if you will. I just work on trying to perfect my own little system and I don't try and let too many people tell me what to do because I know what I do really works.

Q. When did you feel like you became a really good putter?

DENNY McCARTHY: Maybe getting into high school, seventh, eighth grade, getting into high school. It was actually playing some younger junior tournaments, I would have some rounds where I had 34 to 40 putts in a round and it was the weak part of my game. Addressed it and found a system that works and it's obviously -- it's obviously been working. Just stick to my system, not too mechanical. I treat it as an art form and just have fun with it.

Q. How did you come up with it?

DENNY McCARTHY: It's just trying to be creative. It's just really green reading. I like to pick spots. If I see a putt a couple cups out or something, I'm not aiming a couple cups out, I'm not looking at the hole, I'm seeing something tracking along that line whether it be ball marks or poa annua spots or something that sticks out in my way and kind of visualizing something along those spots that I picked.

Q. Do you almost see a line?

DENNY McCARTHY: People ask me that and I don't know what to tell them. See, I don't like to think about it that much. You're like making me think, like do I see a curved line?

Q. We're going to ruin you.

DENNY McCARTHY: No, I pick the spots and I trust that the spot that I've picked is going to give my ball a good chance to go in and I get up and I hit it.

Q. It's interesting that somebody who's a great driver of the ball, everybody would know it if somebody was the greatest driver, even if they whatever, didn't win a tournament, whatever it may be. Statistically in the last five years I think you have a rock solid argument to being the best putter at least on the PGA TOUR. I don't even know if the casual or average golf fan would know that. That's kind of an interesting thing.

DENNY McCARTHY: Yeah, people have tweeted at me. I know Brandel Chamblee's done a couple putting specials on me. Maybe over the last year I've maybe put a little too much pressure on myself, you know, getting frustrated when I do have a good ball-striking round and I miss a handful of 10- to 15-footers. Golf can be frustrating like that. I think I got into too many expectations for myself. Man, I should be making that putt, I'm one of the best putters out here.

So I think it is nice to have that, people respect me for that, but at the same time I need to just go out and put my head down and do it and not worry about the results. If I just trust in my process and not worry so much about the results, good things are going to come my way.

I think today, I mean, that's the attitude that I like to have was today, like I was very positive from the first moment on. I wasn't overthinking things, I just got up, was just picking my spots and hitting them and I didn't care what happened after that. Luckily some went in today and that's kind of the streak I've been looking for to maybe give me a little bit of a confidence boost.