

ROUND 1 QUICK QUOTES
November 16, 2023

RUSSELL KNOX (-4)



Q. Russell, playing in weather conditions like this, just like going home?

RUSSELL KNOX: It's too warm today, though. No, I mean everyone hates playing in this, let's be honest. I mean, the course is in perfect condition so that makes it a lot easier, but yeah, it rained a couple times out there as hard as it's ever rained on a golf course, I think. It was a long day. My feet are tired and ready to have a hot shower.

Q. Given the stop-start nature of the day, are you happy with the score you posted?

RUSSELL KNOX: Yeah, absolutely. Always tough to come back for one hole, especially on 18, it's probably the hardest hole on the course really. I kind of limped out there, but happy to make a par, for sure.

Q. What kind of lie did you have on that second shot?

RUSSELL KNOX: Out of the bunker, it was good. The bunkers here, even though if you're far, like there's that gradual upslope so it kind of helps you a little bit. Even though I missed the green, that was one of the best fairway bunker strikes I had in a long time so I was pretty happy with it.

Q. Did you get out of there in time to see where it landed?

RUSSELL KNOX: I saw it land. I kind of expected it to have rolled down where it did, but I was hoping it just caught that little ridge and rolled left. I'll take a 4 and run.

Q. Did you get a break from where the grain was running from where you were a little bit? Would that have been a tougher shot?

RUSSELL KNOX: Yeah, because my pitch up, I was hitting into the grain and just that fluffy lie I had probably helped. It really wasn't too give difficult a shot so it was nice -- and that's a shot that I worked hard on the last couple weeks, so it was nice to hit a good one there.

Q. The one thing happening for you in the fall is you're making cuts. Is that a sign of progress for you?

RUSSELL KNOX: To be honest, there was a stretch in the middle of the year where I was dreadful. The start of the year and the end of the year, I mean, I've made a lot of cuts this year, but I've just done nothing with it. That's been completely kind of opposite to the rest of my career.

I've managed to do this because I always seem to move up when I made the cut and finished, even if it was top-40, top-30, but this year I've made the cut. To be honest, my game has been so poor that I've had to put like every ounce of energy into making the cut and then come the weekend, I'm gassed. When you're playing your best, those first couple days come so easy to you so you can give it all on the weekend. I've just been banging my head against the wall, and on the weekend I've just run out of gas. I've made bad decisions, bad swings and bad shots and it's just kind of piled on me like a 20-pound weight. It's been frustrating. Hey, one foot in front of the other, try my best.

Q. Is it also tough to make corrections to your swing when you feel compelled to play every week?

RUSSELL KNOX: Oh, for sure.

Q. Can you do a lot, make a lot of progress in your offseason?

RUSSELL KNOX: I hope so, I hope so. My game is good, though. I mean, I've joked with my family, like 80 percent of the time I'm a world-class player, the other 20 percent of the time I'm a 20 handicap. Those moments are killing me. I drove the ball the worst I've ever driven it this year and that's the reason why I'm in the position I'm in. The rest of my game has been pretty good, to be honest. So it's been difficult, but at the same time it's not supposed to be easy, right?

Q. One more thing, do you have a number in mind? Have you been told by anybody what you need to reach --

RUSSELL KNOX: I haven't --

Q. -- or do you just go out there and --

RUSSELL KNOX: Yeah, I know kind of just by glancing at it, probably top-3 maybe, maybe even better than that. I think my best finish this year's 21st, so finishing third, it seems -- it's obviously possible and now off to a decent start, it's like OK, well, one round gone. But the way it's been, it's not probable. But you never know. I draw so much inspiration from Camilo the last couple weeks, you just never know when it's all going to turn around. A lot of the things that he said in his interviews is exactly the way I felt. The word "demons" comes to mind. I mean, golf, golf when you've been out here 12 years for me and longer for Camilo, it's a hard game. You've hit a lot of great shots, but you've hit a lot of bad shots and sometimes your brain unfortunately remembers those ones too much.

It's still a joy to play and I hope I can kind of battle through this. Wherever I end up next year, I'm going to keep going and it's not the end.