

ROUND 1 QUOTES
June 7, 2024



STEVE STRICKER (-3)

Q. What would you call your day today? Did you ever get going?

STEVE STRICKER: It was a tricky day out there today, I'm sure you heard it before from other players, but it was a challenge. I mean, the wind was gusty, the greens were super fast, the ball was moving around once you putted it, you know, the wind would take it. That was the hard part probably is getting a good feel on the greens. Some of them could really get away from you and one did on me on, especially on 17. I was able to make it coming back. You really had to be careful not just running it by 8, 10 feet on some of these downwind putts.

Q. (No microphone.) help you with that, the break?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, you know what, I had some opportunities coming -- I got it to 3 after the par 4 up the hill, what is that, 13. You have -- 14's a birdie hole, 15's a birdie hole and 16's a birdie hole and I didn't birdie any of them. That's disappointing.

Then 17, 18 are good holes, so I had some chances in there. Hit a couple good putts, too, at 15 and 16 that for some reason didn't go the way I was thinking it was going to go, but a good start, good, solid round.

Q. What does the combination of the rain that you guys have gotten and the wind that you had today do to add to the challenge?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, it's playing long, longer than normal. The greens are still kind of releasing in some spots. Some long irons will release on you a little bit, you can stop the short ones. They're just really fast. Then you add this gusty wind that we had today, if you got on the wrong side of things it was a challenge just to kind of lag it down there close and move on. So you had to be pretty cautious. And there was some good holes into the wind. Yeah, it wasn't an easy day out there.

Q. Is this the fastest you've seen them?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, it was -- it probably is just as fast or the fastest we've played, and then you add the wind on top of this. It was borderline too fast for the wind, for the conditions. It was fair, but it was -- I can see where you could, you know, where it could get away from you on the greens today.

Q. Jerry playing in front of you making all those birdies on the back, did you hear the roars? Did you know what he was doing?

STEVE STRICKER: I didn't know what he was doing. I saw him going up the leaderboard, but I really wasn't paying much attention to the leaderboard at all until the last couple holes coming in. Yeah, I knew. And David Duval up in front there, I thought I saw his name up there.

Yeah, some good scores, there's a lot of people bunched. No one really separated themselves today. A lot of players right up there.

Q. Steve, have you had a chance to talk to Jerry about what he's going through?

STEVE STRICKER: I have. I've been reaching out to him quite a bit just to see how he's feeling. We've talked quite a bit about it. I know he's been having a tough time. I think he's got a little bit better handle on things, at times I feel like that, but I know it's a situation where he's got to get the medications right. I think they're still trying to figure out -- I know it's RA, but I think it was from a tick, like a tick bite or lyme's disease, the kind of thing that activated it.

Yeah, it's a scary situation. The guy's never really been sick ever. Then you throw this in there on him and all the other things that their family's been going through, you feel for him.

It's amazing that he's actually playing this well, to tell you the truth. You guys didn't know about it, but he's been going through this for a long time. For him to even be playing. I saw his fingers at one point early on and, I mean, they were puffed up. He was having a hard time getting out of bed, eating was a challenge for him. Early on he didn't know what was going on. Yeah, it was amazing that he was even out here playing and playing to the level that he was playing.

Q. Can you relate to how difficult it is when you don't necessarily have the energy? I know you went through your own scare just a couple years ago, not having the energy and trying to play through it?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, yeah, you're right. I came back though when I finally felt like I had enough energy, so I can't really imagine him going through that and not feeling energized. He wasn't eating right, so I'm sure he wasn't getting enough energy through food.

Then the mental part of it, too, not really knowing for sure what was going on at the time when he first was going through it, that had to take a toll on him, too.

Yeah, I'm asking him a lot, I'm in his corner a lot trying to figure out and see how he's doing. I told him early on that if there's anything we could do to help in any sort of way that we're here for him. I know he's going through a little bit of a tough time right now.

Q. Steve, you were announced as the defending champ on the first tee. Given that the wins haven't been as numerous this year, does that seem like a long time ago?

STEVE STRICKER: A year ago.

Q. OK.

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, I mean, it's nice to be introduced as the defending champion. I'm just trying to get back there again, trying to get in that position again come Sunday.

And hopefully I've got to get this putter worked out, that's the bottom line. I hit it well enough today to shoot 5 or 6 under and to walk away with 3 is a little bit disappointing. So I've just got to get it in the hole a little bit quicker.