

U.S. Amateur Championship

Press Conference

Thursday August 16, 2018

Devon Bling

Q. Our first visitor to the media center is a quarterfinalist for the U.S. Amateur. That's got to have a good ring to it for you.

DEVON BLING: It does, yeah. Really happy. I played pretty well all day, and yeah, there were some shots that I wasn't so happy with, but overall, I couldn't be more pleased with the way I played.

Q. You had to play somebody who was pretty good and on a pretty good roll in Noah Goodwin. Tell us about what you thought were the key elements to that match.

DEVON BLING: Basically I knew it wasn't going to be easy. I did get up to 3-up quickly, but I knew that was going to go away. He's a great player. He's had many accomplishments. Just with my assistant coach on the bag, he just kept pushing me, kept telling me I can do this, and I started to believe it, just kept believing it, and just got to grind it out to the end, and that's all I told myself.

Q. Talk about how you'd been playing leading into this event and what's been working for you most of the week so far.

DEVON BLING: Yeah, I've played a couple events before this, the SCGA Am and Cal State Am. They didn't go exactly the way I was hoping, but I had a couple things to work on. I always have a couple things to work on. Yeah, it was mainly I was trying to clean up my short game a little bit, and I thought the key around here is you've got to hit fairways, so I was working on just shaping the ball both ways and just getting it in the fairway to give myself the best chance to score. Yeah, I've been -- the last couple weeks I've been playing pretty well, so I felt really good coming into this tournament.

Q. Can you walk us through No. 7? I heard you hit the stick.

DEVON BLING: Yeah, it was 104 yards. Obviously played pretty far downhill. The wind was coming off the right and down pretty hard, and I actually hit a perfect wedge, and sometimes you hit it too good, exactly the right distance and the right line. It happens. That's golf. That's the game right there for you. Just got to -- I just knew at some point, me and my coach talked it over, that we were going to get paid back for that.



Q. How far away did that kick from the hole?

DEVON BLING: Oh, it hit the flag, landed about two inches left and then spun all the way off the green into the green, so it was pretty unfortunate.

Q. And you lost the hole?

DEVON BLING: Yeah, I did. I made bogey. The wind gusted on me on my putt and I lost the hole. But that's golf. I just kept telling myself to keep grinding hard.

Q. First time at Pebble Beach?

DEVON BLING: It is, yeah.

Q. Did you have much knowledge, research it much, watch it much on television? How has it looked to you after kind of hearing about it?

DEVON BLING: I mean, this is an unbelievable piece of property. I did -- I must say I did prep for this. I played a little Tiger Woods PGA TOUR on the PlayStation. I played Pebble a couple times just to see how the course was. Looks a little different in person, but just to see the layout. But yeah, this is amazing, knowing that it's a U.S. Open venue, and I couldn't be happier to be here, and I was enjoying every moment of it.

Q. 18th hole you were in the rough, Noah hit first. Were you trying to get it up there where you hit it, or were you trying to get it on the green? What was the thought process in terms of the match on that shot?

DEVON BLING: Well, I saw he laid up to, I don't know, 60 yards, and I assumed that if I made birdie, I could potentially tie the match. That's what I was trying to do. The lie wasn't great. I was going to try to get a 3-iron on there because I had 250 to the flag, but the lie didn't really permit me to hit full 3-iron. It could have come out anywhere. So I decided to go with a 4. It's not that much less club, but I just was trying to chase it to get it short of the bunker because I was trying to rely on my short game to get it done for me. I hit a good chip, and when I saw him -- after I saw him hit it to the back of the green, I was like, I could really tie this up here. I hit a good chip shot right where I wanted it to be, and he putted it past, and on my putt, as I had that, I'd been making those all day. But I just pulled it a little bit. The right hand got control of the putter. It happens. He missed his, too, and that's where I just

never give up and battle it out until the end.

Q. What's the extent of your experience in match play in terms of tournament golf?

DEVON BLING: I've played junior events. I played a couple in nor Cal with match play, and then obviously U.S. Junior, tried to get in the NCAAs with UCLA, but that's really it. I haven't had too much experience. It's a completely different type of game. You rely on what your partner does a little bit, or what your opponent does. If he hits one right in the rough, now you can aim a little away from the flag and hit to the center of the green and just continue to put pressure on hitting fairways and hitting greens. But yeah, I haven't had too much experience playing this.

Q. Where does the quarterfinalist at the U.S. Am stand as an accomplishment in your career?

DEVON BLING: It is definitely very big. It's probably the biggest thing I've accomplished. The job is not done yet, but I'm going to enjoy this moment right here getting to the quarterfinals and wake up tomorrow and be ready to go. But yeah, it's definitely one of the biggest accomplishments I've had.

Q. Just wondering what your expectations were coming in.

DEVON BLING: I was really excited to play the two great golf courses, Spyglass and Pebble, and I didn't really have any expectations. I wasn't expecting to make it to match play. I was just taking it one shot at a time, one hole at a time, and add it up at the very end. Fortunately I made it into match play, and that was really goal number one was to make it into match play, and then just one shot at a time, one step at a time, just take everything slow and relax.