

U.S. Amateur Championship

Quick Quotes

Monday August 13, 2018

Isaiah Salinda



Q. I'm looking at your scorecard; great round, 3-under, best of the day at Pebble Beach, of the wave. What was the secret to your success today do you think?

ISAIAH SALINDA: Everything was pretty solid overall. I think I just played -- my caddie and I just really were committed to playing smart, conservative and aggressive on the shorter birdie holes. But I thought we played -- I played pretty well the whole day and made some putts throughout the day, which was nice, and a few key par saves.

Q. What's your Pebble Beach background? How many times have you played here?

ISAIAH SALINDA: This is my first time out here, so the practice round was --

Q. Really?

ISAIAH SALINDA: Was my first time out here, yeah. I've played most of the other courses in the area. I've played Spyglass a ton of times. But yeah, today was just my second time playing Pebble.

Q. So your front nine is a good one. You've got two birdies in a row, a bogey and then an eagle. What did you do with those holes?

ISAIAH SALINDA: Yeah, 3, I hit a good drive. I hit driver kind of over the trees and just had like a little wedge in there. Hit it to like eight feet. 4, I laid up and had another wedge, hit it to like 10 feet, made that one. And then 6, hit a good drive and then hit 6-iron up there about pin high, 25 feet, and then made that.

Q. So as a Stanford guy, playing Pebble Beach for the first time at the U.S. Amateur, what does that do to your head when you're trying to play the golf course? Did you get enough of your recon in and your view taking when you were playing the practice round to really focus on the round today?

ISAIAH SALINDA: Yeah, I thought I was prepared well enough. I feel like most of the holes were kind of straightforward. You know, having our yardage book helps, and my caddie has helped me a lot. I felt like I was prepared and knew the course well enough. I'm sure I'll learn it more as I learn more things about it as the week goes on. But yeah, I felt good about it in the practice round.

Q. Standing where you are on the leaderboard on the first day, that's got to be a good feeling based on the fact that we all know that once you get through the stroke play, the positioning is there -- you want to make match play. You want to play well enough to --

ISAIAH SALINDA: Yeah.

Q. Assuming really your goal is to get to match play --

ISAIAH SALINDA: That's exactly right.

Q. And this is a great first step.

ISAIAH SALINDA: Yeah, it feels good. I just wanted to put myself in position to make match play. Obviously the higher seed I can be, the better, or the lower seed I can be, the better. But I knew that two rounds under par or around par would definitely be good enough. Yeah, I've just been focusing on playing smart.

Q. What's your recent success been in golf?

ISAIAH SALINDA: Well, I won the Pacific Coast Amateur at Olympic Club a couple weeks ago, a few weeks ago, and then after that I made the sweet 16 at the Western Am.

Q. When you were looking at your schedule at the beginning of the year, were you rounding it out to say, okay, Pacific Coast, close to home, Western, U.S. Am at Pebble Beach? Was that what you were looking at?

ISAIAH SALINDA: Yeah, I felt like I was traveling -- most of my traveling was kind of early, middle of summer, and I knew that I had the Pac Coast and I had to qualify for this tournament, but after I qualified, I was really, really looking forward and hoping to peak at this event. Yeah, I feel like I'm playing better, hitting it better for sure than I was at the Pac Coast.

Q. Does this feel like a home game for you at all because it's close or not?

ISAIAH SALINDA: Not really. Just because, like I said, I've only played Pebble twice now, and I don't really get to play here that often. But it is nice to be close to home and have my family with me. Yeah, I'm definitely comfortable. I'm more comfortable on Spyglass just because I've played it more, but yeah, it's nice to be pretty close to home.

Q. So that combination of a good round at Pebble, you need another good round the next day to get into match play, and you've got experience at Spy and you're playing well, how's the feeling? Is there a confidence, or how do you feel about tomorrow?

ISAIAH SALINDA: Yeah, I guess -- well, as I said, my goal was just to make match play, but hopefully I can play another good round tomorrow and hopefully be medalist. That would be a pretty big deal for me. That would be a good goal to kind of go after tomorrow. Yeah, looking forward to it.

Q. Are you an aggressive player?

ISAIAH SALINDA: I am. Yeah, so my -- going into this tournament, I knew, knowing that I just wanted to make match play, I knew that I needed to kind of tone it down a little bit and hopefully save it for match play, so that's kind of what I was talking to my caddie about, just picking good targets and not getting too aggressive because it's just stroke play, and hopefully we can pick it up if we need to in match play.

Q. So you have to turn it back a little bit more when you're playing Spyglass, to be conservative and get to the goal?

ISAIAH SALINDA: No, it'll probably just be the same as today. Pars are good on almost every hole out there, so I'll just be trying to play the same as I did today and hopefully shoot under par and be up there at the end of tomorrow.