

ROB LAIRD (-3, 68, Charlotte C.C.)

On shooting a 68 in first USGA start: You bet. I couldn't be more pleased with the results and the position I am in.

On his expectations: They were high and they still are. I've been playing well. I've played [U.S.] Am qualifiers and sectionals for the U.S. Open. So everything I've done this summer I've played well. So I had reason to believe that I would play well again. I had expectations to play well and I did. I did what I needed to do.

On what went well: I hit a lot of fairways and I think that is key out here. You've got to position yourself. The greens are tricky, but if you can keep it in the fairway and give yourself a chance at birdie, someone is going to make birdies and why not me.

Birdied first hole of his first USGA championship: There's a couple of ways to play that first hole. You can get aggressive with it or you can kind of lay back. First tee shot in a USGA championship, so I said let's be conservative and hit an iron off the tee. Hit a good iron shot and had a wedge in. I hit it to 5 feet, and was a little nervous on the putt and snuck it in on the left side.

Consecutive birdies on 14 and 15: Those were good. Fourteen is kind of a shortish hole and hit a wedge in there to about 15 feet and made the longest putt I had up to that point. Was fired up from the disappointment from the hole before (bogey). I got a little aggressive with the putt and it paid off. Then we get to the next hole. Played to the middle of the green and used the same logic with the putt, but it went in. That was probably 25 feet. (9-iron approach)

On his mindset going into Sunday's final round of stroke play and qualifying for match play:

Tomorrow's course (Carolina Golf Club) is a little bit different, but it's the same mentality. It's hitting fairways. That course is a little more attackable, so if I can hit the same amount of fairways and keep that mentality, I think the rest will kind of take care of itself. Obviously, I don't need to go shoot the course record. I can play the same way I did today – be conservative but attack with that conservative game plan. Par is OK and if you get a couple to drop ... and eliminate the high numbers, you are OK.