

U.S. Senior Open

Flash Interview

Friday June 30, 2017

Scott Verplank



Q. 66 seems to be your number so far. Feel pretty good?

SCOTT VERPLANK: Yeah, that's a good number to be stuck on. I'd probably take a couple more if I could. Just played pretty good. I had a little stretch near the end where I got to not feeling very good and came out of it on the last hole. So that helps.

Q. How are you hitting it overall?

SCOTT VERPLANK: In general, I'm hitting it pretty good. I've been driving it really good. The last -- on 7 and 8, I hit bad drives when I wasn't -- when I lost my equilibrium. But other than that, I've been driving it really straight, which is good. That's what I haven't been doing for a while.

But putting solid. Irons could be a little more crisp, but if I stay in the fairway, then, you know, I'm in pretty decent shape.

Q. Did the wind pick up on you at all toward the end?

SCOTT VERPLANK: Well, yeah. It was kind of up and down, but it got to blowing pretty good there for a certain amount of time. And then it kind of laid down, and then it would come back up.

So, you know, just I think through these hills and through the trees and all that just kind of comes and goes. But no complaints, though.

Q. What do you call the last putt as far as length, probably 20 feet?

SCOTT VERPLANK: Probably 20 feet, yeah.

Q. Have you made a lot of those in the first two days?

SCOTT VERPLANK: Well, I didn't make -- you know, I made a couple of, oh, 10 and 15-footers for par yesterday. I don't remember -- I did make one longer putt. I made about a 25-footer on 17 yesterday. Then today, I actually made kind of like a 40-footer. I made two putts that you probably shouldn't make. I made like a 40-footer on the 11th hole. And then on the 16th hole, I had one that broke about 5 or 6 feet and then somehow it went in.

There's no such thing as an easy 20-footer, but that was dead straight, straight uphill. All I had to do was get it there.

Q. I thought straight was the hardest putt.

SCOTT VERPLANK: Well, okay, it was left center.

Q. Scott, with all the red numbers does that make the par saves all that more important?

SCOTT VERPLANK: Oh, you know what? Par saves are always important. But, yeah, you've got -- more importantly, you've got to keep making a lot of birdies. I really -- if I could get my irons a little more dialed in -- you know, I've only made nine birdies, but I've only made one bogey. So if I'm in the fairway, I'm in good shape. If I could start taking advantage of being in the fairway and hitting it closer, then I hopefully can make a few more.

Q. How's the wrist? That's always been an issue, hasn't it?

SCOTT VERPLANK: Oh, yeah. It's as good as it's going to be. I had -- my shoulder's almost back 100 percent. I had shoulder surgery in December. I'm not quite there yet. I still have a little bit of tightness and a little soreness. Obviously, it's better.

So I've got a lot of things to deal with, but I'm doing the best I can.

Q. Sitting where you are, on the leaderboard near the top, how does that feel for you?

SCOTT VERPLANK: It's great. Obviously, you can play these tournaments and would like to compete. It's kind of the -- when you play well and compete, playing tournament golf's pretty fun. If you're struggling and not feeling any good and all that, tournament golf's really not that much fun.

So, like I said, if I drive it in the fairway, it gets a lot more fun for me.

Q. Well, that's the key here too, because you can't do anything --

SCOTT VERPLANK: Yeah, the rough's pretty good.

Q. It might rain. How much more is that going to impact scoring when the course is already a little bit soft?

SCOTT VERPLANK: Well, I don't know that, but I guess it could. You know, the fairways aren't really running out right now anyway. So I guess, if it softened

up the greens a little bit, that would possibly.

But, you know, as sloped as these greens are, you get it spinning too much, and they don't want to stop. So they're actually pretty good right now. They're one big bounce and stopping.

Q. Would you say that the first two days, the pin positions have been -- I don't want to say easy, but fairly benign. Because they were trying to get 156 guys around, they didn't take a lot of chances with -- or have they been tough?

SCOTT VERPLANK: I would say they're pretty tough. I mean, the last hole -- including the last hole, they've got some pins on sides of hills that you just don't see anymore because you normally don't play greens that are 10 anymore. If these were 12, 12 1/2, I don't think you could finish.

So, yeah, they're pushing the pins up more on the hill, so there's more breaking putts here than you normally have and what everybody here has been used to for quite a while now.

Q. My point being, then, you're conditioned to see some challenging pins?

SCOTT VERPLANK: Yes, and there have been some. There's not a whole lot of flat ones. There's just not any flat spots on the greens.

Q. You're not going to be surprised tomorrow and go holy -- you know, you just can't believe it.

SCOTT VERPLANK: I've already done that for two days.

Q. Pretty much handling it okay then?

SCOTT VERPLANK: Pretty good.

Q. Congratulations.

SCOTT VERPLANK: Thanks.