

DEAN & DELUCA

Invitational

Thursday, May 25, 2017

Graeme McDowell

Quick Quotes

Q. Some good saves out there, including the one at 8. You almost hold one at nine to finish the round?

GRAEME McDOWELL: Yeah, I think we got very fortunate this morning. It was pretty benign for the first 12 or 13 holes. As forecasted, this is now starting to get up.

Like shots like my second shot to 9. I had 136 flag and playing anywhere from 155 to 160, so there is a 20-, 25-mile and hour wind whipping up out there. Like I said, lucky enough to get out there and get a nice run in and take advantage of the conditions this morning.

Q. Your first time here. What did you think?

GRAEME McDOWELL: Yeah, I mean, it's just a real classic, old-school golf course. So many guys have told me over the years this would be a great golf course for me. It's always been a tough decision to make around Wentworth time on what to do.

This year I thought I would come over and check out Colonial. Obviously very, very happy with what I saw so far, and obviously nice to get out there and get off to a good start.

There is always that kind of at the back of your mind thinking when you're playing against guys that have been playing here for years and years, you're hoping you're making the right decisions off tees and sort of got the right strategy on holes.

I really felt like I played the course correctly today, and obviously nice to get a low score under my belt.

Q. What were the deciding factors? Was it FedEx points, all the things that are involved in climbing up that board?

GRAEME McDOWELL: FedExCup points exactly. With it being a non-Ryder Cup year, I felt like I could keep my focus here in the States. And let's be honest. Going forward, this really is where any focus is. My family are here. I love the product that's the PGA Tour and the FedExCup. It's hard not to play a lot of your golf over here at the moment.

Of course I will keep my European Tour card and continue to play some back there, but the FedExCup is



so lucrative, and I've never made to Atlanta. I would like to make it there sometime.

Q. You seemed to solve the riddle out there in your first round.

GRAEME McDOWELL: Yeah, it was nice. It's always tough to come to a golf course like this for the first time that they been playing for so many years here on the PGA Tour. You are always a little worried that you're going to get your strategies wrong and not know the little nuances of a golf course like this one.

I had to good looks at it Tuesday and Wednesday, and really felt like I made some good decisions out there in this increasing wind. We got off to a pretty nice start this morning in some benign conditions. We really got a dozen or so holes under our belt before this wind started to get up.

It looks like it's going to be a blustery afternoon, so as I say, nice to get out there and take advantage of the conditions.

Q. A reflection too, I surmise, in how well you've been playing, how well you've been striking the ball.

GRAEME McDOWELL: Yeah, the game has been very good. Patience has been a big word sort of early in the season. It's hard to stay patient sometimes. Bad last round the PLAYERS and I bogeyed the last coming in at the -- what's that one called in North Carolina? Wells Fargo.

Just not really been getting the results that I feel like I need to sort of keep giving me that confidence to move forward. I've managed to stay patient, and I really like the way I'm hitting the ball.

Just got to keep plugging along. Nice to come to a golf course like this one where I really feel like it fits my eye and you don't have to hit it 150 yards for a change.

It's easy to be out there and think to myself, I've got to legitimize my decision to be here; I've got to prove that I made the right decision.

I kind of said to myself, I'm not really here to prove anything to anyone. I'm here because I want to be here and I want to chase some FedExCup points.

Like I say, I don't want to have to answer the question did I make the right decision to come here or should I be in Wentworth. Looking at the sunny skies in London this morning and watching a little bit of the golf on TV, yeah, looked beautiful there.

But I'm here for all the right reasons and not really here to prove anything to anybody.

Q. What are your impressions of the course?

GRAEME McDOWELL: Yeah, I really like the golf course. Tuesday was a little bit of a kind of start-and-stop day, but I managed to come out late afternoon. I think I was here until about 8:30 on Tuesday making sure I got a really good look at the golf course.

I like it a lot. It's old school. It's got some magnificent holes. Like I say, you're always kind of a little worried that you might miss some of the nuances. Guys been coming here for 20, 30 years. It's always tough to come here for the first time and, like I said, make sure you execute a good strategy and game plan.

I felt like I did that pretty well today.

Q. You look at this golf course, and it seems to be the type of golf course that would fit your game. Did that factor into the decision as well?

GRAEME McDOWELL: I've had guys that I look to for schedule hints and tips, guys like Jim Furyk, Snedeker, Zach Johnson, guys that I would sort of put my game on a similar statistical level, guys like that have been telling me for years and years I would love this place.

Obviously it's windy. This is a golf course that you don't have to move it 320, 350. In fact, that can be a negative at times because some of the tee shots are very narrow.

Yeah, that really was a big reason why I wanted to come.

It's a non-Ryder Cup year. I really feel like I -- I'm going to be back -- most of the month of July I'll be in Europe. I wanted to try and get as many FedExCup points as I could before I go back and do that European run.

Q. How pleasing was it to get through 1 to 5 1-under?

GRAEME McDOWELL: Yeah, 1 to 5 is a tough stretch on this golf course. It was nice in a way to not start there this morning early.

The start on the back is maybe slightly more benign, and that's just luck the draw sometimes. It was nice to be coming into that front five warmed up and kind of

good to go. I missed a fairway right on 1 which you're not supposed to. Actually gave myself a good look at birdie.

But, no, I got through those holes.

I made a great birdie on 4, which was one I had from the back fringe, and that really got me going. I hit a great tee shot around the corner on 5.

I played that stretch reasonable well. Great golf course. Obviously this wind strength here now for the afternoon and we're going to see it again a little bit tomorrow. It really brings another added dynamic to the golf course.

Q. You have a pair of pants to match the plaid jacket on Sunday?

GRAEME McDOWELL: You know, it's a similar plaid to the one on Hilton Head, and I think I looked equally bad in that one as I hopefully would in this one.

I'm not really worried about a color clash. I wear pink on Sundays generally. It would clash pretty nicely I think.

It's a long way to go. I'm just very happy with that start and look forward to getting back out there tomorrow.

Q. (Regarding Hogan Room.)

GRAEME McDOWELL: No, I only heard about the Hogan Room yesterday, so I am going to pop my head up later and see it. I was a big Hogan fan; read his biographies. It's tough not to be pretty intrigued by the man.

This is obviously his part of the world. Looking forward to going and checking out some of his golf memorabilia.

Q. Any impressions of the Fort Worth area?

GRAEME McDOWELL: We're staying in the Omni, which is only ten minutes from the golf course. It's a great hotel. We wandered up into town last night and ate. Saw some great restaurants and saw some good vibes.

I like the layout of everything this week, the golf course and the proximity to the hotel. Looks like we can have some nice food some good fun in Fort Worth as well. It's got everything you would want here for a tournament week.