

Charles Schwab Challenge

Thursday, June 11, 2020

Harold Varner III

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome Harold Varner III following a 7-under par 63. Harold, amazing round. If we can get some comments on your play.

HAROLD VARNER III: Just super solid. Obviously just hit 18 greens, but good to be back inside the ropes and just doing what I love to do, play golf and have fun. I'm pretty good at those two things, and they came together pretty well today.

Q. Talking about the greens, you're only the third person in 25 years to do that. When you look at how difficult this golf course was, was there something about your game that you discovered in the last couple days that led you to believe you were going to play like this?

HAROLD VARNER III: Last time I was here, I hit a lot of drivers, and that obviously is not the key to this place. Just had a really good game plan. Just hit a lot of fairways so you give yourself a lot of chances to hit greens, and man, it's just fun to just get back out there. It didn't matter if I shot 80 today. I love playing golf, but you don't realize it until it's taken away.

Q. What were you doing at 8:46 this morning and what did that mean to you?

HAROLD VARNER III: 8:46, I literally have no clue. I think I was watching "The First 48." But when I got to the gym it was on TV, and I just couldn't hear but I could see that they were just -- man, I don't really know what they were thinking on the golf course, but it was just crazy what they did. I thought it was pretty cool.

Q. We saw some guys have rust. Obviously you didn't, to shoot a 63. What do you attribute that to?

HAROLD VARNER III: When I'm playing golf out here, it's just -- man, it's fun. Like I love playing golf. I work my tail off to play and to get back in the ropes. No one is asking anything, you're doing what you're good at. Same thing, you're asking me questions, you're doing your job. I'm doing my job and I'm appreciative of that. Getting out there, the adrenaline is going, just that kind of stuff.

Q. How do you keep it going forward for a full four rounds?

HAROLD VARNER III: I don't know. Just keep playing golf. Keep doing -- I keep saying that, but just wake up.



It's going to be a super early morning but just be ready to play. Give myself a chance, and I'm excited for the challenge.

Q. Does it feel any different this morning given the fact you haven't played golf for three months, and you alluded to you kind of miss something when you don't have it?

HAROLD VARNER III: I woke up and I was like, am I really about to play golf? But I worked out with my trainer this morning, and I was like, it's game on, just back in the saddle. I've been playing a lot of golf like at home just with a bunch of friends, but now this world excites me like no other because that's what you want. That's why you get on the PGA TOUR, that's why you work your tail off, and just to be here is good.

Q. Has there been anything this week, maybe just social distancing wise, the way everything has been handled, that has kind of caught your attention?

HAROLD VARNER III: Yeah, I'm a big hugger. I love to hug people. I love to just -- I care about people. It's weird. Like you don't realize how much a handshake matters, looking a man in the eye or a woman, whatever that may be, you don't do that. So I've been struggling, honestly.

Q. Following up on that, how was it to play without fans? Maybe because you were having so much fun with your game and with yourself, playing within yourself, you were kind of immune to it, but a lot of players have talked about how strange it was to be without fans today.

HAROLD VARNER III: Well, I've said this to a lot of my friends and a lot of people that know me. I think it's going to help me because I'm going to focus a little bit more, but on 15 -- 14 or 15, there's stands on the right and behind the green, but people were yelling, so I thought that was awesome.

I feed off of that, but I don't know if it always helps my golf game.

Q. Just curious, I don't know how much you looked at the leaderboard before you started today, but I'm curious what your reaction to see 61 year old Tom Lehman stamping a 65 today, hadn't played here in

seven years, obviously he's a Champions Tour guy.

What was your reaction to that?

HAROLD VARNER III: You just threw me a huge curveball. I mean, the only thing on is golf, so I saw the leaderboard. I mean, just because he's old doesn't mean he's not good, and the course sets up very well for -- it's not very long, and he's really good at golf. He's won a few tournaments in his lifetime, so it doesn't surprise me, but I got him today.

Q. Kind of going back to the fan thing just for a second, on any normal day you'd make a birdie putt at 18 to grab a share of the lead, what kind of reaction would you expect to have? Obviously it was much different today, although I did hear a couple people clapping for you.

HAROLD VARNER III: Yeah, that was awesome. It made it feel a little bit normal. The scariest thing was the cameraman running on the green after I was like trying to talk to the other caddies, tell them, "hey, enjoyed it," whatnot. So that was a curveball because he came out of nowhere, and I was like, whoa. Yeah, it was different, but like everyone is going through this together, and we're going to get through it together, so I just kind of just have to do the best I can to social distance.

Q. Given everything that's happened the last couple weeks and obviously your interaction with the commissioner, can you imagine what the story line would be like on Sunday?

HAROLD VARNER III: If I'm thinking about winning a golf tournament right now, I've probably lost it. Yeah, I know what's going on, but when I'm on the golf course, I'm trying to play well. The reason I have a platform is because I'm really good at golf. I just need to focus on that, and to be honest with you, being on the golf course, it helped me. It's my getaway, I guess. But I didn't think it would be like that until I got on the first hole and I hooked one super far left and I was pissed, like it was good. Those juices are awesome.