

Travelers Championship

Saturday, June 24, 2017

Paul Casey

Quick Quotes

Q. Stop me if you've heard this before, but Paul Casey's in contention here at TPC River Highlands. What is it about this golf course for you?

PAUL CASEY: It's a cool golf course. You've seen it. It's not just this golf course, it's the whole tournament, Travelers, it's something very, very special. The players absolutely love it. Look what happened this week with the strength of field that we've had with Rory setting up. We're independent contractors so we can play anything we want. It just shows that everything that Jay did with Travelers is going to pay off for now and hopefully for years and years to come.

Q. We want to have a look at your scorecard, we'll get back to that in a moment. I've got the scorecard up. Obviously a slow start, but when you got going, you really got going.

PAUL CASEY: Yeah, this was the trickiest day, I think it's been so far this week, reason being we've had a lot of wind and we had some yesterday in the afternoon. We couldn't figure out where it was. It was not like it stayed constant in one direction. It was constantly twisting around and making it difficult to judge. In fairness, it could have gone either way. In today's rounds, missed opportunities early. 6 on the par-5, made a mistake on 7, and bounced back. The back nine was some really solid stuff, good stuff. Scrambled well, and had a couple close ones in the end (inaudible).

Q. Nice to have Paul Casey join us. 66 today, but after seven holes you (inaudible), what changed?

PAUL CASEY: I don't know. It was the most difficult day I think we've had so far this week. Reason being, the wind was being fairly strong, but it's been very difficult changing direction and swirling all over the place. I don't know what changed. I've been very patient all day. You know, I was patient on the front side even though the scorecard doesn't reflect it. Just a couple cuts went in, couple of nice close ones.

It's nice when you drive a par-4. So not a lot, but it just shows that it could go very much either way on this golf course.

Q. You mentioned the par-4, 15, you actually eagle this hole yesterday, so obviously a big fan?

PAUL CASEY: I'm a big fan. 3-wood for me. Wasn't sure where the wind was going to be. I think it was off



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the left. I was thinking I was going to be 10-yards short of the green. Very tricky front hole location. Where it landed was absolutely perfect. You know, the four corners are perched up so delicately. It's treacherous. So happy to get on the green.

Q. When you say we, where's John McLaren, your faithful bag man?

PAUL CASEY: Johnny's got the week off.

Q. Why did you give him a week off? He's got 20 weeks off a year anyway.

PAUL CASEY: You know, family's first. It always has been for the two of us since we started working together. But Johnny takes a week off because (inaudible) and this week is Shannon Wallace, and he's channeled his inner Johnny Longsocks. So Shannon's been wandering around with some long socks on all week, and he actually finds it quite comfortable.

It's one of those I'm so looking forward to tomorrow and Johnny's probably going to be hating it watching it on TV.

Q. The highlights at 17 (inaudible)?

PAUL CASEY: Thank you very much. Played the wind straight off the left, 165 yards. My 9-iron goes 162, and for the first time today it was spot on the number. If you look here, it lands three or four short, 62ish. But happy with it. It's one of those things you have to be patient, wait for the opportunities to come, and in this case, they did come.

Q. Paul, 66 today you but you got rolling on the back nine with those four birdies.

PAUL CASEY: Yeah, thank you. The front nine could have gone either way. What a difficult day. The wind was all over the place. I assumed everybody else was struggling to figure out what was going on. Saved myself on 8 after dropping a shot on 7, and things clicked. Nothing changed. I didn't make any different decisions or change any approach. But just the way golf goes.

Q. Great success recently this event. You've got to be charged up for a Sunday here at TPC River Highlands?

PAUL CASEY: I'd love to win this. After losing in the playoff a couple years ago to Bubba, and I was in the



mix kind of a little bit last year and didn't have a very good final round. Knoxy obviously played amazing golf.

It's a course I really like. It's a tournament I love. Since meeting with Andy Bessette and these guys a couple years ago and having a summer sort of schedule free up, what a great event. So glad I added it. It's one which I just think suits my game. And I said, everything that Jay and Travelers have put into this tournament is paying off when you see what a great field and how much enjoyment everybody gets, not only players, but I think spectators from this great tournament.

Q. Only one bogey and then a flawless and pretty strong back nine. How did you put together the round today?

PAUL CASEY: Patience. You know, I found it really difficult today. Couple of opportunities early on, and then a small mistake on the front nine. I feel like the round was slipping away very early, but slipping down the leaderboard when everybody else looked like they were making birdies. Nothing changed. Didn't change my approach. But sometimes you've just got to have the right moment to hit the shots out here because the wind was very, very difficult to read direction-wise.

Yardages clicked, and the push shots or the pull shots ended up closer than they were earlier in the week. Turned into a really healthy round of golf, and got up the leaderboard.

Q. You sure did. Being in contention, you've played in this tournament twice before, a second place finish back in 2015. What does it take to win on this course?

PAUL CASEY: Something more than I've done before. I'd need another round like I had today. Jordan's at the top of the leaderboard. It's looking pretty stacked where I'm at and maybe some guys just behind me. It's a par 70, and it can be a difficult one to, you know, sometimes break par on. We've seen some great players this week who missed the cut.

But we also know it can yield some ridiculous numbers with Jim's amazing 58 last year. Although we're getting close to closing this thing out tomorrow, there is actually a lot of golf, and it could get blown wide open tomorrow if somebody goes bananas early. Hopefully that's me. I like this course. I love this tournament. Travelers and everybody here in Connecticut puts on such a great show. I like it. Maybe that's the added difference.

Q. You said the course played much tougher today than the previous two days?

PAUL CASEY: Yeah, to kind of expand on that. I thought the toughness was from the wind. Though did we get rain last night?

Q. Yes.

PAUL CASEY: It was softer. So obviously the rain made the greens more receptive. So, I guess in a way, I said it was tougher, but it was trying to figure out the yardages and the direction of that wind was the difficult part. If you figured it out and picked the right moment in time, it was more receptive. So, yes and no. I'm going back now on my statement.

Q. Can you recount the story of why you have Shannon on the bag?

PAUL CASEY: I've got Shannon Wallace on the bag because Johnny wanted a week off. Which when Johnny started working with me a year and a half ago, we agreed he's got a young family, I've got a young family, that family was first. That if he ever needed a week off, then it was totally cool. The only rule was that if Johnny wanted a week off, he wanted to pick who worked for me. So late last year I had Mark Fulcher, Justin Rose's caddie work for me in Malaysia in China.

Then school holidays and things in summer Johnny asked for this week off which was totally cool. He said, well, Shannon's going to work for you. So Shannon's perfect. He's been on the bag for Faldo and some guys. Maybe he hasn't had the results he's wanted as a caddie. And I love the fact that he's channelled his inner Johnny Longsocks this week and turned up with long socks to try to make me feel better.

We failed to get him high tops. That's the only thing I've failed on my behalf. I've shown Shannon for a long time since we've been on TOUR. So a good blend. We actually, were it not only for Johnny, we are working very well together.

Q. Does your approach tomorrow, if you believe that in this course you have to be aggressive because there are a lot of birdies out there. But would it depend on where you're at, what course you're playing, who is in front of you how you attack it? Or do you just go ahead and do the same?

PAUL CASEY: I'm not going to -- I don't look at leaderboards that much anyway. The first time I looked at a leaderboard today was coming down 18. And I won't tomorrow. Because my belief is tomorrow Jordan's about 11 under as we stand here, Danny Berger's up there, couple more guys on 8. I think, I assume, you're going to have to get to 13, 14 or something like that. Probably at a minimum.

So for me I've just got to shoot another 5-, 6-under. Assuming it's a wonderful day like it is today. And that is the case of when can I be aggressive? Look at pin positions, bide my time like I did today. So I'm not going to react to what other guys are doing maybe until the last couple of holes. It's a golf course which has yielded some amazing numbers in the past.

Furyk's 58 is spectacular. But does Streelman have a 60-round here? He had a putt for 59. We've also seen guys struggle around it, this week being an example of some of the world's best missing the cut. I played with Jordan Thomas last week. He played flawless golf and missed the cut. So for me, just bide my time.

Q. You know how hard it is to win out here. Jordan's going for his tenth win before the age of 24. Can you put into perspective how impressive that is?

PAUL CASEY: It's very difficult, and it always has been in golf to explain to people who are not golfers how difficult it is to win. Unless they're sports fan, and all they see are other sports where people just win, win, win, win, win. I go to Tiger as an example, how amazing his dominance was. If you play a lot of golf, you get it. If you don't, it's too difficult to explain, plain and simple.

For Jordan, you said going for his tenth? That's amazing. It really is. I can't explain it for you. And I don't have a way to explain it to a non-golfer. Sorry.

Q. Is there anything you took away from that playoff a couple years ago?

PAUL CASEY: Yeah, well, the nice thing is the course has changed since I was in that playoff. Because that bunker on the right was way too deep, and I couldn't reach the pin out of it when I played against Bubba. So I don't have to worry about that anymore. I can clear the bunker now.

That season I think I was in two playoffs and didn't win that year. I've had enough experiences now in the game to say that you learn from every experience, I'd probably be lying. I've learned enough things from my experiences on the golf course. It's just another example that it's tough to win on TOUR. Need to play a little better, clean up my mistakes.

Sometimes I don't always put it down until the last hole either. This week I'm doing a really nice job so far of eliminating mistakes. To me that's more important. That will then get you in position more often and hopefully you have more opportunities to win.

I've not struggled to win in the past. I've won enough around the world. The last couple of seasons not

getting a win has been a little frustrating. But I don't see it as a problem.

Q. Today Rory was tinkering with putters?

PAUL CASEY: I saw three or four on the putt being green before he went out. Five, okay.

Q. How easy is it to fall out of love with a putter?

PAUL CASEY: I fall out of love with putters all the time. Having said that, I've always predominantly stayed with the same style of putter for the last decade or so, or longer. I've tinkered with different looks, different finishes, lines on top, no line currently. I'm always -- I think there is something to it that I think the best putters in the world have quite often stayed with putters for extraordinary lengths of time.

Tiger, I'm going to think of -- I'm going to think of Snedeker, but also some of the old guys. Furyk, players never changed. Before that, they never changed. Crenshaw never changed. Faxon never changed. Sorry, Brad. So I think there is something to that. I've been trying not to change.

Q. Six weeks I think you told me at Colonial?

PAUL CASEY: For what?

Q. That's how long that putter has been in the bag?

PAUL CASEY: Yes, but it was just a new version -- yeah, okay, six weeks.

Q. You've come pretty close in this tournament before.

PAUL CASEY: I hope Johnny's sending me good vibes and not sticking needles in a Shannon Wallace doll (laughing). No, Johnny and I are a great team. The reason I'm talking to you and I've had a great week so far with Shannon, is a lot to do with the work Johnny and I have done together, the work Johnny's done by himself, analyzing my game, strategizing and I'd love to get the win tomorrow.

If I do, it's as much a Johnny McLaren win, as it is Shannon and Paul win, and I mean that.