

US Open Championship 2016

Saturday, June 18, 2016

Branden Grace

Flash Interview



Q. Great way to finish. Talk about it.

BRANDEN GRACE: Yeah, very special. The guys up there are playing some great golf. I thought they maybe would have come a little bit backwards, but I had to play maybe not 4 under but something just a little bit in that direction to get it close to (indiscernible).

It's great, stayed patient the whole day. Didn't go out there a helluva lot, but when I had the chances, I took them. It was a bonus finishing the way I did.

The last stretch is not the easiest from 15 onwards. Two birdies in the last three is great. I'm in a good position to maybe put my hands on one tomorrow.

Q. As far as you said before, you seemed like a little surprised at the 4 under?

BRANDEN GRACE: It just 4 under is a tough round around here. There's a couple of spots where one of those bounces that you're waiting for is not going to go your way. It's going to bite you.

I actually had the bounce on the 12th hole, on the par 5. Hit a superb drive down to there, didn't think I could hit it to the bunker and I hit in there, I think it was, 320, which was unlucky. I stayed patient, I took chances when they came my way and I actually hit the ball 15 out of 18 greens. Gave myself plenty of chances. I missed a few, but I made up for a few of the long ones.

Q. Can you draw upon last year?

BRANDEN GRACE: Yeah, definitely. I think the last two Majors have been great. Finishing this season, last year, and I've learned a lot from that. Obviously, the win at Hilton Head earlier in the year. I have lot of experience now hitting into the (indiscernible), so I felt a little bit better out there. It's still a little bit of a different position. Last year, I was in the lead. This year, I'm chasing a little bit. So it's just you have to try not to get ahead of myself, just stay in the moment, stay positive and not forcing.

When they come your way, take them and carry on.

Q. Can you talk about how No. 14 (no microphone)?

BRANDEN GRACE: Yeah, it's still reacting to pretty much the irons and the things. We're still getting spin up there. Still pretty decent control with the iron shots going into the greens, but the speed is really getting up

there.

I think they double cut it before we went out yesterday. I don't know if they rolled it or cut it after the morning round this morning, but it's really quick. And I think the main thing for me today was just not to give myself any of those five, six-footers for par. There's a couple of putts, maybe 20, 25 feet that you're actually not trying to make, you're just trying to get it close. I think it's going to be a similar situation tomorrow.

Q. Are you glad to be done tonight?

BRANDEN GRACE: I've been lucky. That was a big thing yesterday. We were fortunate, we had three nice guys in front of us yesterday, so we all started playing the last hole as a six ball. It was fun. It helps a lot finishing yesterday. Good sleep in this morning and I'm relaxing at home with my fiance and the family and friends. And obviously, again, today, fortunate to finish in time and if I can just rest up, get a little bit of a lie-in and come out tomorrow and be ready.

Q. Branden, on his way out, did Ernie pass along any advice, good words, anything, support?

BRANDEN GRACE: I was fortunate, I played a practice round with Ernie. We talked a little bit about how it was like in his time and things like that. He's always a big help with some wise words.

I haven't spoken to him since yesterday, but I'm sure I'll have a message when I switch my phone on later.

Q. There would be some good symmetry for you to win.

BRANDEN GRACE: It would be definitely. Those things, if that happens, it's all bonuses. I just want to, when I get out there tomorrow, give it my best and then see what happens. Take it from there.

Q. You backed off a putt at 17. Were you just uncomfortable with the line? What were you seeing there that made you back off?

BRANDEN GRACE: Yeah. I think those things for me is positive. When I can back off things like that, it shows that I am mentally there so that my concentration's up. Just I thought I overread it a little bit and backed away.

Same thing happened at 18. Normally, when I do it, I

can get back into the putt, play it fresh. I hit a good putt on 17, just didn't go in. It helped on 18 when I backed off 18 twice with the guys on the tee in front of us. One good putt so it was a good day.

Q. What do you think you've learned from last year?

BRANDEN GRACE: Yeah, well, you know, I think last year I handled myself a little better than I thought I would. It's tough out there with all the pressure. You're there with three of the best guys, best golfers of this day right behind us, and sharing the lead with them.

It was great that I could play the top as I did. It's just a pity one bad shot cost me at the end. But just the game is there. I've got a lot of great past experiences just from the Presidents Cup leading up to this and there's big moments, doing things in the big moments. Definitely going to relive those and hopefully make a couple good ones tomorrow.