

US Open Championship 2016

Saturday, June 18, 2016

Mike Van Sickle

Round 2 Quick Quotes

MIKE VAN SICKLE: It's so hard. It's such a challenge that you're just out there trying to survive Oakmont. You can't really care about much else.

Q. What was your score before today?

MIKE VAN SICKLE: I shot 76 on Thursday.

Q. And then 76, 80?

MIKE VAN SICKLE: 76, 80.

Q. And you're from --

MIKE VAN SICKLE: Yeah, I grew up north of Pittsburgh in Wexford, and then I've been living in McKees Rocks County Township area for about two years now.

Q. Any most memorable moments this week?

MIKE VAN SICKLE: The coolest thing happened this morning. Hitting balls on the range, and some guy puts his Callaway balls way too close to me. I'm like what's going on? I'm going to have to move down. Then Phil walks up, and I'm like, oh, it's lefty. That makes sense. It's a lefty. Well, that makes sense. Phil is hitting balls next to me, and I turn around, and Furyk is hitting balls behind me. And I go to walk off the range, and Phil says, Hey, hey, Mike, and he kind of whispers, and I walk back over, and he shakes my hand.

He said, Hey, I've been following your golf career since you were in college. I just want to tell you -- wish you the best of luck out there today.

That was by far the coolest moment of the week. So I told him, You go find a couple on the last. I knew he had two holes left, and I knew he was at 7 over. So I told him, You go get a couple coming in. And he was like, You too. You go out there and do it.

How did Phil do to finish?

Q. Par, par. He finished at 7.

MIKE VAN SICKLE: Oh, he might have a chance. I helped him out, backed up for him.

Q. Maybe kind of rehash some of this, but when you play this course, how do you keep from scrambling your brain? You know what I mean? Just to try to play the game instead of thinking about everything that's going on.

MIKE VAN SICKLE: Yeah, that was our goal in the



practice rounds. We walked the course Saturday, walked the course Sunday, played as much as we could: 20 holes Monday, 18 Tuesday, and 9 Wednesday. We probably played more holes of practice round golf than anyone out here.

The main goal was just to try to get comfortable inside the ropes with the gallery. You're at Oakmont in your home city, and we just want to try to get as acclimated with the environment as we could.

I was really proud of how I felt out there today. The shame of it was I just -- I brought my "D" game out here, and Oakmont demands your "A" game nonstop.

Q. I know you struggled out there and it was frustrating, but did you have fun? Was it a fun experience?

MIKE VAN SICKLE: Absolutely. This is -- ever since I missed by just a shot in '07, this has kind of been the focus of what's the one tournament you want to play in. For me, it's always been get into the U.S. Open at Oakmont. That be would the one.

So I got here and just wish I could have competed a little bit better because I just know that my game when I'm on, that I could have been up there under par.

Q. How much will this help you for the next major?

MIKE VAN SICKLE: The next major, I love the way you think. Fortunately, I am exempt for sectional qualifying for the British Open, but it's the same week as the Frank Fuhrer Invitational, which is in a week and a half at the Pittsburgh Field House. That puts together a nice purse, and I'm going to play in that instead. So I won't be at the British Open.

Like I said, the big thing was, by the end of the week, we felt really comfortable in the spotlight, which was important. I hadn't really had the opportunity to play in an environment like this, not that there are a lot of chances to do that ever.

We can take away that positive, and then also, when I go back to some of the other fields that I play against, just hitting balls next to Phil and Jim Furyk on the range, that's not going to happen to me up in -- you know, if I go up and play the Canadian Tour.

So you kind of, even though you didn't play well, you get that extra notch in your belt and a little extra confidence when you're going to your next tournament.

Q. Plus all the Pittsburgh media attention.

MIKE VAN SICKLE: Oh, I know, it's been brutal. You should hear some of the questions they ask.

Q. We're a tough bunch. Actually, were there a lot of guys out there -- I know Thursday was just a frustrating day for everybody. But were there a lot of people there, guys here again today for you? Like friends and some guys.

MIKE VAN SICKLE: Yeah, we had a good gallery out there. Every day I saw a handful of different characters. Thursday, I saw Vince Smith, former Pine-Richland teammate; Evan Popelarski, a former Pine-Richland teammate; and Gary Torso was out there, who was our coach. It was cool to see the different guys who came out. I had a couple guys travel from out of town to come for today too. So that was really cool.