

SCOTT PAREL

Q. Feel like since you won here, your game has just grown exponentially, a lots of runner-up finishes this year. Do you feel like that was just such a boost to confidence?

SCOTT PAREL: I don't know if it's a confidence thing as much as it's comfortable, you know. I've said that before. I'm the kind of person who kind of needs to be comfortable. I'm not -- I don't perform very well in uncomfortable situations, or I don't want to say not stressful because there's plenty of stress in golf, but I need to feel kind of at ease with myself.

I think once I won out here, an ease kind of came over me a little bit to say, look, you've proven that you belong out here and that you can make a career out here. So I think that just helped my game take off.

I guess maybe that is still confidence. I don't think that I didn't have confidence that I couldn't play well or win, but it did put me at ease maybe a little bit to say, you know, if I play pretty good, my game is in a position where if I play, I don't want to say decent but above normal, a little bit above normal, I can still compete. I don't have to play perfect golf to win and I think you get caught up in that a lot of times. I think you think, gosh, to win out here, I've got to hit every shot perfect, I've got to make every putt.

I'm not saying that I didn't play well in those two tournaments. Surely, I did. But I didn't hit every shot perfect and I didn't make every putt. That's one of those things until you actually win, you don't really know that. You feel like you've got to be this perfect golfer because you're trying to beat people who have, you know, won major championships and who are in the World Golf Hall of Fame. So you maybe put that on yourself a little bit to go ahead and win without -- you know, I can still go back and think of shots I left out there just like everybody can, but you still won. So look, you can just play your game. Some weeks you're going to play good enough to win, some weeks you're going to play good enough to finish 30th. That's just kind of the way it is. I have more of a comfort level about that now, I think.

Q. How about defending, do you feel -- this is the first time obviously doing that. Do you feel pressure this week?

SCOTT PAREL: You know, I won't know probably until I actually get in the -- it's obviously a different -- it's a different feel for me. I haven't had to do this before. Maybe if there is any extra pressure, it's because I'm putting it on myself.

Again, I've been playing pretty good golf. I played pretty well last week. I haven't had a whole lot of really bad weeks here lately. You know, pressure, I think, comes when you

don't have confidence in your game. I feel right now like I'm playing good golf. If I was struggling a little bit, I think I would feel a lot of pressure because obviously I would love to defend. I at least want to play well and be in the mix again, that would be great. But I feel like I'm playing good enough golf that if I play like I've been playing, it will happen.

Q. Kevin had to go backwards a little bit last year for you to win, but it looks like you've seen plenty of Kevin as far as this year.

SCOTT PAREL: Yeah, yeah. Kevin -- I don't know what to say about backwards, but when you shoot a 60, it's tough to follow that up.

I watched -- after I was finished, obviously I watched the coverage. We DVR'd it and I saw some of the things that happened. He hit so many putts that could have gone in, it was unbelievable. The guys behind me, they were playing fine, they just couldn't get the ball to go in the hole. It's one of those things that kind of happens in the group. If everybody's kind of playing the same, nobody can make a putt, it just seems like it gets contagious and nobody can make a putt. I think he made 17 pars and a birdie that last day.

Q. Yeah, on the last hole.

SCOTT PAREL: So it wasn't like he played bad golf, he just couldn't get the ball to go in the hole. Yeah, he's -- I mean, he's one of the best golfers out here on this tour. I mean, of anybody playing here, he is to me the most likely guy to shoot low at any point. He can do it. He shot 59 before, he's shot 60s. He probably has shot more low rounds on this tour since he's been on it than anybody else. I'm willing to bet there's nobody that's shot any lower than him multiple times. And, you know, we've been in a couple playoffs this year and he's gotten the better of me. That's okay.

Q. He might be up two to one. Not playoffs, but --

SCOTT PAREL: That's what people told me. You know, when you came back and beat him last year, you kind of woke up the angry bear or something now, right? Now he's got it in for you.

But we're good friends, Kevin and I. And we played a bunch together here this year. So I really respect Kevin and his game, and he's as nice a guy as he is a good golfer.

That's the way it is I think on this tour for the most part. Everybody out here wants to win, everybody out here wants to beat everybody else, but everybody I think for the most part respects everyone's game. We're happy for guys.

Just like Doug last week. I played with him on Sunday. I played a practice round with him in Lytham, his first time he played in a senior event. When I played a practice round with him, I told Harry, my caddie, I'm like, this guy's going to be out here. I mean, he's got the game. He's not afraid and he's been playing -- I kind of -- because of what I've done in my career, I

still follow the mini tours.

Q. Oh, really.

SCOTT PAREL: Oh, yeah. I still watch all those things. It's just part of who I am. That's how I've grown up playing golf. I still go back and look at who's doing what on the Swing Thought Tour and the G Pro Tour and the Emerald Coast Tour, which is where Doug was playing. I still look at those things because I want to see who's doing what, because then that may be the next guy, like a Doug Barron, who comes out here, or the next guy who's a Scottie Scheffler or whoever from the Korn Ferry Tour. I keep up with that.

So I had seen that Doug had won a few times out there, so I'm like, he's staying competitive and he's beating up guys who are in their 20s and that does a lot for your confidence. Even though those guys are maybe people nobody's heard of, but they're hitting the ball -- I guarantee they're hitting the ball 40 yards by him and he's still beating him. So that's makes you feel pretty good about your game. He played unbelievable last week.

Q. How many times have you played Augusta National?

SCOTT PAREL: Four times in my life. And I live about a mile and a half from that golf course, so I pretty much drive by the fence at some point when I'm home about once a day.

Q. Those are some hard feelings, right?

SCOTT PAREL: No. You know what, I get that a lot in pro-ams. People are like, you must play there all the time. I'm like, no. They're like, well, doesn't that bother you? It doesn't really bother me because I've got to play it four more times than most people have.

I love the golf course, don't get me wrong. It's still my favorite golf course of all time, but I get to play so many good golf courses now that I don't drive by it every day wishing, gosh, I wish I was playing there today. I mean, I get to play Augusta Country Club, which is right next door and I'm a member there. I'm a member at Champions Retreat, I'm a member at Westlake, so I've got plenty of good golf courses.

Q. So you're a member of three courses in Augusta?

SCOTT PAREL: Yeah.

Q. Three clubs?

SCOTT PAREL: Yeah. Well, I was a member at Westlake, which is where the guys who are my buddies when I was an amateur, that's when I was playing most of my golf.

Then, once I started having some success out here, I joined the country club, and then Champions Retreat has kind of given me a membership out there. Like I said, we've got a

lot of good golf courses in the Augusta area. It's a good place to grow up if you want to be a golfer.

Q. Talk about just what does it take to win? Talk about this course. What do you have to do here besides, you know --

SCOTT PAREL: Well, you have to make a lot of birdies, obviously, but I think this course has some holes where, I mean, I think you need to make a game plan and you need to stick to it. I think that's one thing I did last year which is not something I've been great at doing.

Like the 14th hole where everybody can -- you know, I could drive it on that green probably. I laid up every day. I said I'm going to have a game plan, I'm not going to put myself under the stress or pressure of that. I should be able to birdie it a couple of times with a wedge in my hand. No undue pressure on myself, just lay it up over there, and I stuck to that. And I think you kind of have to have that every week. If you come up with a good game plan and you execute it, you should have a chance to win.

Q. What's another hole here with a game plan?

SCOTT PAREL: Well, I mean, I would say like a couple of the par 3s coming like down the hill, No. 6, and on the back, the other one.

Q. No. 13?

SCOTT PAREL: Right. So I think to me, I play those holes, I'm just trying to get front edge. I'm not chasing pins that are in the back of the green. If I can just carry the ball to the front edge, if it releases, great. If it doesn't, you know, then I'll just let my putter two-putt.

I think if you play the par 3s here in even par, you're going to make up ground on the field, because No. 9 is a bear, too. So there's not -- you know, I don't think there's any reason to be stupid or overly aggressive on those holes and try to make birdies. I'll take four threes on all those holes all three days and take my chances. I think that that's -- that's, I'm not going to say unusual for our tour. Our tour usually has pretty good par 3s, but I feel like you always maybe have one out of the four that you feel like, all right, I should be kind of aggressive here and make a birdie. Here, I'm playing to the front edge and trying to make pars.