

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW: KIRK TRIPLETT
August 26, 2016



DAVE SENKO: Well, Kirk, interesting round, 65.

KIRK TRIPLETT: Yeah.

DAVE SENKO: You had 10 birdies --

KIRK TRIPLETT: 10?

DAVE SENKO: -- and a bogey and a double.

KIRK TRIPLETT: There you go.

DAVE SENKO: Maybe just a quick Cliff's Notes, as they say, of your round.

KIRK TRIPLETT: I guess I really just hit a lot of good wedges to real close, like two or three feet. That probably describes the round more than anything. It was by no means a pure ball-striking round or anything like that, I just really judged some wedges well so that's where most of the birdies came.

DAVE SENKO: Do you remember your --

KIRK TRIPLETT: I three-putted No. 11 from probably 20 feet. Then I hit one of those good wedges on No. 12, sand wedge, to like two feet. Then I hit a 7-iron to about 20 feet on 13. Then I hit a wedge to about six feet on 14. Sand wedge to maybe three feet. Pitching wedge to two feet. Good drive on 18, only had about 200 yards to the front but I hit a really poor shot into the right edge of the right bunker and I hit a wonderful bunker shot to about three feet, made that.

DAVE SENKO: And then what happened on the double?

KIRK TRIPLETT: Hit a bad iron. It went down in the collection area right of the green. Fairly easy up-and-down but I just kind of stubbed the chip and it ended up on the fringe and I three-putted from there.

DAVE SENKO: What did you hit?

KIRK TRIPLETT: 4-iron was my second shot from the fairway.

DAVE SENKO: And you ran off four in a row.

KIRK TRIPLETT: Yeah, the next hole I hit a pitching wedge to two feet, then I hit a 9-iron about 10 feet, then I hit a 6-iron to three feet, and then I hit a sand wedge to two feet.

DAVE SENKO: Did you miss any other -- there's only --

KIRK TRIPLETT: I had a short birdie putt on No. 1, I hit a pitching wedge in there three or four feet and missed it. That was after a poor drive so I was feeling just kind of fortunate to make a par.

Q. That was a great approach to escape with a birdie when you couldn't find your ball.

KIRK TRIPLETT: Oh, on No. 1, yeah. I thought that ball was really in trouble off the tee.

DAVE SENKO: You grew up in Pullman, but is it special to come back here and play in Seattle?

KIRK TRIPLETT: Yeah, I like coming here. I haven't been able to come the last couple years because my daughter, I've been taking her to school this weekend so I've been missing this tournament. I'm glad to be back.

Q. You're the only guy this year from the state of Washington.

KIRK TRIPLETT: Yeah, I guess Fred's hurt and Rick's not playing anymore.

Q. Do you take any extra pride kind of carrying the state banner?

KIRK TRIPLETT: Yeah, it doesn't really seem like that too much, it's more like memories to me than anything else, just being around town a little bit, thinking about the family trips we made over here. And, of course, this course wasn't here when I was a junior golfer or whatever. Sharing some stories with my caddie about playing at Sahalee or playing at some other places.

Q. To have five birdies on one nine --

KIRK TRIPLETT: Yeah, that's pretty unusual.

Q. To have two runs like that --

KIRK TRIPLETT: I haven't been doing that this year, but like I say, when you see those distances that the shots were getting hit to, that's a lot of good fortune because you don't hit the ball well enough to make it go that close to the hole, right? You have to play the bounce out there, too. I kind of knew, I guess I have a little experience here, I know which greens are firm and which greens are soft. Like No. 7 out there, I know you've got to give it 10 or 12 paces whereas that back corner pin on 14 you can get right in there to it. Same on 15. So

16, I kind of run it up to the back edge and it rolled back down to the hole. Those were just kind of going right today. I mean, I didn't walk off the golf course going, wow, that's my best ball-striking round ever. I mean, I just hit a lot of shots that found a way to get close to the hole.

Q. When's the last time you won an event in this state?

KIRK TRIPLETT: In this state?

Q. Yeah.

KIRK TRIPLETT: I'm not sure I ever won anything in this state.

Q. High school, right?

KIRK TRIPLETT: It's got to be a District 5 Washington Junior Golf tournament from way back, or maybe -- yeah.

Q. Do you have any relatives or friends watching over the weekend?

KIRK TRIPLETT: Not that I know of out there today. My dad's family still lives kind of over in that Lewiston-Clarkston area, but I don't really have anybody over on this side of the state. I'm sure somebody will stick their head under the ropes this week and say hello.

Q. You're the bold type every time you play in the Seattle Times. We claim you.

KIRK TRIPLETT: Well, that's good. I played a lot of golf up here growing up, so I appreciate you keeping my name in the bold type.

Q. Does it feel like a hometown tournament?

KIRK TRIPLETT: Not a hometown tournament, but a place I'm familiar with, yeah.

Q. The fact that you have not won in Washington, would that make --

KIRK TRIPLETT: I just haven't played enough. You know, I mean, I was gone basically when I was 18, I played the state am at Meadow Springs in Richland probably when I was 18, and I might have played it one more time. Bellingham, Lake Padden, is that the name of it?

Q. Yep.

KIRK TRIPLETT: Yeah, so in 1981, 1982 is really the last golf I played up here except the two tournaments at Sahalee. I played the World Golf Championship and the PGA, and I didn't win either one of those so that's not very many tournaments in Washington since

1979.

Q. So it would be kind of special?

KIRK TRIPLETT: Oh, it would be very special, yeah.

Q. Check that one off the list?

KIRK TRIPLETT: Yep. I don't have a list, I take whatever one I can get. I don't like pick them, they pick me.

Q. Where's your daughter in school?

KIRK TRIPLETT: She was in a school in Monterey, California. High school.

Q. You missed the last two years?

KIRK TRIPLETT: I missed the last two years to take her to school.

Q. Are you still beating your son? Who wins now?

KIRK TRIPLETT: Oh, well, my son has beat me significantly more often this year than I beat him. He just lost today in the semifinals of the Arizona State Amateur, so he was a medalist, but I can't beat him. He's better than I am. Don't tell him that, though.

Q. 65, he would have a hard time matching that today?

KIRK TRIPLETT: Yeah, I got him today, but day in and day out, he gets me.