

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW
August 2, 2018

IAN POULTER (-8)



IAN POULTER: Hit a lot of very good iron shots. I think proximity to the pin will be something I have a look at later on just to see where that kind of stacks up. Holed a couple nice putts. All in all, a very decent start to the week. I looked at my stats this morning, which were terrible. My overall stats on this golf course have not been good. T-13 is as good as it's been, which is surprising.

Q. You mean overall, everything?

IAN POULTER: No, T-13, best finish ever.

Q. Oh, finish-wise, okay.

IAN POULTER: It's not very good when it's a short field, is it? So, you know, with that in mind, I needed to kind of get off to a decent start, try and see if we can finish ahead of T-13 this time.

Q. Does that ever fire you up or do you just accept the fact that you're not very good on this course generally?

IAN POULTER: Yeah, it fires me up. I mean, it's frustrating to look at. I actually thought I had a better finish than that, so it really annoyed me. For some reason I thought I finished 2nd, but I didn't know how mistaken I was when I looked at all the numbers. I wrote them all down, they were that bad. I was like seriously, how can you play a good golf course this many times and not really have a result. So not to even finish in the top-10 is pretty poor.

Q. Has this ever felt like a golf course you can be aggressive on?

IAN POULTER: Yeah, I mean, greens are pretty much always soft. You know, generally it favors the longer hitters. If you look through the years of the guys that have played very well, it's the guys that can obviously send it out there a little bit. They've got an advantage on a few holes, can cut some corners and carry a few of those bunkers that are positioned quite nicely. When the course is this soft, yeah, you can be pretty aggressive.

Q. Being one off the course record, I assume you would have liked to have had that?

IAN POULTER: If you would have offered me this at the start of the day, I would have snapped your arm for it, for sure. Yeah, we can be greedy and say I'd love to have holed that putt on 8 to have tied the record, but 8 under par's a pretty decent round for me around this golf course.

Q. What's your attitude coming into this, to a tournament like this, which is a big event, but you also have a major stacked on the other side of it? There's no other time like it during the year really.

IAN POULTER: My attitude toward it this week was I played the 1st hole and 2nd hole and 8th and 9th in practice, that was it. So I played four holes knowing it's a golf course which I know very, very well, only for the wrong reasons and not the right reasons. So it's not a course I wanted to go out and play 18 holes and, you know, it's been the same every year we've been here. The green speed's been pretty similar, everything's kind of set up the same. So it was a case of spending a bit of time on the range and spend a little bit of time on the putting green and kind of roll the dice today.

Q. Seven months ago you had that very hectic run up to the Masters obviously where you were trying to get in. Was it inevitable or almost impossible to avoid any kind of a letdown after that emotion of winning like you did and trying to keep after it?

IAN POULTER: I don't think I've had a letdown at all. You know, I think I've put myself on the board quite often since then. U.S. Open, I was there for a couple of days. You know, I've kind of jumped up on the board a couple of times in Europe and I've played some good golf. So I don't think there's been a letdown.

Q. Maybe a bad word. Just how you fought through that, it's obviously a big deal to get in and then the way you did it obviously just a day or two before you were supposed to go there?

IAN POULTER: Are we talking about Augusta or are we talking about --

Q. Just in general, just after that.

IAN POULTER: I mean, it's been awesome. There's no letdown. I'm pretty -- I'm happy with myself, I'm happy with my golf game. I'm happy with, you know, how things have panned out from a bigger picture perspective. Gets me back in the top 50, puts Ryder Cup points on the board. All of it's good, I'm happy.

Q. Why are you playing good?

IAN POULTER: Why?

Q. Like you weren't a couple years ago, now you are.

IAN POULTER: Freeing the mind. There was a lot of nonsense going on behind the scenes which has been cleared up.

Q. Is there a better word for nonsense?

IAN POULTER: We do not have long enough to explain.

Q. And when did you do that?

IAN POULTER: One day, I'll let you know.

Q. A year ago, I think you said, you did that?

IAN POULTER: Yeah, 15 months ago we cleared up a lot of stuff.

Q. Beyond injury, I take it?

IAN POULTER: Yes.

Q. And where do you fall -- I have a hard time keeping track when we have two lists going on. Where are you Ryder Cup-wise?

IAN POULTER: Ten. So I'm two out, tied right now. I think Matt Fitzpatrick's in front of me and then it's me. Paul Casey's in, then Matt Fitzpatrick, and then I think it's myself. Got a decent stretch.

Q. Just got to finish it up. Pardon the ignorance, but the yellow ribbon signifies what?

IAN POULTER: It signifies -- you should really know -- Jarrod Lyle.

Q. Um-hmm.

IAN POULTER: Obviously the news that we all got this week Jarrod is going home. I forget the word, palliative care. So sad news.