

ROUND 3 INTERVIEW
February 27, 2021

BILLY HORSCHEL (-13)



Q. (In progress) really changed the last half hour of competition?

BILLY HORSCHEL: Yes, it did. It was one of those days where I was playing some good golf, hitting some good putts, they weren't going. And the bogey on 13 and 14 sort of was a little bummer. Sort of in a similar position in Scottsdale on Saturday when Jordan was playing really good and shooting 10 or 11 under par round. Then I didn't finish that off very well. I made bogeys in the middle portion of my back side and finished really bad.

So I did a really good job of learning from that. Got on 15 tee and just said, hey, let's just keep doing what we've been doing all week and that's just commit to the first shot, one shot at a time. I did a really good job of that and it was nice I got rewarded for it.

Q. Everyone's going to point to the 12-foot eagle putt at the 17th hole, but I thought that birdie at 16 really re-jumped your round and started the engines.

BILLY HORSCHEL: It did. I hit a lot of good putts today, a couple putts that I hit six inches hard, they're in the hole. I had some really tough reads, too. Putts I thought were going to break early or maybe keep breaking or they were going to straighten. It was finally the first putt I had in I don't know how many amount of holes that it was just breaking hard left to right and all I had to do was just make sure I hit it hard enough and I did a really good job of that.

Q. You're a veteran, I guess this doesn't bother you, but I thought you hit a lot of really good shots, made a lot of really good strokes, didn't make a lot of birdies, and you're playing with a guy who has 23 birdies this week.

BILLY HORSCHEL: Yeah, I think when you're 12th or 13th year out here you should learn. I'm 34 now, I'm not going to play until I'm 50. I may not play until I'm 45, I know that. I've got to at least be smart about learning from my history, learning from my past and taking it forward. And that's what I'm trying to do this year, just be better mentally, be better prepared mentally and learn from my history of being in contention and let that sort of shine through.

Q. Billy, that felt a little bit of like a bike race where somebody breaks out early, looks like they may never be caught, and then you kind of reel them back in at the end. You must feel a lot better right now than you did like an hour and a half ago. And another question, were you conscious of Morikawa, how good he was playing really?

BILLY HORSCHEL: Listen, Collin played really good today. He's a really good ball-striker, hit a lot of really close iron shots. It's nothing unexpected.

Yeah, he got out early and he was making a lot of birdies and I was sort of, you know, tasting the fumes a little bit, but not the full fumes of the bike. Then obviously those two bogeys sort of put me way behind, but there's so many more holes left than just this third round. We still have another 18 holes left to go, so I just said, hey, if I can make two birdies coming in, maybe get to 12, 13 under par, I would be in a better position going into the weekend. I was fortunate enough to do that. Collin gave one back there on 17, which is unlike him, but yeah, we're in a better spot going into tomorrow.

Q. Is it a good example of how quickly the whole scene can change, especially on a Saturday?

BILLY HORSCHEL: Yeah, it can change in a heartbeat. Like I said, I've been out here for 12 or 13 years now, I've seen enough of this and I think that I need to start learning from what I've seen from the positions I've been in. I didn't do a really good job of that at Scottsdale when Jordan was playing really well and shooting a great round of golf. I sort of did what I did today, a couple under par, then I made a couple bogeys and I screwed up coming in in Scottsdale. And I didn't want to make that same mistake today and I did a really good job of just getting back into what we were doing all week, just committing to the shot at hand and just trusting it and see what happens.

Q. So you almost make it sound like the way the other player's playing affects you a little bit, or has the potential to?

BILLY HORSCHEL: You would be naive to say it doesn't affect you. It's like looking at a scoreboard, it doesn't matter what anyone says, there's some mental -- it affects you something mentally, it's just the way it is. You're lying if it doesn't. Whether it's a good way or a bad way, and it could be minute, but it affects you.

Yeah, I would be naive to say that Collin, it wasn't affecting me that he was playing really well, making a lot of birdies, I was hitting a lot of good shots and I wasn't making the putts. But it was more or less I knew I was doing a really good job of what I was doing and I had to sort of stay patient enough and show hopefully my experience I've learned that I have patience now and hopefully get rewarded on the back and I did a good job of that.

Q. On a course where disaster lurks around every corner, how do you view a two-shot deficit?

BILLY HORSCHEL: I don't know. I mean, listen, you hit one bad shot and it could cost you big time. It's a Sunday, any tournament a two-shot deficit doesn't seem like a whole lot, doesn't matter what event you're at. You've just got to go out there and play a really good round of golf and see what happens. And I'm going to do that, I'm going to play my game the first nine holes and I'm going to see where we stand after nine holes and then adjust my game plan. But you've got to be very careful because you start trying to get too aggressive out here, it can bite you in the ass in a heartbeat.