

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW
November 17, 2022

WEBB SIMPSON (-5)



Q. What was the highlight?

WEBB SIMPSON: Birdieing the last. Yeah, that was a great moment. You know, it's funny, you guys know golf. My target was about 15 feet right of the hole there, so I did pull it, but I did hit it good enough to where I knew it would cover on that line. And I do love my hybrids. My 3-iron hybrid's been with me since 2013 and this 4-iron's been with me now since 2016. Yeah, it was a great moment, great memory.

Q. What is it about this place that seems to bring out the best in you?

WEBB SIMPSON: I think being right by the coast. I learned the game in Wilmington, North Carolina, by the coast and I've always loved going to Hilton Head and I've always loved going to Sea Island for those reasons, I think.

I do love both golf courses here. I'd like for it to have been a little warmer, but I do love the wind. I feel like we've had a couple years here where the wind's been calmer and I think it was maybe two, three years ago scores were just so low. Really, I feel like the wind brings out -- you get blowing 20 miles an hour left to right or right to left and you hit a good quality iron shot and you start being able to separate yourself from the field a little bit with birdies, so I love that.

I think we're going to have some wind the next few days, which I'm happy about. But you take wind away with kind of the overseed, it's softness in the fairways, the golf course becomes a lot wider and more scorable, so at least that wind is kind of an equalizer today.

Q. Where do you feel like you stand as you try to get back to maybe 2019, 2020 form?

WEBB SIMPSON: Yeah, I really feel that I'm finally on the right track. I'm healthy, I feel like what I'm working on is simple for me and I'm starting to have confidence again. You know, I didn't have that much confidence last year. It's hard to create confidence out of nothing. I'd work on my game and I just wasn't quite getting over the hump, but I feel like the last five, six weeks since I've been home, my practice sessions are different and they're reminding me of what it used to feel like and the shots I'm hitting, the way I'm striking the golf ball. So I'm optimistic. I feel like -- I'm 37, I still have a number of years of good golf in me. I am going to play less, but I've got to take advantage of my time at home with practicing and my time on the road and make it count when I'm out here.

Q. What was the number two highlight like today?



WEBB SIMPSON: I think birdieing the last. I didn't birdie eight with 7-iron in, I hit a big drive there. Bad hole on eight. And then nine's not a very easy hole but same club in, had 7-iron into nine, tricky read and made it. That was a nice way to finish off after kind of letting one get away from me on eight.

Q. How would you characterize what you've been doing to get, I guess, things simplified? What have you worked on to simplify things?

WEBB SIMPSON: Well, I've gotten three lessons now from Cameron McCormick and I feel like what he's trying to get me to do is get me in positions that I've been in before. I think I'm going to blame myself for a couple years there I tried to hit the ball so much further that I got into a number of bad habits that it was hard to see because it happens incrementally over time. But Cameron, he pulled out a bunch of swings from 2011 and 2020 and showed those similarities, so we're just trying to get it back to where that was.

But the other thing I would say, I'm very much a feel player, I don't love a lot of technical language when it comes to golf. So I think I got too technical thinking about chipping and putting and full swing where, you know, if I want to cover the ball a little better, instead of thinking about where the club needs to be, I just need to cover it and hit it lower. So I've been trying to work on my game that way more and I'm seeing great results from that.

Q. When did you have that first lesson with Cam and how did you -- why did you start going to him?

WEBB SIMPSON: Well, I had a tremendous run with Butch, I loved working with Butch. You know, my best year ever on Tour winning the Vardon trophy was with Butch. It got to a point where he's in Vegas and it was so hard to get to him, you know, for just one lesson and make it back to Charlotte. So I just started thinking.

Not only that, I want to work with a guy I'm going to see on the road more. You know, Butch is not traveling. I've known Cameron from a number of years out here, but I just, I remember seeing him on the road quite a bit. So I thought, man, that would be a great start of having a guy like that who's had tons of success.

But I didn't know a whole lot about him and the way he teaches. It was kind of like, hey, can you come to Charlotte. We spent a day together the week before THE CJ CUP or two weeks before THE CJ CUP. Yeah, just hit it off. Like I said, he's going to be traveling a lot with Jordan and Tom and a couple other guys, so it's nice for me to think I have a guy out here if I need him.

Q. How hard is it to change swing coaches?

WEBB SIMPSON: I think having Paul as my caddie is a great benefit to that process because Paul is able to kind of be the middleman. I'll tell Cameron what I like, what I like to hear, the way I like to be taught, those kind of things.



I think Paul, he has a lot of questions that I don't hear and they communicate, but Cameron's been fantastic in the sense of keeping it very simple for me. I mean, our first lesson we worked all day and worked on two small things and that was a green light for me. I mean, much like the way Butch taught, Butch kept it simple and that's what I need.

So yeah, I've had two more lessons with Cam since and really happy with where things are.

Q. Could you tell us one of those things so we can get some idea of what goes on --

WEBB SIMPSON: Yeah. Well, my golf, my club at the top got kind of up and above my head and I used to swing a lot deeper and lower and shorter. I think this came from trying to hit it far and high, so I would get it up, which would create a lot of this on the down swing. So I'm just trying to get the club lower and deeper is what we're calling it and just cover better to kind of take out a left miss.

Q. Do the distance gains stick with you because you've worked a lot on your body or are you maybe less in driving distance and feeling like hitting it shorter but swinging it way more comfortably and play better?

WEBB SIMPSON: I didn't know what would happen, but thankfully I've kept all my distance. Like my speed is as fast as it was six months ago, a year ago. But I was willing to give up 10 yards to get -- to start hitting the ball the way I used to.

You know, most of this past year I had two-way miss where most of my career I've had a one-way miss. It's a lot easier to play consistent golf that way. So I mean a day like today, it was a great day but I felt like I left a couple shots out there and that's what my golf feels like, whereas last year I feel like if I shot 5 under, it would have probably been I got the most out of it.

Q. You and Paul are pretty open when you talk about shots, club selection. What was the conversation like for the hole-in-one?

WEBB SIMPSON: It was a great number. I don't like left-to-right winds with my hybrids or woods, but it was a left-to-right wind and the 4-iron was only enough club if I hit it really low. So he just, he thought it was the perfect club as long as I kept it low. It was one of those where I had a little too much face rotation in a good way and it overdrew, so yeah, perfect club.

Q. How many people were around the green at that time?

WEBB SIMPSON: There was probably 15 people behind the green.

