

Golf

Storms soften Oakmont and stop US Open

By DOUG FERGUSON
Associated Press

OAKMONT, Pa. — Even a rain-soaked Oakmont didn't keep the U.S. Open from delivering its usual dose of frustration.

Just not the kind anyone expected.

Defending champion Jordan Spieth, who had spent five days preparing on the firm and fiery greens of Oakmont, posed over a wedge into the 17th that landed behind the hole, spun back and kept rolling until it trickled down a slope into the bunker.

"You've got to be KIDDING me! How is that in the bunker?" Spieth said before slinging his club toward the bag.

Masters champion Danny Willett sat in a cabin behind the seventh tee for more than an hour as his group waited out the first of three rain delays. When the weather cleared, players were sent back onto the course without having a chance to warm up again.

"You're in a U.S. Open, they don't give you a chance to even hit a few balls," Willett said, and he wasn't alone in that observation.

Most frustrating of all?

Only nine players finished the first round, and 78 players didn't even tee off. Play was to resume at 7:30 a.m. Friday.

It was the worst rain delay in a U.S. Open since no one finished the opening round at Bethpage Black in



Fan leave the course during the third rain delay during the first round of the U.S. Open golf championship at Oakmont Country Club on Thursday, June 16, 2016, in Oakmont, Pa.

AP Photo/Charlie Riedel

to No. 1. The fairway slopes sharply downhill to a green that runs away from players, and the typical play is to land it some 25 yards short and let it run onto the green and, hopefully, have it stay there. His shot stopped short of the green.

But while the greens were soft, they still were quick as ever.

Starting on No. 10, Bryon DeChambeau had a 40-foot birdie attempt that didn't stop until it was some 35 feet beyond the hole.

Two holes later, Spieth hit a wedge that checked up about 10 feet short of the hole and then trickled a few inches toward the cup. And it didn't stop. Turn by turn, the ball kept moving until it settled 2 feet away. Even then, Spieth gave the putt great care and rolled in it.

"It's nice to know if I miss it, I'm chipping," Spieth said walking off the green.

There was still enough excitement, with Lee Westwood holing out with a wedge on the 14th hole, Danny Lee holing out from the fairway on No. 6 and McCarthy getting it on the act with a hole-out from the 11th fairway.

Lee was at 2 under through 13 holes, along with Bubba Watson, who made only two pars in his opening holes. Watson has never played the U.S. Open very well, except at Oakmont. He tied for fifth in 2007.

Westwood, Kevin Streelman and Harris English were at 1 under on various parts of the course.

2009 in a tournament that ended on a Monday.

The first round was suspended for third and final time just as 28-year-old qualifier Andrew Landry was finishing up a dream round in his U.S. Open debut. Coming off two straight bogeys, Landry drilled his approach to about 10 feet on the par-4 ninth when the horn sounded as a violent storm approached. He was at 3-under par.

"I was trying to get it in," Landry said. "But it's hard when you've got a couple of 60-footers out here. And

it's the U.S. Open. So you've just got to be patient with it."

He wasn't the only player to make a quick impression in his first U.S. Open. On the short list of players who finished was Scottie Scheffler, who just finished his sophomore year at Texas and opened with a 69.

"I feel pretty good. It hasn't really sunk in yet," he said. "There's definitely some scores out there to be shot. We're used to playing short to all these pins, and now we've got to worry about controlling our spin.

And you've really, really got to be on the fairway to attack these pins again."

Willett, Rory McIlroy and Rickie Fowler could not get off the course soon enough. They played in the same group and were a combined 14 over through 13 holes. Fowler has missed the cut in three of his last five events.

It was evident immediately how much the rain affected the course. Denny McCarthy, the first to hit a shot in the 116th U.S. Open, struck what he thought was a good approach

NFL

Seahawks expect Graham and Rawls to be ready for season

By TIM BOOTH
AP Sports Writer

RENTON, Wash. — If Pete Carroll's optimism proves justified, the Seattle Seahawks will have Jimmy Graham and Thomas Rawls on the field when the regular season begins.

That both could be ready for the Sept. 11 opener against Miami is a pleasant surprise for the Seahawks.

Carroll said Thursday as Seattle wrapped up its three-day mandatory mini-

camp that both are on track, although they may not be able to go at the beginning of training camp in late July. Carroll said it was a critical six weeks coming up for the pair as they recover from injuries suffered late last season.

"They both have made great progress," Carroll said. "Whether it's the first day of camp or not or it's PUP or whatnot we're going to see how these six weeks play out. It's a really important six weeks because these guys now are in good enough

shape that they can get in shape. They've worked their way back in the rehab process and now they're preparing to really push over."

Graham tore a patellar tendon in his right knee in Seattle's Week 12 win over Pittsburgh last November. Two weeks later, Rawls broke an ankle early in a victory over Baltimore. Rawls was believed to have a shorter recovery schedule, but Carroll said Graham was actually ahead in the rehabilitation.

Both were on the field as

spectators during workouts earlier in the offseason and during minicamp this week.

"Both kids are mentally right," Carroll said. "They have a great attitude about what they're going to do these next six weeks so we just have to wait and see."

Asked specifically about whether they would be ready for the opener against the Dolphins, Carroll was confident.

"I absolutely think that," he said. "They would have to incur some issues that

we can't foresee right now for (missing the opener) to happen."

Carroll also briefly touched on two contract situations — his own and that of wide receiver Doug Baldwin.

Carroll said getting a deal done with Baldwin is a priority and that it was being worked on "right now." Baldwin, entering his sixth year in the NFL, is coming off the best season of his career and the three-year deal he signed in the spring of 2014 expires after this upcoming

season. Last season, Baldwin tied for the NFL lead with 14 touchdown receptions and became Seattle's first 1,000-yard receiver since 2007.

"It is a big deal, and it's a very serious negotiation as they all are," Carroll said. "But he's done an incredible job for us and been a great teammate. Hopefully, eventually, we'll get something worked out. I hope it happens. The intent is to get him signed and secured for a good while. So we'll see if we can get that done."

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