

KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship

Tuesday, May 22, 2018

Rocco Mediate

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everybody. Welcome to the 79th Kitchen Aid Senior PGA Championship, and I'm pleased to be joined by Rocco Mediate, 2016 champion. Rocco, welcome back to Southwest Michigan. As you think back two years ago, as you return here to Harbor Shores, what kind of memories or images jump into your mind and stand out?

ROCCO MEDIATE: What happened here? It's been a long time. No, it's always great to come back, especially this event. It's just good, you just remember -- Martin and I were talking all day about shots. Do you believe we did that or do you believe -- crazy stuff happened, especially around here, so it's great to be back, always good to be back. So yeah.

THE MODERATOR: So I've got to imagine the golf course is a little bit different.

ROCCO MEDIATE: Yeah, it's different.

THE MODERATOR: How is it different?

ROCCO MEDIATE: Well, by Thursday it'll be cleaned up pretty good, a little firmer. But it's still in good shape. Greens will be a little faster on Thursday. Probably be a foot faster at least. Yeah, I know what to expect, so there's no surprises. It is wet, though.

Q. What kind of demand is it mentally and physically when you compete for a major and four days later you tee up for another one?

ROCCO MEDIATE: Yeah, it's something we've never had to do before. Back on the regular Tour, they were every month and a half, two months. These are different. I love four-round events, and we've played -- back in the regular Tour, you played four-round events every week. But then you come here, this is a very demanding place. Last week was -- it's a different animal totally. It's not quite as demanding. It's still -- but this one is demanding. This one is evil in a good way I like to say. It's just you have to have it here or it'll show you that you don't, quick. And that's what I like about major championships anyway. But this course is especially good at doing that.

It is, it's hard, but it shouldn't be that hard. It's really

not that big of a deal. But it's different. It's definitely different back-to-back, but I love it. I wish we had them all back-to-back.

Q. You referenced specific shots with your caddie that you look back on. Is there a specific shot or two that you saw during the round today that you thought back to 2016 about, wow, we hit that shot or that was incredibly memorable that was critical to your round?

ROCCO MEDIATE: Yeah, the only difference was it was wet -- it's playing a little longer today because it's so wet. The ball is not plugging but it's not going far in the fairways. A lot of holes, you think back, like on the 3rd hole, I hit a couple good pitches. At the last I hit a good pitch into that hole, which was a really hard shot. Just remembering little -- and 4, playing 4, I played 4 pretty good last year. That's just such a hard hole. There's nowhere to go. You have to hit a good shot no matter what. God, we talked about a bunch of different things. 7, I hit a couple horrible drives on 7 and got away -- hit a couple of really cool shots to get up there where I could make a 4. But you just think about all those. We were talking about 8, I hit it to the right one day in the stuff, hit it in the front bunker, got up-and-down. Stuff like that, you just remember all these shots because there were so many of them. To do that, there was a lot of shots that you remember that mattered. They all mattered, but you know what I mean.

Q. You have a number of top 10s so far this year. Playing much better than you were two years ago. Is your game in good shape?

ROCCO MEDIATE: Yeah, it's as good as it's ever been really in my entire career. A lot of changes. A lot of changes, in a good way.

Q. You mentioned just now, you wish you could play back-to-back majors all season long --

ROCCO MEDIATE: Yeah, it's fun, yeah.

Q. Do you feel, especially after the weekend you had at Regions, your game is a little bit more tuned upcoming into this weekend preparing to defend at a venue where you've had --

ROCCO MEDIATE: Yeah, it really is. I did most of the stuff good last week, driving and hitting shots and all that stuff. It was pretty good. They have to be in those events. And those greens last week were about as fast

as this formica here. They were good.

So yeah, does it mean every -- it's good to come in here knowing you're playing pretty good and then you see what happens because once Thursday comes it's a whole new -- everyone asks you how you're playing. I say, I'll let you know Thursday when I play. Everything seems good, but until the bell rings, you just don't know what's going to happen, and that's the crazy part about probably any sport really. I hate the time it takes to get to the first tee or the 10th tee in my case on Thursday. The day of, I hate that time before. I'd just rather be -- know what I mean? But once I get in between the ropes -- I think we're all like that. Once we got to our house, which is in between the ropes, then everything is okay. It's just the anticipation, all that stuff, drives you nuts. It drives me nuts.

Q. The unique nature of this championship coming back to Benton Harbor every other year, do you feel like the defending champion this year as we haven't been back since your --

ROCCO MEDIATE: Yeah, this course, and since Bernhard is going to the graduation, which is really cool actually because I did the same thing, but yeah, I'm the defending champion that played here. But last year he won at D.C.

Yeah, the last guy to win here. What does that mean? I guess we'll find that out here shortly, a couple days. But it is -- you know where you're going to go and you know how to play the golf course, and if it is a little wet, you still know how to play the golf course. It actually makes the fairways bigger and they're already big enough, and the greens are a little more receptive, which it probably still be because it's not going to be dead dry by Thursday. But just a great set of greens out here. You have to really know where your ball is going or you've got issues, big issues. It's just like -- I call it -- maybe Jack called it, it's just quadrant golf, certain quadrants, and if you miss them, it's not a good thing. It's no fun. Or actually it is fun, just in a different way.