

KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship

Wednesday, May 23, 2018

Colin Montgomerie

Press Conference

JOHN DEVER: Welcome to the 79th KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship. Pleased to be joined by a two-time KitchenAid champion, Colin Montgomerie.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Do I need this here? I'm in now. Don't need it.

JOHN DEVER: No, we snuck you in. Welcome back to southwest Michigan and --

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Well thank you.

JOHN DEVER: It's got to be fun to come back to what is ultimately a special place in your career.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: It is indeed. Very much so. This was my first sort of 72-hole triumph here in the States and obviously it meant an awful lot to me, and being a major as well and having played the four rounds with my good friend Bernhard Langer and managing to just pip him at the post, it was thrilling for me. So, yeah, and then to go to French Lick and to have the opportunity of winning again and taking that was great. And then coming back here and giving Rocco a run for his money.

So, yeah, those last three years have been fantastic and I look forward to coming back here and trying to do something similar. Who knows. Yes, it brings back good memories. So when you go to tournaments as I have in the past and you've won on a course before or you've done well on it, you have good vibes and I have this week.

JOHN DEVER: What's the state of Colin Montgomerie's game right now what's it going to take to get you back in the winner's circle?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: I just wish the hole was slightly bigger than it is. I'm just brushing the sides of it right now. So that's the state of my game. Tee to green is fine. Tee to green is as good as ever. It's just a matter of getting the ball in the hole in the least number of shots. I'm maximizing my score as opposed to minimizing it. And I'm walking off thinking, well that should have been three less or that should have been two less. It's only one putt every nine holes that's not going in or brushing the side or hitting the lip or



something. Now you add that up over four rounds and that's eight shots. And that's where I'm off. I'm eight shots off winning. So it's one putt per nine holes and that's the issue. I can say that I'm speaking for, I'm sure I'm speaking for a hundred players here and I'm speaking for the PGA TOUR as well, it's simple mathematics, but that's what it is. It's one putt for nine holes that isn't going in right now and it's got to win.

JOHN DEVER: Good equation. I like it. Questions?

Q. You've mentioned you've played well on this course before. What are the characteristics of this course -- I guess what does this course bring out of a player that needs to win?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Sure, well, this particular year the course is playing slightly different. It was quite fast running the last two times we have been here, the weather's been fantastic. This, apparently, according to the locals, they have had nine inches of rain in the last nine days. That's a hell of a lot for a golf course to take. So it's going to play very differently, meaning that the fairways are going to be much wider than they were before because the ball's not running the way it did.

That's why a faster course plays more difficult because the ball runs into trouble. There's no run here. So although the course is playing longer, it's playing a lot wider. So that takes care of the driver, really. So this course is all based -- and most Jack Nicklaus courses are -- is based on the second shots. Distance control with the second shots. That's why I've done here particularly well in the past is because that's been my strength is being able to hit an iron shot a certain distance. Doesn't matter what iron it is, what number it says on the bottom, it goes the distance that I would like it to go. Nicklaus, that's, that was his game and fading shots into the pin, and it happens to be, that's my strength of my game is my iron play and getting the right distance. Because there seems to be a four leaf clover type design, these genes, where there's a four obvious pin positions, you can see them already and they're in corners and quarters of the greens. So it's not just hitting the green it's hitting the right quarter of that green to have a chance at birdie. That's why I've done particularly well here.

Q. A unique nature of this tour is that you're out there fighting for a major and four days later you're

doing it again. How hard is it to do that and to reboot the emotions and just in that short order?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Very easy indeed. Very easy. When it comes to Major Championship, very easy indeed. Very similar to what it was, to be honest. Yes, there's usually a gap between majors on the TOUR, of a month or two, here, yes, it's back-to-back major, which is great and it gives us a golden opportunity. And an opportunity is everything. So without opportunity, where are we? So we're given that and, yes, it's very exciting. Everybody's excited about the course, the weather is going to set fair now, we have had our fog and our rain and we're very fortunate at this time of year to play so north that the weather's going to be good for us. So we look forward to it. Again, obviously, major to major, great stuff, yeah. Yeah, we're very excited about it.

JOHN DEVER: I have to ask, last weekend did you get up early Saturday morning and did you watch the royal wedding, did you take it in and what are your thoughts.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Oh, well very good. Yeah, well considering it's sort of half American here and half British it was, there's more to it. And I think it was a great occasion and I think we were lucky again with the weather and 120,000 people turned up I happen to live, my address is Long Walk, where they were, I live it in Windsor and just across from the castle and so I know the area extremely well and was in St. George's Chapel there two weeks before, a couple of weeks before I came out. Yeah, very close to home.

So I thought it was a great success. Great success and made me and I hope you feel the same, very proud, very proud to be British on that occasion, we do that extremely well. We do the ceremony and pomp and circumstance very well indeed. And I think that it made me very proud to be British and I hope you feel the same about being American that welcoming someone into our family, a very famous family, being an American girl. And I think she was brilliant on the day. Brilliant. Everything worked so well. So glad it all went off without a hitch and I think they're fantastic. The security was great, everything worked well, and superb. So, yeah, congratulations to everybody concerned.

JOHN DEVER: Seemed like a lot of fun.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Yeah.

Q. This senior major is unique in that we come to this golf course, we have come to this golf course every other year. How special is that for you in that you get to return to the site of your first senior major victory so often?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Yes, I suppose it's like the

only other major that you feel is that way is Augusta. And any time that you go back and someone had done quite well, well of course you look forward to it. All the other majors tend to change direction, so it's good to come back to somewhere that you've done well before. There's a vibe, like Wentworth is this week, the PGA Championship down at Wentworth, the BMW PGA Championship. Every time I went there I felt somehow I was one up on the first tee, having done particularly well there. This is something similar. I feel very comfortable on this golf course. I look forward to tomorrow afternoon's round, I really do. It's a major championship, it feels like a major championship, finishing there, they have done extremely well with the setup, the PGA of America, they have done extremely well with 16, 17, 18, the way that it's done -- and 15 there -- superb finish, tight finish. Yeah, it will be, again, a very good winner because, as I was saying, it's an iron shots course this. Yeah, it should be a great championship.

Q. I heard you talking about your putting, I heard you talking about your high fade into the greens. Expecting some rain this weekend, do you think that's going to help you?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Oh.

Q. Yeah, according to the weather. Do you think that's going to help your game so you can shape your shots with a high fade getting in there and make a few putts?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Well that's the idea. Sorry, I didn't realize it was going to rain this weekend. But if it does it doesn't really affect anything, we just have to get on with it, it's an outdoor game, so that's part of the arena of what we do. But, yeah, I look forward to every iron shot I hit out here because it's a challenge as well because you got to get it to the right quadrant of that green. I enjoy that challenge of trying to get it into that particular area. It's exciting. From the first hole onwards you got to get it in the right quadrant and I really enjoy it. So, yeah, if you enjoy something, you're usually quite good at it and I enjoy this, this particular golf course I enjoy. So, hey, we'll see what happens.

Q. You mentioned the challenges that the course is going to be able to provide for you, but when you look at the group that you're going to be in tomorrow too with Rocco and Vijay, just that challenge as well, playing along with you as one of the better names in this sport, what's that going to be like playing with them?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Fine. I played with Vijay many, many times when he used to play in Europe, of course and over here when we used to play in majors together, we're a similar age. Rocco, Rocco's a character, obviously -- and his caddie -- it's just a

matter of getting his caddie to shut up, really, that would be good, if we can get Rocco's caddie to be quiet we can all concentrate on the golf. But Rocco's a character, super guy, and very worthy winner two years ago when we came up. I kept on thinking I could get to him and every did time I that he holed a putt or he chipped in or he did something and kept ahead tremendously well. He obviously feels confident here, he's playing, apparently, according to him, he's playing the golf of his life right now, he's had a lot of top-10 finishes on the TOUR and he's doing very well. So it's the case when you've got a sort of high profile draw like that on a course that they obviously will do well on, that the factor that I've got to do is over the first two days is try and beat them. My job over the first two days is make sure I'm ahead of Vijay Singh and Rocco Mediate, as I'm sure they feel the same with me. So if I can do that, if I can sit here Saturday, Friday night and be ahead of Vijay Singh and Rocco Mediate, job done. And then we'll move on from there, hopefully. Because that's a difficult task in itself, just to beat my playing partners, never mind everyone else.

JOHN DEVER: Colin Montgomerie, thank you, sir, for your insights and for your time.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Thank you very much.
Thank you.