

KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship

Friday, May 25, 2018

Tim Petrovic

Press Conference



JOHN DEVER: Good afternoon, everybody, welcome back to the 79th KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship. We're joined by our leader in the clubhouse, Tim Petrovic, 7-under for the tournament. He had a 69 today. 2-under. Tim, yesterday you talked about playing Petro golf, maybe you could tell us what that is and did you accomplish it here on Friday.

TIM PETROVIC: Pretty much the same deal, except earlier. I hit fairways and hit greens. I made an unforced error on the first hole, I ripped a driver up there and missed the green with 9-iron and that was kind of not the way I wanted to start the day. Short side myself and make a bogey.

But I bounced back with a birdie a couple holes later. But the way the course is set up today we got a little bit of wind, it's blowing kind of opposite direction, 10 to 12 miles an hour, and the pins are all tucked. They're all hiding behind bunkers, behind slopes, even the pins that are on the front like number 7, which you have up there, I think that's number 7, yeah, even the pin that's on the front left I hit an edge with right at it, hit a great drive and it still went by about 25 feet. So if you hit mid to long irons in to some of these pins you're going to have your hands full today, for sure.

JOHN DEVER: So you had a couple good days on hole number 10 maybe walk us through the championship's first and only eagle to date on that hole.

TIM PETROVIC: You know, it started out with two great tee shots. I hit a great tee shot out there yesterday and then we made the turn and then I just roasted one probably about 325 out there and I hit a 5-iron in, only had about 200 yards to the hole and I kept it on the left side, where the pin was, and it kind of took a bad bounce, it bounced through the green, so I had this weird five or six steps off the green, putting this way when the pin was over here, and I got it up on to the green and then it took a right turn and started heading down the hill and I just said, please hit something, and it did, it hit the pin and went in.

So it was a good break that it went in, but I played the hole the way it was probably as good as you're going to play it and it all starts with a tee shot.

JOHN DEVER: Questions?

Q. 15 I believe you went for the green in two. Looked like a well-earned par, actually. Tough hole of the tell me about it.

TIM PETROVIC: We were in between clubs, I hit a great drive there and we just never got settled on a shot. I took way too much club there with a 3-iron and then usually when you're trying to hit a three quarter shot with a long iron it's going to go left. And I got it and of course I hit it left and it went way over. I was fortunate it got over the hazard because it was so far left. So I kind of turned a birdie into almost a bogey there. That was unfortunate. We talked about it after and I guess when it comes down to it it's up to me to pick a shot. We just never -- it wasn't so much the club, I just never got settled on a shot that we wanted to hit and kind of got up there and hit it and that's kind of what's going to happen.

Q. When you headed into today is there a difference in approach with knowing that you have five other guys that are tied with you a top the leaderboard?

TIM PETROVIC: No, I'll be honest with you I wasn't even looking at it. We glanced at the board maybe a couple times today, but we talked about, I talked to a couple of guys this morning about, I talked to Gary Hallberg this morning before we went out and played and I was pretty much trying to get some of the other guys going maybe to make have them make some birdies today. But we were talking about my round yesterday and I just felt good yesterday, everything was kind of smooth and clicking and it's pretty much the mindset that I had today. Just maintain my tempo and don't try to over hit anything when the wind came up and just rely on your putter, just be confident that you're going to make your share of putts.

Q. Lastly, now that you are at the top of the leaderboard, early on, do you feel pretty good heading into the weekend, obviously where you stand at the top and I guess does your mindset even change knowing that if you could be at the top heading into this weekend?

TIM PETROVIC: No, my mindset is not really going to change. I've been playing pretty good and I've been putting myself in position the last few events and so I

kind of expected myself, expected to be -- you never expect yourself to be leading, but I'm not completely surprised because I have been playing really good and I've been putting up some good scores and just going to try to relax and -- everybody's going to get a little nervous out here coming down the stretch and that's normal. We're not 22 anymore, so we're, we know too much stuff now. My mindset's pretty much going to be the same. Petro golf, fairways and greens. I'm driving the ball really, really good and long and that's giving me an advantage to hitting shorter irons in when most of the guys are hitting mid irons in. So I think that's been the key. So as long as I'm driving the ball long and straight, that's never going to hurt out here, for sure.

Q. What was your reaction to the first time you saw the 10th green, do you like extreme features like that?

TIM PETROVIC: It's extreme, that's an under statement. Not sure what Jack was thinking when he did that one. But from the putt that he made on that green we talked about it earlier, he obviously knows that green. Only Jack is going to make a hundred foot putt just throwing a ball down. It's unbelievable.

But that is, it's definitely extreme, it is a gettable par-5, so I think he wanted to make it really tough for someone hitting an iron into the green where it just wasn't a gimmie for sure. You can make a bogey on that hole if you get on the wrong side. Like yesterday if you hit it right when the pin was back you would be hitting it off the green with a wedge. But, yeah, it's definitely a crazy green, for sure.

Q. Could you talk about the last couple of years and how difficult it is as you're nearing 50 and then the change of how you have acclimated to senior golf and what it's done for your ability to play on a more regular basis and all of that.

TIM PETROVIC: Yeah, coming into the Champions Tour I played -- and I made enough career money where I knew I was going to get a lot of starts out here -- but coming in like when I was between 48 and 50 I was playing some events just to keep my game sharp, because I kind of tailed off a little and I really wasn't playing that well, it was a struggle, 48, 49, 50. I know I did lose a -- I was in a playoff in Puerto Rico I think in 2015 when I was 48, so that would have been big, but other than that I really was really struggling. But it's been an easy transition. The guys out here have been fantastic. The cool thing about this tour is I get to meet and not only meet guys and talk to them I get to play with some guys that I never got to play with and I think that's the coolest thing for me. Talking to guys like Hale Irwin and who's been really good and really receptive to me in terms of picking guys' brains about talking about tournaments and what to expect and

guys have been great. It's been an easy transition and I kind of needed it because I really wasn't playing well coming in and easing into it when I turned 50, I think I played four or five at the end of the year, just to kind of get a little taste and so this is really my first full season.

So it's nice to have a, it's nice to make a schedule and be able to make, know when you're going to play and where you're not going to play and I think that's helped this year. I kind of have a nice routine going again, kind of like when I was playing the PGA TOUR in 2014 and 2015.

JOHN DEVER: You mentioned you had an inkling, you weren't totally surprised you were up at the top here right now. When did that inkling come, when did you get a sense that you were about to play some really good golf for an extended period of days?

TIM PETROVIC: I've been playing good all year, been putting good, been driving it good, and the game's just been coming together slowly, so I'm not -- I had a second place finish earlier in the year and just been pretty solid. I've been shooting 68, 69 every day and it was nice to get a 66 in there, especially in a major, that can, those low numbers in majors really help you, for sure. But, no, just been playing solid. So it's not -- when I say I'm not totally surprised, but I don't want it to sound arrogant, but, no, I've just been playing solid, so I'm happy where I am going into the weekend and I think I got a shot at this thing if I could just keep playing the way I'm capable of playing.

Q. Have you seen an impact on your game just by being older now and how you perhaps make adjustments to that?

TIM PETROVIC: Yeah, I think I'm a little -- I'm still, I still tend to play aggressively and I think as I've gotten a little older I'm realizing more that I'm not going to win tournaments on Thursday and Friday, so you just got to be a little smarter, a little more course management.

I think that if you look at the guy that's been at the top on this tour the last few years, Bernhard, Bernhard Langer, he's efficient in everything he does. Eating, practice, and especially his course management, you just never see him out of position. If you're never out of position, your chances of shooting good scores are pretty good. You want to roll the dice out there, you are going to pay the price. There's a time and a place for it, I think I've kind of learned that a little bit, when to roll the dice and when not to. But I still do tend to take the aggressive route, but there's times when you want to do it and times when you don't, obviously.

JOHN DEVER: Yesterday you mentioned talking to your dad, what's the first thing you're going to tell him about today's round? What facet of what happened

today is going to be the first topic on the table?

TIM PETROVIC: It's actually funny you mentioned that. I went back -- when you play good your phone usually lights up with texts -- and I went back and turned my phone on, I didn't have one text. I'm like, do they know there's a tournament this week? I thought that was pretty funny. Didn't hear from my mom or my dad still. I haven't talked to them since two days ago. But the rest of the family chimed in. And I told them I was going to turn my phone off for the rest of the week, so maybe they sensed that and didn't bother texting me, I don't know. It's funny you mentioned that.

JOHN DEVER: Tim, thanks again and we will perhaps visit later on the weekend.

TIM PETROVIC: I'll make way for the Bear.