

KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship

Friday, May 25, 2018

Kevin Sutherland

Press Conference



JOHN DEVER: Good evening, everyone, welcome back to Friday at the 79th KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship. Pleased to be joined by Kevin Sutherland, who put up a 66 today, seven birdies in there in all. That followed a 71 yesterday. He's tied for the lead with Scott McCarron at 8-under par. So you really went low on your back nine, the front nine of the golf course. What happened at the turn there for you? Something must have clicked in, I guess.

KEVIN SUTHERLAND: You know, I really hit the ball well all day and the difference was I had a few balls get closer to the hole and then I made some putts on that side. But on my first nine holes with the exception of 10 I kind of made a mess of, but I really had good birdie putts all day. But I made -- I 2-putted 15 for birdie. Then I hit a couple shots close to the hole and hit it to about three feet on 1 and made a nice putt for birdie on 3. I hit two par-5s in two on my last nine holes and so it was all good though.

JOHN DEVER: It was all good. Tied for the lead, after 36 here with Scott McCarron, who you actually have a little bit of history with, going back to the PGA TOUR days.

KEVIN SUTHERLAND: Well, yeah, I mean we actually played -- we played junior golf together. We're Northern California guys and played some high school golf together and some junior golf together and we played each other in the finals of the Match Play in 2002. So Scott and I have known each other a very long time and he's been playing very well though.

JOHN DEVER: Let's open it up for questions.

Q. What's it been like this season as the Charles Schwab Cup champion from 2017. I know it's a new season but what's that experience been like, being the defending champion?

KEVIN SUTHERLAND: It's been a lot of fun, I haven't played as well as I did last year up to this point. I just, there's a lot of reasons for that, but just haven't played as well. But it's been great, I've had a ton of people come up to me, people in the gallery and congratulating me on last year and winning the Schwab Cup and it was a great accomplishment and something I'm very proud of.

Q. What will that be like going into the weekend playing in the last group with a guy you played with and against as a teenager?

KEVIN SUTHERLAND: You know it's honestly nothing new for us, it seems like we're playing together a lot. Especially on the Champions Tour. We have been paired a lot on the last days of tournaments in the last group. A lot last year, actually, because Scott played incredibly well last year and won four times and I had a very good year too. So we saw each other a lot on Sundays. Tomorrow's Saturday, it's a little different, we're still trying to get ourselves in position to have a chance to win on Sunday, both of us, and but it's something that we know each other a long time and as far as we know it's the same stuff as 30 years ago or whatever it was. More than that, actually. 35 years ago. Time flies.

Q. Were you on opposing high school teams or same high school team or?

KEVIN SUTHERLAND: No, opposing. He's actually from Napa originally and I'm from Sacramento. He actually ended up moving to Sacramento later on after high school, but there's, we had some, we saw each other like at Norcal's and some of the -- CIF is the federation there -- and so some of the CIF stuff like you get to sections and Norcal's and State's and stuff so we always seemed to run into each other at that point. But the two schools were probably a good hour apart, but we always found a way -- he played for Vintage, which was a very good, had a very good golf team and I played at Christian Brothers High School in Sacramento, which had a very good golf team, so we always managed to run into each other.

Q. When Scott McCarron was in here earlier it was at the tail end of Jack's interview and he asked Jack kind of jokingly, it's Friday night, what do you have for dinner. And Jack told him the story about when he was captaining a Presidents Cup team how the team wanted to have hamburgers, so he said sure, hamburgers, and, well, the team, in Jack's words, they played like hamburgers. What have you having for dinner tonight?

KEVIN SUTHERLAND: I don't know yet. I'm going to try to find something quick and fast and get some sleep. It's a quick turn around, quick turn around for me tonight. I don't know. I haven't gotten there yet. It

will not be hamburgers though it will probably be something hopefully something to go would be the most important thing. I don't know. I might have a steak or something like that. Give myself something good to eat tonight after a good round of golf.

Q. Would you describe your birdie on 9, your last hole.

KEVIN SUTHERLAND: It's kind of a funny -- we, I hit a 3-wood off the tee on 9 and maybe because the driver, that fairway really pitches down. But I still felt like I could reach the green in two with a 3-wood and I thought it was going to be another 3-wood. But we got down there and I was going to hit 3-wood and I didn't really feel that comfortable about it and so we decided, I decided to hit a hybrid and leave it short of the green. Well, I hit the hybrid very, very well, on the exact line I wanted to, but a lot of these fairways have little humps and bumps on them and I caught the back side of a hump, shot it right to the middle of the green and I was like, we did not expect the ball to go that far, we were actually playing for just short of the green. That pin is in a funny spot so if you hit it anywhere, even the right, on the green on the right, you really don't have a putt. So I wanted to hit it short and left, but it took a great bounce and rolled right on to the green and was a pleasant surprise and I managed to 2-putt from about 35 feet.

Q. Continuing with the hamburger theme there was a little meat left on that bone on that second putt though?

KEVIN SUTHERLAND: Yeah, it was. I didn't hit the greatest of first putts, but I managed to wiggle the last one in. I had about probably a good three and a half to four feet. It was a lot more than I wanted. I was hoping to snuggle up there for a tap-in and move on.

Q. Just looking ahead to the weekend now with you being in contention after getting it done last year at the Schwab Cup, what's one key to your game that you might be focusing on, especially on this course, Harbor Shores.

KEVIN SUTHERLAND: You know, it's, the fairways for the most part are fairly generous. You do need to drive it well because there's, if you happen to miss fairways, you can get yourself in a lot of trouble. But the fairways are generous. So it's really about hitting good quality second shots and the greens are tough. They got a lot of slopes and bumps and humps and so obviously lag putting is going to be important too. But if you hit really good iron shots you can make it a lot easier on yourself. I did that today, I hit my irons incredibly well and I had a lot of really good chances from good spots, I had a lot of good looks from putts that were fairly straight or minimal break and one of the keys, although did I hit three par-5s in two, so I did snag three easy

birdies and that always makes it a lot easier.

JOHN DEVER: Okay, Kevin let's let you get off and get something to go there. No burgers, please.

KEVIN SUTHERLAND: No burgers today.

JOHN DEVER: Enjoy your weekend and best of luck. Play well.

KEVIN SUTHERLAND: Thank you very much.