

**PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW**  
**September 12, 2018**



**KENNY PERRY**

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**CHRIS RICHARDS:** Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the inaugural Ally Challenge. I'm joined here by Kenny Perry, who won twice here during his PGA career. Kenny, welcome back to Warwick Hills.

**KENNY PERRY:** Thank you. Good to be back.

**CHRIS RICHARDS:** What feelings and thoughts went through your mind as you pulled up and walked onto Warwick Hills for the first time in, I would imagine, a number of years?

**KENNY PERRY:** Yeah, I just stepped foot on the property today and it looks like it's in a time warp, it looked like nothing's changed. Everything looks the same. The golf course -- I mean, I haven't played yet, but just heard of a few trees being taken down.

So it was always a venue I truly loved, always felt very comfortable coming to this golf course. It's a golf course you've got to drive it well. It always had great putting surfaces and it would just, to me, I just felt very comfortable. The sightlines were always good for me, for my big hook. Just seemed like I felt comfortable here.

So I'm excited to be back. I had a smile on my face when I heard we were coming back here. Been 10 years, I guess. I think '09 was the last time I played here. So looking forward to getting back out there and walking the fairways one more time.

**CHRIS RICHARDS:** You mentioned a few things you remembered about the golf course. Can you talk about what you remember about the crowd and the fans here in Grand Blanc, Michigan?

**KENNY PERRY:** Well, I always remember the 17th hole is kind of the starting of the crazies, I think, of what we got now in a lot of Tour events with the atmosphere of the noise and excitement and I just remember how vocal it was and all the fans there on 17.

And I love the holes like 12, 13 and 14. To me, holes out here were holes you can either make birdies, eagles or you can go the other way, you can actually lose the tournament on those holes. One of the years I won here, I remember the 14th hole, a little short par 4, I drove it in the green-side bunker and it was about a 30- or 40-yard bunker shot and I'm really not very good at those. I hit the shot of my life, I holed it for eagle and that propelled me to a win that year.

So a lot of great memories here. I remember 18 having a one-shot lead. I remember I drove it down, knocked it on the green, I had a two-putt to win. That was huge. So just a lot

of great memories here.

**Q. Kenny, how about the historical perspective of being back? You know, this was like the first corporate sponsored Tour event, they were here for 40 years, whatever it is. How maybe important is it to be back here because of the history that is here?**

**KENNY PERRY:** Well, I mean, you can't thank Buick enough. They gave me two cars. I think on two of my wins I had two cars, so I gave them to my sister. But to have a major sponsor and to have a 40-year partnership is pretty incredible.

You know, we're lucky here, we've got to thank Ally. We're lucky here on the Champions Tour to have great sponsors and partnerships out on this tour as well. We can't thank them enough.

Actually, to pick a great venue, what I like about the Champions Tour, quite a few of our venues are old Tour events that we get to go back to and kind of relive our memories. I just think that's special. I mean, 40 years to be a sponsor, you can't thank Buick enough for their time with us. It was pretty incredible.

**Q. In 2007 there was a story back where you unfortunately had hit a woman with a golf ball.**

**KENNY PERRY:** I knew that was coming up.

**Q. There was a story recently where someone got ahold of her and said you had sent her flowers later and all that.**

**KENNY PERRY:** You know, out of my 35 years of playing on this tour, I'm sure I've hit people before, but this was the lick that stayed with me forever.

I was going for 16 in two and I drove it in the middle of the fairway and I hit a 3-wood and I hit a hook going into the green, so it's going to the left of the green. You know how the green's right there and everybody's kind of lined up left side of the green right there. She was just kind of looking this way and all of a sudden it hit her square in the nose. I mean, it broke her nose immediately and the blood was incredible, how bad she was bleeding. I thought I killed the poor lady.

Eric actually was in the group with me. He's real squeamish to blood and he's over there gagging, he's over there gagging when he showed up and he saw all the blood that was around. I felt so bad.

They showed her picture of her I think in the paper the next day, she looked like a raccoon, both her eyes were black and her nose was broke.

But I was tickled to read that article. I have not seen her -- I did send her a dozen roses, or

flowers. The article said that she had no effects from the hit or her nose was fine and that made me feel a lot better. She said she was coming out this week, so I hope she comes out. I would like to meet her and personally tell her I'm sorry.

**Q. On hole 17 do you hope the fans are as crazy as they used to be? They're 30 years older. Do you want their kids to come out there and kind pick up where they left off?**

**KENNY PERRY:** Oh, yeah, you've got to stick with tradition, don't you? I mean, now that I won the Phoenix Open and now the 16th hole is completely encircled, it looks like a football field and you get booed if you miss the green, kind of expect it. So that's part of the fun. I mean, it's really -- the Champions Tour's not as serious as the regular Tour, we're all out here having fun, so yeah, let them have a good time.

**Q. I can testify during the media day they had us come out and the putting greens are absolutely spectacular. That must be music to your ears?**

**KENNY PERRY:** Yeah, that's what I always said about this golf course. I remember when Robert Wrenn shot 26 under here, I think it was 26. Every time I set foot, the greens were always -- you know, there's a little slope on them, but the surfaces were pure and if you had got the ball on line, it went in the hole. That's all we can ask is a good surface of a ball that's rolling well and you're very comfortable. It's at holing speed. They're not so fast that they scare you to death. You feel like you can be aggressive putting, and consequently there's a lot of birdies made here this week. So it's a fun tournament. You've got to get after it.

**Q. Is there something special about playing in a smaller town? This isn't a Detroit, it's not Chicago, you know --**

**KENNY PERRY:** Yeah, it's hard to get here when you fly into Detroit, you've got a 70-mile drive. But yeah, it's like a Hilton Head. It's like a golf tournament, you know, when you're kind of secluded and out and away from major cities, that's nice. It's not as fast paced it doesn't seem like. Traffic's not nearly as bad, you don't have problems getting to the golf course. And yeah, it's just -- I'm from a small town, I like a small-town atmosphere.

**Q. Are the fans different because this is so special to them because this is kind of --**

**KENNY PERRY:** Well, I think they're probably more polite in a small town. The bigger cities like New York, they get pretty boisterous and they get pretty liquidated, I guess you would say, and they get very, very loud.

**Q. You were talking about the greens. You guys play in the best conditions in the world. What is it about this course that makes it a player favorite?**

**KENNY PERRY:** Well, you've got large surfaces. You've got a golf course that's -- I guess I would say I don't feel claustrophobic like when I'm standing on the tee box. It's tree lined,

but yet it gives you -- the fairways are generous enough where you feel comfortable about hitting it. So you're usually playing out of the fairway.

Then you've got a big surface to hit into and they're fairly flat. There's a little bit of slope on some of them. But like I said, they're at holing speed. The ball always bites. You can be pretty aggressive firing at the flagsticks. It just makes you feel like aggressive, it just wants you to attack.

A lot of courses, like I played Shinnecock this year in the U.S. Open and I was like, that's the hardest golf course I've ever played in my life. You had to play defense all the time, you had to shoot to the middle of the green because if you went at the stick you're probably going to make 6, make double. So it was -- it's a nice change to where you can feel very aggressive and get after it.

**CHRIS RICHARDS:** Can you talk a little bit about your season so far? You picked up a win a couple weeks ago up in Minnesota and we're trending towards the Charles Schwab Cup Playoffs. How do you feel your game is --

**KENNY PERRY:** Well, it's starting to turn. I was very nervous. I had shoulder surgery November the 15th so I was out six months and I think I played 11 events coming back already, so I've played about two months, three months now. My game is just now starting to come back.

Played beautifully at a golf course I knew a lot of there at 3M there in Minneapolis. Won there twice previous, won three times there, kind of my norm. I won three times at Memorial, twice at Colonial, twice at -- just seems like when I find a golf course I really enjoy, I feel very comfortable and feel very successful.

So I'm kind of way behind the eight-ball here. To catch the guys that are leading the Charles Schwab Cup, I've got to do something crazy, I've got to win probably three or four times between now and the Finals to even get near the guys at the top, which is a big ask out here as good as the players are.

But I'm excited. I took my top 50 all-time money for next year, so I'm going to actually play some on the PGA TOUR next year, too, so I'm going to add those at the end of the year to my schedule. I'm going to put Vegas and Napa Valley and Sea Island in, I'm going to play there. So I've got a lot of golf ahead of me and looking forward to it. My shoulder's good, no pain anymore. I don't have to get the shots I was getting all the time to compete. Just looking forward to playing some good golf.

**Q. I want to ask about the Ryder Cup coming up in a few weeks. You were part of --**

**KENNY PERRY:** Two of them. I was on a winning and losing team, so yeah.

**Q. The win I was thinking of at Valhalla, is that something that when it comes around**

**you still --**

**KENNY PERRY:** Oh, yeah.

**Q. Even though you're not part of it, you still kind of get --**

**KENNY PERRY:** That was by far one of the greatest accomplishments on my career, just the feelings of playing in a Ryder Cup representing your country wearing the red, white and blue. And it's just the emotions, the feelings you feel when you're in there when there's only 12 of you, spend all week with each other, just great camaraderie. And you just want to win so bad just not only for your teammate and your coach, but for the country. They were pounding on us. For us to finally get a win at Valhalla was huge, plus it was in my home state and I felt like a rock star out there because I knew so many people there in Kentucky.

So yeah, I'm looking forward to it. We've got a great team going to Paris and I'm looking forward to watching. I'm glued to that TV when the Ryder Cup starts.

**Q. Real quick, you know there's a tournament coming up next year, the Quicken Loans is coming to the Detroit Golf Club. Is there any chance you might tackle that one? It's a new club and I guess it's an awesome one.**

**KENNY PERRY:** Well, it's just -- it's not going to be like a world event or anything, is it?

**Q. I don't think so, regular Tour event.**

**KENNY PERRY:** Yeah, my exemptions get me in everything except the world events and the majors, which I have to earn my way in. So yes, you'll probably see me there at the Quicken Loans.

**Q. Last thing from me, anything around town that you remember, any special places you went, any restaurants that you like hitting up, anything special?**

**KENNY PERRY:** Not for me, because I'm the kind of guy that comes in and I was always staying -- I don't even remember where I stayed here. I think it was a Holiday Inn out there. I mean, this was 10 years ago.

I'm the kind of guy that usually eats at the club or just kind of stays in my area, take something back to the room. But I'm usually out here 24/7. I was always practicing late, putting late, doing whatever I could to kind of get ready for the event. So I didn't really -- I'm not a sightseer. When I come into town to play golf in a tournament, I'm usually working.

**CHRIS RICHARDS:** Anything else for Kenny? All right. Thank you very much and good luck this week.

**KENNY PERRY:** Thank you.