

U.S. Senior Open Championship

Sunday, July 11, 2021

Omaha, Nebraska, USA

Omaha Country Club

Jim Furyk

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome the winner of the 41st U.S. Senior Open Championship, Jim Furyk. Jim, what's going through your mind right now?

JIM FURYK: Still can't believe I'm a senior, but just excited. This year, I haven't played poorly at all this year. I've played solid, but I haven't contended for enough tournaments. I haven't put myself in the positions to win like I would like to, and when I have I haven't finished them off either.

So I worked really hard on my game this year. I still feel like I've got some stuff I need to work on, but to see I guess the fruits of that labor is very satisfying. To come out in a big tournament, major championship on a Champions Tour and a great field and then on a very difficult golf course. So to get off to a rough start today and just gut it out and grind it out. And you know, I was 3-over through 3 but only finished 1-over for the day.

So to really play the last 15 holes that well under the conditions was real exciting and gratifying.

Q. No 3-putts this week on these greens. Is that a huge key to your win?

JIM FURYK: I didn't know that. It definitely it helped, and it was a big deal today because it allowed me -- I just had a real good feel for the speed of the greens, and I did starting early in the week.

I kind of came out Monday, Tuesday and felt like my lag putts and my speed were -- just it came very natural this week and felt very comfortable with the speed of the greens. Today that kind of allowed me to I guess on the back nine knowing I had a good sizeable lead and knowing it was going to be hard for those guys to chase me down, that I was going to have to at least come back and meet them halfway.

It allowed me to take conservative lines on 10, 11, 12, 14,



17. Just I could take conservative lines and I felt very comfortable that I could get the first putt up there pretty close. I left myself a little work on 9 and I left myself a little work on 17. I hit that one solid, but when it left the putter I knew it was a little firm.

But for most of the day it was pretty stress free. A lot of tap-ins, a lot of easy clean-ups. And so it would be yes. It definitely had a big help, and I guess I didn't realize I hadn't 3-putted.

Q. Your family came in, I understand, overnight.

JIM FURYK: Yeah. That was the original plan and then it kind of got altered this week, but it was nice. Tabitha kind of surprised me with the kids. She told me last night she was going to fly in. We were supposed to meet in Baltimore tonight. I've got some work there with Constellation to do tomorrow, and she said, Well, it's just as easy for me to get there, watch the tournament, and I'll fly over with you late this evening.

So but she did surprise me with the kids, which was pretty cool, and my agent surprised me today. Andrew came in as well.

Q. Is there any other significance to this win? Any personal satisfaction?

JIM FURYK: Well, it's a big event. I mean, I've got a history with the USGA, and U.S. Open was the major that I played my best in as far as if you look at the four majors. That's the one I had the most success in and it's the only one that I won, and it's still -- I guess it's an over-50 National Open, but still our National Open.

It's always a tough test. It's always a difficult course. We're used to kind of -- Champions Tour is kind of three days and pin your ears back and go, go, go and try to make a bunch of birdies. This is a totally different style of golf.

This golf course is very difficult and the setup -- even with all that rain and as soft as the greens were and as receptive as they were, the golf course still is very difficult and even par is still a great score.

So yeah, I think beating a good field on a really tough golf



course, that's a feather in your cap.

Q. What's going through your mind walking to the 4th tee after what happened on 2 and 3?

JIM FURYK: Yeah, a little mad at myself. A little disappointed. I accepted what happened at 3. I just hit a bad drive and wasn't able to scramble and get out of it.

On 3 I made a mental error off the tee and I tried to hit the wrong shot. With that, I should have made 4. I mean, that ball ended up in a spot, a very difficult spot, and I -- again, I think I made a mental error. I should have had the face a lot more closed to try to dig it out. I think I got a little greedy and tried to throw it across the green a little farther and maybe give myself a 10- or 15-footer for par.

With that, it came out low and hit the lip, and I guess I was just a little mad at myself for turning a 4 into a 5, which you got a big lead or got a lead going into Sunday, that's what you're trying to avoid. So I was really just trying to collect myself, and I thought the tee shot at 4 and the iron shot at 4 were very key.

I hit two very good shots and gave myself a good look at birdie.

Q. Is that the deal where experience, your experience kind of helps you when you hit a bump in the road like that to be able to recover?

JIM FURYK: I think so. I've been there before. I've done it before. Sometimes you don't react as positively as I did. I guess the one thing I really had going for me, I really felt good about my game. I felt like I -- coming in, I was really disappointed with kind of the 72 on Thursday.

I mean, I mumbled to myself a few times, like I really thought I was ready this week. Like I really felt good about my game. I had a lot of confidence in my golf swing this week. I had a lot of confidence in my putter and I putted beautifully all week. Short game was good.

So, I mean, I -- I made a mistake, but the good news was it wasn't like I was reeling at the time and hitting some bad shots. I still felt pretty confident about my game, and just you got to shake it off and know that you got to go out there and play hard.

Q. Did you do any scoreboard watching? Did you feel Weir and Goosen kind of coming up on you?

JIM FURYK: You know, there's not a ton of scoreboards out there to start with. Some of them got knocked over, and then also replaced. Like the one on 14 green got put

back up today. I really didn't until about once I finished 12. You got to get through that stretch, like 10, 11, I'll say 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 is a really difficult stretch of golf holes.

Once I got through 10, 11, 12 and actually hitting all the fairways, all the greens and hit a lot of really good shots, then I was kind of like, All right, I would love to see a board just to get an idea where I'm at.

But I don't think I saw one until 14 at that point. I heard someone talking about Goose. When I was on 14 someone knocked a putt in on 15, and I heard some of the fans say, He knocked it in, but I had no idea if he knocked in a birdie putt, a par putt. In fact, I didn't even know if it was Retief or was it Steve.

So I was a little anxious to see my -- you know, I'm don't know, did he birdie 16?

Q. Yes.

JIM FURYK: Okay. So at that time I'm thinking, Well, I could be 1-up or 3-up, I really don't know. I was probably 2 and then I made birdie to go up 3.

Q. Did you feel like you maybe had locked it up when you threw that dart in on No. 16 to within about three, four feet from 109 yards out?

JIM FURYK: Yeah, I -- did I lock it up? I felt real good about it, I'll say that. But I know the game well enough that you get ahead of yourself or start thinking ahead and just don't go through your process, bad things can happen. So I really tried to not get ahead of myself.

But that was probably -- looking back after making bogey at 15, that was probably the clincher.

Q. You and Fluff have had such a long relationship. What did he mean this week?

JIM FURYK: Yeah, it was good to -- I mean, it was good to have that nice long walk with him up 18. I mean, at that point it's kind of stress-free and I can't -- I've only had like -- I've only stood on the last green and had like four putts or whatever it was to win maybe once in my career, and that was at the U.S. Open in '03.

Every other time it's always been a tight battle, and 18's always been a super nerve wracking. So it's nice to take that walk. He's been on the bag now for over 22 years, so it's great to share it with him and great to have him be a part of it.

And you got to think, I mean, the guy's 73. Walking these

hills, he's a beast.

Q. When you walked up and you said you had that same kind of a lead, are the emotions similar walking up this fairway as opposed to 2003?

JIM FURYK: Similar, but, you know, I was 33 at the time. Still like getting -- won maybe six, seven times on tour. I mean, I was still kind of in the middle of my career. I hadn't won a major. I put so much pressure on myself to win that tournament that when I got to 18 it was more like the air was let out of the balloon. I mean, I was spent.

I'm a little older, a little wiser now, and these are like -- this part of your career is more we're kind of taking a victory lap and enjoying it. I still get really stressed and I still put a lot of pressure on myself, but it's not like being 33 again. But the feeling of winning never goes away. I mean, it's a great feeling to walk up there. I didn't get that emotional until I saw Tab and the kid to the right of the green.

I hit that first putt. It almost went in from 60 feet or whatever and I had the tap-in and I kind of looked across and she was on the other side of the hole. So I kind of motioned to her, and that's when I got emotional.

Q. Yesterday we talked about the list that you joined, but when you read the names, Casper and Trevino and Nicklaus and Palmer, what does that mean to you, because you probably not only watched them on TV growing up, but probably played with a few of them.

JIM FURYK: I have had the opportunity to play with -- other than Mr. Casper I haven't played with, but I've met Mr. Casper. I had and played an event -- he took us to Morocco. It's just a -- I mean, it's an incredible list. I didn't really want to look to see who was on it last night, but when I finished in the scoring tent I saw it was on TV. They listed the seven folks before.

And, yeah, it's a -- I'm very honored and humbled to have my name in the same breath, to be honest with you. That's some damn good players.

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