

U.S. Senior Open Championship

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Stevens Point, Wisconsin, USA

SentryWorld

Jerry Kelly

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Jerry Kelly, even-par 71, third place here at the Senior Open. Can you just characterize how you feel right now.

JERRY KELLY: I didn't have much of a swing or a putting touch all day. I don't think I had the best luck with three divots and a plugged lie, but I put myself there, so you can't argue with it. I just didn't play well.

I wanted to do the same things. As the pressure heightened, I guess nature kind of took over. I've been nurturing a new move and a new swing. It felt great the first three days, and nature kind of took its course a little bit. I got stuck behind most of my shots, which didn't feel the best.

Again, it was a battle. I'm proud of the way I battled again, but having a front row seat to 45 and 46 as a really good friend of Bernhard's, that was special. He can retire now.

(Laughter).

But that was very special. I'm happy to be a part of it. He deserves it. It was incredible watching him pick apart the golf course methodically and making birdies.

Got a good break on 5, but other than that, it was all him. Hat's off to him. Nice job.

Q. Jerry, how would you describe yourself when you arrived at the golf course today, emotionally, physically? And then as you leave here today, what level of disappointment, if any, is there about not giving Bernhard maybe the run you wanted to?

JERRY KELLY: I know I was way too amped up. I was trying to be settled and calm, but I was talking more than I have all week. I was moving a little bit faster than I have all week. Just wasn't -- I could tell it wasn't, okay, I'm really tired. I'm just going to pass out. I was up a little bit last night too. I didn't have the strength as much today to stave



off that.

We want to be in those situations. We want to push our mind and our bodies into those uncomfortable spots and see how we do in them. I did well without my best stuff today. There have been times, there's going to be times when I have it on that Sunday, and I didn't today.

Q. You mentioned 5. Would you say that was kind of that point where this one really shifted?

JERRY KELLY: Yeah. He birdied the first two, but then I got one back on 3. Just missed the one on 4. So I was feeling really good. I was right in between clubs on a par-5, and I couldn't trust the wind coming in, just like he got caught with that one gust and he landed into the bank, came backwards, which normally would be the water.

But he had a boggy spot right there and it was sitting up perfect. All he had to do was take his shoes off and splash it out. It's actually easier than a bunker shot because the water actually supports your club better than the sand does.

He knew how to play it, and he played it perfectly and made birdie out of a bogey situation. Yeah, that's a big turning point.

Q. You call Bernhard your friend. When you see a guy like that take his shoes and socks off on one hole, execute that shot to make a birdie, then almost make an ace right after that, what's going through your mind? What can you say about his longevity and what he's doing out there?

JERRY KELLY: I didn't give it to him even after the 2 he made on 7. I had enough holes left, and there was enough trouble up there. But I had to execute, and I didn't.

I was in a divot there on 8 and had to hit a shot that wasn't coming in high. So it landed perfectly and skipped out.

Then 9 it turned over on me, and I got really a lucky break, hitting the rock and coming back out, and then I'm in somebody's pitch mark. Not a divot, but somebody's pitch mark. So it was an exact circle down in there. That was one of the best short game shots I've ever hit in my life. It was a great par.



Then I was like, okay, I can birdie the next two and then pick up possibly three more. If he falls back at all, I can win by multiple, much less -- and he just never stopped. That was him at his finest, especially coming down the stretch. People are like, oh, he left that way short. Well, he did that on purpose. He wasn't going to go through. There's no sense in taking a chance of one going down the slope.

He did what he had to do to win. He's just such a technician. He's awesome.

Q. I know you said you didn't play as well as you would have liked to today, but you and Bernhard were the only guys that either had even par or under for every round of the tournament. How do you feel like you played during the week? Just your overall thoughts, I guess.

JERRY KELLY: Yeah, it's a battle on these types of courses and these types of conditions. Even when I was hitting it well, it was still a battle, but I hit it poorly today, so it was really a struggle.

So I hung in there, made a birdie, get it back to even. Okay, let's get it to a couple under, and I just could not get that next one. It was too soft of putts, too firm of putts. It was pretty much everything. My touch just wasn't quite there.

But overall, the week is good. Langer wins, Stricker beats me, what's new?

(Laughter).

Q. Jerry, you mentioned the support the Wisconsin crowd's given you and then the rest of the field. You put your arm around Bernhard coming up 18. How do you think they did, the crowd, giving him appreciation of how he played this weekend?

JERRY KELLY: Wisconsin golf fans know golf, and I know they knew exactly what his accomplishment, what history was being made. Even if they didn't, the appreciation they showed of the man he is both on and off the golf course is exemplary.

It's just really fun being with him all the time. I have gotten him a few times, but he's definitely way, way up on me right now. I guess he has to stay out here a lot longer for me to try to catch up. I'm not going to catch up on the win total, just the head to head.

Q. As you look back on the week as a whole, you've

had a lot of home games in this state in your career -- Milwaukee, Whistling Straits, now here, Am Fam. How does this rank as far as an experience?

JERRY KELLY: I'd say it ranks three. Two wins at Am Fam, I think, are still up there. If I would have won this one, this probably would have been No. 1. And then the playoff loss my rookie year at the GMO, I'd still put that even behind this one because this was fantastic.

I love the Wisconsin people. I think they're fantastic. They support everybody, but they do support us just a little bit louder.

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