

ISPS HANDA World Invitational

Wednesday, July 28, 2021

Northern Ireland

Galgorm Castle & Massereene Golf Club

Jonathan Caldwell

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for your time. It's great to have you on. It's been a roller coaster year, I guess, or maybe a couple of years since you got back on to the European Tour and have started to play some really good golf and obviously your win this year. How exciting is it to be at home in Northern Ireland and playing so close to home and in front of your home fans?

JONATHAN CALDWELL: It's going to be great, yeah. I'm looking forward to seeing some familiar faces, family and friends out there throughout the week, so yeah, I'm hoping I can find some form and give them something to cheer about.

Q. You obviously won in one of these mixed events. What was the vibe in Scandinavia and what was it that made it such a special week for you going on to win and playing such good golf? Was there something about the tournament itself that kind of gave you that sense?

JONATHAN CALDWELL: Not so much the tournament itself, more the golf course. I really liked the golf course when I arrived there on the Tuesday. You needed to hit it sort of straight and it wasn't very long, it was more a positional golf course and that kind of suited my game obviously pretty well.

I played nicely all week and putted nicely. It was just really -- the course and the setup kind of suited my game, which was great.

Q. Can you talk to us about the golf courses? You're obviously there at Massereene today playing in the pro-am and you played at Galgorm yesterday, but these are two golf courses you're very familiar with. Can you talk about the golf courses and what the players should expect the next few days?

JONATHAN CALDWELL: Yeah, I'm more familiar with Galgorm obviously having played quite a few events over



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the years there. It's certainly playing different this year than it has in years past, a little firmer, less rough. I mean, I can see the scoring being better than it was last year at the Irish Open with the rough being so thick and playing softer and longer.

I suppose the danger would be for guys maybe that haven't played in hard and fast conditions recently, positioning their ball, probably not a lot of drivers for guys, more get the ball sort of on the ground and running off the tee.

I suppose the fringes are quite firm, so pitching the ball on the green is key. If you land it on the edges you're going to get that bounce. So yeah, it's going to play different than what the guys have been playing the last few weeks.

Q. We've obviously got males and females playing here, as we mentioned before, and we've got the EDGA disability golf at the weekend. How important is all of this stuff and all the inclusivity in golf and all these tournaments that seem to be increasingly happening? How important do you think they are and how important and proud does it make you to have them here in Northern Ireland, as well?

JONATHAN CALDWELL: Oh, massively proud. Yeah, what Niall is doing with Modest is fantastic for the game. It's growing the game all around the world. Getting it on a world stage is massively important to continue to grow the game. It really shouldn't be an exclusive game. It's got to be for everybody, and I think what the guys are doing is really showcasing that.

Q. Your win in Scandinavia, what does it mean for you as a golfer, your mindset and things? Does it change things?

JONATHAN CALDWELL: No, it doesn't change things. It probably allows me a little bit more free will, if you like, and it gives me that extra confidence obviously knowing that if I get in that position I can win a golf tournament. Obviously if you can do it once, it does give you that confidence to be able to do it again.

The goal is the same; it's to try and give myself chances over the weekend every weekend, and again, see if I can get over the line on Sunday.

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Q. You're coming into this week, you're on home soil in front of home crowds and things. Do you get a buzz off that? Does that add pressure? How does that work?

JONATHAN CALDWELL: Oh, yeah, I get a buzz off playing in front of family and friends and obviously they enjoy coming and watching me play. Obviously yes, it adds that little bit of extra pressure, you're trying to do well, you're trying to be in position over the weekend to give them the thrills that they want, but at the end of the day I've got to hit the shots and do my job and hopefully the rest takes care of itself really.

Q. Talk about the conditions and things. It's a slightly different course than what you've been used to in previous years.

JONATHAN CALDWELL: Yeah, definitely. I've never seen it this firm and fast. Obviously this rain is going to help soften it quite a bit, but I've been at home the last two weeks, just playing a good bit of social golf. I've been to Royal County Down a few times and Ballyliffin, so I've been playing some firm tracks, so I was sort of hoping it would remain fast and firm, though give me a little bit of advantage playing the last few weeks at home, but it's different than what we're used to seeing here.

The rough is normally well up. It's not so bad this year. Obviously we like the growth. It's a different test. Guys won't have seen it this way, so it's going to be different for everybody.

Q. Talking about your form, since the win, maybe not as hot as you'd like it; any reason or is it just a wee bit of -- just going off a wee bit?

JONATHAN CALDWELL: Well, no, I had the week off after Sweden, which was to be a rest week. Didn't turn out to be a rest week. Lots of things to do, maybe too many pints of Guinness.

But in hindsight I probably should have taken the week off after that, as well, Germany. But I went out to Germany. I played okay in Germany. I needed to birdie the last to make the cut from playing sort of okay, mediocre, and then went to Ireland, didn't play particularly great the first day in Ireland, and then Scotland I didn't play particularly great. So I feel if I had maybe taken that week off in Germany I would have been fresher for Ireland and Scotland.

And then again, the environment I was playing in in Ireland is something I wasn't used to, two and a half thousand people, playing with Shane Lowry, Martin Kaymer. That

was a new experience again for me being in that three-ball.

But again, a bit of a learning curve on the Thursday. I played decent on the Friday, so I felt okay going to Scotland, and then I just didn't play particularly great in Scotland, and then it was two weeks off.

I've enjoyed the two weeks off and sort of regrouped and played a bit of casual golf and enjoyed the two weeks off resting and chilling out.

Q. Have you set any targets the rest of the season, DP World Championship? Is that the big ambition?

JONATHAN CALDWELL: Yeah, that would be the big target would be to get in that top 60 and secure a spot there at the end of the season. Other small goals are again, like I said before, to compete for tournaments again over the weekend, give myself possible chances on back nines on Sundays, things like that. If I can kind of take care of those small things, I think that top 60 is very realistic.

Q. How have your expectations changed? Is this a mindset issue? Have you tried to sort of -- you win one, you sort of have your expectations going up and down? How do you deal with that sort of thing?

JONATHAN CALDWELL: No, they haven't gone up so much. I had some decent results up last year, a few good top 10s, top 5. So I knew that I gave myself chances, like I say, on the back nine on Sundays.

I mean, really it was obviously fantastic to get over the line and shoot a great score on Sunday to come from behind and win, but really it doesn't really change much. I still treat the weeks the way I did, just go about my business and take care of it and sort of see where it takes me come Sunday afternoon.

Q. I'm going to finish off with a quiz question of sorts: Do you know what was the golf course that hosted the last LPGA Tour event in Northern Ireland?

JONATHAN CALDWELL: Ooh, LPGA Tour event in Northern Ireland?

Q. October 1984.

JONATHAN CALDWELL: October -- what was I, five months old.

Q. It's Clondeboye.

JONATHAN CALDWELL: You're joking me. Unbelievable.

Q. We managed to unearth that one. Clandeboye October 1984. Kathy Whitworth was the winner. It's hard to believe, isn't it.

JONATHAN CALDWELL: All the way to Clandeboye for an LPGA tournament in '84. Geez. I'll be able to use that one at home. (Laughter).

Q. If you can win this one, you can say that you've won the next LPGA Tour event --

JONATHAN CALDWELL: The next one, yeah, in Northern Ireland.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks a million for your time and really appreciate you coming along and have a great week.

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