

# American Century Championship

Thursday, July 7, 2022

Lake Tahoe, Nevada, USA

Edgewood Tahoe

## Tony Romo

Press Conference



**Q. Tell us how excited you are to be back here in Lake Tahoe. And how is your golf game?**

TONY ROMO: I'm excited. This is one of my favorite weeks of the year, my family's as well. We come out, I've got my three boys, and my wife and my in-laws. We do that every year. It doesn't get much better coming here, on the lake, having a great time with a lot of great people.

It's going to be a great week, regardless. Obviously it's more fun if you win. But trying to play good golf. I've been playing pretty well lately. And hopefully that will continue.

**Q. What parts of your game have you been working on coming into this week?**

TONY ROMO: Over the years, I think I've finally learned that there's a few shots that are important, I guess you could say. Stuff that comes up a lot that really gives you an advantage. Like the tee ball on 18. I haven't consistently hit that fairway.

And I've worked hard on drawing the golf ball on that hole. And with the tree on the left, so that shot is something that is more like you're practicing a shot. So I'd say it's more situational coming in this year; whereas, in the past it's like you might be trying to hit the ball solid, you're hitting it more solid or something, but I feel confident in that area.

And then some of the wedge game work, like on hole 2, hit a drive up there, and you could be anywhere from 20 yards to 70 yards, depending upon the wind. You're into the grain upslope, but you're in a very advantageous situation because you're close to the hole. I've worked on the "uphill into the grain" pitch, short wedge game. So those are the shots that I haven't really taken advantage of over the years. Because if you drive it well on nine, I might have a 9-iron in or a wedge or something short instead of punching out of the trees or trying to make a 5. So stuff like that.

**Q. The field this year, where we're positioned, it's probably the strongest field in the tournament's history. You've got you, Mardy Fish, John Smoltz, Mark Mulder. Talk about not only your preparation on the golf course, but the mental preparation coming into this week.**

TONY ROMO: I feel like every three to five years the field just gets deeper. I think you're finding there's more players who have the ability to compete and win.

And putting is such a huge deal in every golf tournament, especially here, just because the slopes are subtle and it's tough to get the reads right consistently.

But if you do put the ball in certain spots, you have the ability to read it correctly. And I think that's another thing you learn. And for me, it's just you're going out there and you're going to just, each shot, the next shot, it's cliché, but it's kind of what you do here.

You've got to hit your wedges close and you've got to putt the ball well. You've got to lag putt well because you can't just give away -- because the greens are fast and they do a great job.

Edgewood, the staff here, it's incredible. The course is in great condition. It has been for years now. And the greens are immaculate. And give them a lot of credit, because that makes it even more special when you're out here.

But back to the depth of the field, a lot of guys can win. A lot of guys are really players who can go out there and shoot 70, 69. And you didn't have that many guys before.

**Q. Did you use like spray-on 5:00 shadow this morning?**

TONY ROMO: Yeah, I did. It's called "Spray-on 5:00 Shadow" for you guys who want to use it. I got some for you, Dan, if you need it. (Laughter) Don't knock sunscreen, you're going to say you should have done it.

**Q. Asking a lot of guys about Charles finishing in the top 70. Do you think he can do that this year?**



TONY ROMO: You know, I would have said no two weeks ago, but we were in Dallas together and we went out and hit on the range. And we were just talking golf. And I love Charles. He's one of the best guys anywhere.

He's so generous and giving. He's got such a big heart. But he hit the ball really well. And he improved a lot last year, I thought. But now his ability to actually turn the ball over and hit a two-yard draw and get it to tumble.

And his sequencing, it's just different. Everyone knows about the hitch. But he really has changed his game in the sequence. I know he got a lot of help from Stan Utley, and that helped. And it was genius, some of the stuff he was telling me. But he looked great. I would bet on him to finish in the top 70.

**Q. Is there a Fish/Romo rivalry right now?**

TONY ROMO: My kids think so. Like today, my sons were out here. We're walking by -- I think we were going to the 10th hole, which was No. 1 today. And Mardy was on 10. We're walking by, saying hi. My oldest, guys, say hi to Mardy. He's, like, "Mardy Fish," he was like, [grunting].

I was, like, "We like Mardy every day of the year except for these three days." But the reason is because he's good. And Mardy has a pure golf swing. And technically he does stuff at an incredibly high level. You could put him out on the PGA TOUR and he would fit right in. His golf swing is great. He's an even better guy. I really like Mardy. He's a good friend.

**Q. Of the top five finishers last year, you were the only one that improved his score every round. The last round for the other four were horrible. But John and Vinny managed to get three points better than you from your previous scores. What was the difference, do you think, in your mind for your game on Sunday that maybe even Annika, everybody else really fell off?**

TONY ROMO: Well, the course was playing tough. And always on Sunday it could be -- for Vinny to do what he did last year, you've got to give him credit. He played amazing golf. What a great story. Just after the round, I didn't know about his dad.

As a dad, with three kids, that was pretty cool. It was, like, you're going to -- that's just one of those moments where you're happy for him because I know that's such a big deal. And life is short sometimes.

But I think just playing better each round is one thing. A tendency would be that, in some ways, because you're

almost learning yourself and what you're doing poorly you put more time into what that is.

It's like the more tournament play you have, the more data you get on where your weaknesses are, and then you can put the time in to go and actually improve those.

I feel like it's not just from tournament to tournament, it's round to round. You're doing it hole to hole, nine to nine. But you get the pacing of the greens down a little bit more each day. You know which angles are tougher. You start to find what is creeping in that's a negative or what the positives are that you can lean on.

So you start to, what I call the 100 percent rule, which is to trust something fully, and you start to get more committed. Some of that is also just luck.

**Q. For those of us contemplating picking you in the press pool, especially my wife, what do you think you're going to shoot this weekend?**

TONY ROMO: It sounds like your wife is more onboard than you are with it.

**Q. She always is, Tony.**

TONY ROMO: Those wives, they're smart, aren't they?

I would say from a scoring perspective, I wouldn't give a score, per se. But I do think that with the greens and the firmness and the ability to keep the speed up, if you shoot three rounds at 70 or lower, you're going to probably win the golf tournament because it's tough not to have one day where it's a 74, 5, just because of the pacing, if you're off something it can catch you. But you can also shoot one round really low.

I think the key is just to have that one low 65, 64, 66-type round that gives you the chance to breathe, I guess, and feel comfortable being aggressive to conservative spots.

And without that then you're starting to attack stuff and get to spots that can catch you.

**Q. Did you play on your high school golf team when you were in high school, and how long in your life have you played golf?**

TONY ROMO: I played high school golf. But you know, when I was young, I never went to a range. Like, growing up, you would just play golf. Like, my boys can't stand it, all right, guys, let's go to the golf course. They're excited, we're going to go play. They get a Sprite, whatever. Then we get out there, okay, let's go hit some balls. They go,

"Why? Why are we going to a range to hit? Let's go on the golf course." Because, then you get to hit it good and be better when you're out there. And they're, like, "I am better. I want to go out there now." And I'm, like, "you're definitely not better. You're still not great yet. But you're great to me."

But they just want to go play. And I was that way as a kid. And in high school, it was like I played but we had nine-hole matches back then. And it was so much fun.

One of my favorite times is just traveling with the team going from tournament to tournament, playing the matches. And when I look back now, I couldn't imagine going up and just hitting driver off 1 without hitting a ball or warming up the back, activating. Oh, my gosh, to be young again. It's a great time. High school golf. Enjoy it.

**Q. There's obviously Josh Allen, Patrick Mahomes are here. It's about six months ago they played that game that you called. And I'm just curious, what still sticks out to you like the lasting sort of feelings or impression you have that game and from the performance of Patrick and Josh Allen?**

TONY ROMO: Just first, they're great people. Number one, it's so great -- you look for people that you want your kids to kind of root for and look up to that you feel like do it the right way and they both do.

They're so genuine. They're so giving. And they're both really hard-working. They love football. They put everything they have into it. And then you throw the talent in on top of it.

And I love watching people who commit everything to their craft. And then on top of it, you like them. They're genuine. They're people that I appreciate the way they go about the process. And that game just showed you the evolution, just the quarterback play, the ability to run.

The ability to scan the field, read it, have great instincts. Stand in the pocket. Throw under duress. Take a hit. Be tough. And then will your team. And then make it look easy because it's not. And these guys, I mean, the depth at quarterback in the National Football League right now is really at one of the highest points ever.

From top to bottom, it's like, wow, you've got almost 10 to 15 guys that you could start and say that's a championship caliber quarterback. And I think that's a lot in a season.

**Q. You were mentioning like seeing things like maybe that hadn't been done. Especially with Mahomes, how have you seen maybe things change with the**

**quarterback position because of him?**

TONY ROMO: Well, the league always evolves based on who's winning. So when a team starts winning, like for years Seattle was so dominant on defense that everyone wants to hire those defensive coaches.

So they all go somewhere else. They put this system in. So then everyone started running the Seattle version of Cover 3.

And then what happened is the rules on offense had to change because you used to run these routes versus Cover 3. It's like this route right here would always beat Cover 3, but now Seattle's version of their Cover 3 swallows it up and they're covered.

So once offenses started to say we've got to change this concept, then, all of a sudden the defenses started to get beat that were playing that defense. Then that started to slow down. And then you find that it's a new evolution of defense. And now people are going to shell defense, which means two safeties high, instead of one safety, which Cover 3 means three guys deep, two corners are deep and the safety. There's three of them. Shell, with two guys deep means you have two guys deep or four guys deep.

So that's the evolution that takes place. Everything evolves. These quarterbacks are a big reason why these things evolve. The reason you're having two shells, two safeties back there, because these guys are good and you need more help back there, because they're going to go ahead and just slice right through if you don't.

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