

American Century Championship

Sunday, July 14, 2024

Lake Tahoe, Nevada, USA

Edgewood Tahoe

Joe Pavelski

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Joe Pavelski. Finished with 79 points, 29 points today. Finished runner-up. Joe, walk through the round today and what was the mentality going into today to try and chase Mardy Fish?

JOE PAVELSKI: I think, first off, you get in this position, you're like kind of looking at how you played the first two days. I've hit the ball as good as I've hit it in a long, long time. I knew that was good.

Day one I didn't make the putts with the looks I had. Day two, I definitely made some, put up a nice number. It was, okay, coming into day three for me was let's hit the ball the same way, let's make some putts.

With a guy, when you're chasing Fish down, you know you'll have to go and get it and win it. So it was, we're going to have to make a few putts, have a dream start, birdie first two holes, have looks. Get one on 4 there, if you don't birdie the first out of four, and match it early to kind of set the tone.

And I think he got one on five there or whatever it was. So you feel like, you throw a little bit of a punch at him and he responded and he was good.

I knew it was right there. We were still playing, but he's so solid. That was the mindset. You're going to have to go hit some good shots. Put up a good number. Just really excited with my start today, I think, and felt like I'm going to have a chance.

Q. Did it almost feel like with you and Mardy like match play a little bit that you needed to do and then him one up?

JOE PAVELSKI: We both got off to such solid starts that it felt like that pretty early. Kind of pushed a few people out of the tournament early, and focus on him a little bit.



And coming down, there was a shot on 8, the wedge on 8, I felt a little short, I chipped up-and-down down there. Looking for more at times to close it, but he always responded with something different.

At the end, on 16, the putt for eagle on 16, it was I felt really comfortable over the speed. And the line, kind of right at the end, it felt like it was one of those that could maybe start going a little more. We already had it out more than far enough. You just didn't fully trust it at that moment, and added a little extra. And you just don't get a good putt.

I had been hitting good putts all day. The putts were good. And I liked that look and ended up three-putting there, which hurt the chances right before hole 15 to make a great putt. Felt like a must-make to catch this guy with the holes that were coming up.

Put myself in a lot of good looks. Shot 67 today. I mean, it kind of was one of the numbers I was looking at, and with a little luck if, if he falls back behind, we'll be right there at the end.

Q. You shot 67 today. Did you have a number you were going to try to get to today?

JOE PAVELSKI: I was at 50, which is already, if you look at last year and the year before, that puts you right there at the end, if you have another good solid day, 23, 24, 25 points.

So he's at 57. I didn't look at an end. It was how fast can I close the gap on him. And felt like I made an attempt on that early and he responded, and it was chasing him. He was setting the point total that we were trying to get to.

Made a few birdies coming in. Shoot 3-under on the back. You make that little push, it wasn't enough. He played tremendous. Yesterday I heard a little bit about his round. He made everything, made good putts. Today was no different. Stared at a few 15, 20-footers made them real easy.

Q. Curious mostly about if you had to fight any sort of



internal, you know, especially when you get to the par-5s and you know you're probably going to need an eagle to bring him in, did you have to fight, you can't try to make eagle, you know what I mean?

JOE PAVELSKI: 100 percent. That was kind of the talk all day, really. It was, like, hit solid shots. I've been hitting them good all week. Hit solid shots. Hit a couple good ones on the first few holes, make a few putts. Just make the putt on 15 and get up there on 16.

And at the end of the day that's probably the urge that came out and why I didn't hit a good putt on 16 to give myself a better chance at maybe scaring the hole or a tap-in birdie, staying close, because where he was you knew he was getting up-and-down for the most part. So there's that little urge.

Then coming down 18, you know three is the number you're looking at. And I kind of missed my drive by a few yards and it hits that tree. Now you're staring at something longer coming in. Don't make the best contact, you're staring at chip now. And you're thinking, how can I hole it. Even then you're going to need him to make a mistake to fall back to you.

But eagle was the number. You're looking at it. You knew you needed to make a move. The urge is there. It's in your head. He hit a few good shots, and have a look and a chance. Just didn't cash in at the end of the day.

Q. You're 13 points better than last year. Good round. You came in third last year, I believe?

JOE PAVELSKI: Yes.

Q. Now you're going to take some time off in retirement. How much improvement can we look forward to for next year?

JOE PAVELSKI: This is good. This is my best showing. I think if I could replicate this here the next few years, if we get the opportunity, hopefully we have a chance to lift that trophy like Fish is doing.

Golf is a game I love. Definitely going to be playing, practicing, trying to get a little better at it. But you get in a tournament you never know how fully it's going to play out.

I felt good over the ball this week. Even with that said you get some nerves over the first tee, you get some nerves over putts. You want to score and get it in the hole. But we'll keep trying to get better and keep trying to chase down Mardy.

Q. You finished with 79. I know things are different from year to year, the greens, weather, you're four points better than Steph Curry's winning score last year. Keep up the good work.

JOE PAVELSKI: It was great being out here.

Q. Now that you have announced your retirement, finished runner-up, is there, similar to what John Smoltz has done in Monday qualifiers or tries, other tournaments like that, USGA events? Is that potentially in the future for you?

JOE PAVELSKI: I think so, maybe a little bit, as far as the extent of it I have no idea. Actually, coming to this tournament, it's a highlight.

Just absolutely love being out here. Hopefully get into a couple other ones. Maybe a state open at some point back in Wisconsin and club championships. That kind of stuff. It's still very fresh for me.

Right now season ends, pack up the bags, pack up the house, turn the key and head home for an offseason. It's very fresh. It's been busy. I think we've been at the lake house for three or four weeks, come out here.

Once it gets closer to the season you'll definitely -- I'm sure there will be a few different feelings and just ideas that will pop in your head.

But I think we're in a very good spot where we're at right now. And we'll keep talking about it and looking at it. Looking forward to the summer and spending more time with family.

Q. I was excited because early on you chipped into his lead. I was thinking we were going to have a round. And there was this three-hole stretch. I was rooting for you. I'm curious, what were you or your caddie thinking? What was your plan? What were you saying to yourself in those three holes when you were trying to get that momentum?

JOE PAVELSKI: I felt the same way. I felt I chipped into his lead a little bit. Then all of a sudden it was gone. And he kind of grew the lead a little bit. It was just stay connected, sort of thing, to him, try to chip away, try to go on a little bit of a run, make some birdies in a row, put some pressure on him.

He hits one on 14 right of those trees there and gets a great look and knocks it up there. And he's making his number.

He had a couple of breaks but he hit all the shots. He's been good all week long. He was just rock solid. And his putter was great. He made the putts he needed to and made a few on top of that. Felt good.

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