

# Workday Charity Open

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Dublin, Ohio, USA

Muirfield Village



## Gary Young

### PGA TOUR Rules and Competition Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome, Gary Young, tournament director of the Workday Charity Open and part of the rules and competition team with the PGA TOUR. Gary, the reason we had you in here is this is a really unique situation this week playing two events back-to-back on the same golf course. It hasn't happened for a long time; 1957 I think was the last time. Can you just give us some explanation about that situation and perhaps talk about some of the differences between the weeks?

GARY YOUNG: Yeah, sure. Well, we're certainly treating the two weeks very differently. I think this week here we're going to have to be a little bit cautious with the golf course, certainly out of respect to Mr. Nicklaus and the Memorial Tournament being next week. You know, this week here we have an opportunity to present the golf course in a different way. You're probably going to see a more receptive golf course, one where the greens will certainly be receptive. We're going to have to be cautious with the heat and certainly put a little bit more water than we normally would, knowing that we've got to carry this golf course through a two-week period.

I just think it's going to give us a chance to really highlight the golf course being played in two different ways. We're going to have the green speeds a little bit different where our target speed is 11-and-a-half feet this week, where next week we'll be above 13, and you'll probably see that we will slowly, over the course of the four days, ramp up the speed on the greens towards that 12-foot number. But it will be a gradual slowing.

And Chad Mark and his team have done a great job, along with Thomas Bastis from the PGA TOUR agronomy staff, really getting things ready for this two-week period.

**Q. Gary, can you fine tune that just a little more in terms of exactly how you're going to make them look different, maybe shorter tees, rough? Is it sort of a fun challenge for you?**

GARY YOUNG: Yeah, I would expect that the golf course,

again, scoring will probably be a little bit lower this week, given the fact that the greens will be a little bit more receptive. The rough you mentioned, the rough will be at three-and-a-half inches. That's where we've topped it on Monday. Probably not going to mow the rough the rest of the week. We'll probably reassess it next Monday before the beginning of the Memorial Tournament.

But as far as distance goes, we will use some different tees, and I think we will vary that. We'll play some tees from all the way back, we'll play some shorter tees. You might also see on the weekend where on the 14th hole we may try that as a drivable par-4.

They did that during the Presidents Cup the last time it was here, and it played out pretty well. We haven't done it during the Memorial Tournament in recent years, but you know, I think you're going to see some fun this week creating some different angles on teeing grounds. Certainly the par-3s, playing those at different yardages. It's all about variety.

**Q. How many different new pin placements do you think you can look at setting up?**

GARY YOUNG: You know, it's really a challenge during the Memorial Tournament when the greens get above 13 on the stimpmeter. We're usually finding the most level areas within those quadrants.

I think having the greens in that 11-and-a-half to 12 range will probably allow us to shy away. It's hard to put a number on it. Ken Tackett is going to be the setup person on the back nine of the golf course both weeks, so he's going to have a great opportunity to make sure he doesn't paint himself into a corner for the Memorial Tournament. He'll be able to this week really kind of figure out based on the forecast, whether we have precipitation predicted, winds predicted.

I don't think we have any big winds this week. But you may see us go to some locations that have a little more slope than we've been able to go to in the past, and sometimes it may end up being only a few feet, but these players are all about memory recall on these putts, and they're going to see some hole locations that maybe they don't have that memory recall. So they may end up playing more difficult. It'll be interesting to watch the scoring.



**Q. A couple players have talked about their fear that basically there's going to be everybody hitting into the same place on the fairways for two weeks in a row, that they're afraid of an excess of divots that could be out there. How much of that is a concern for you guys and how much are you looking at alleviating that?**

GARY YOUNG: Well, it certainly is a concern, but I think that the grounds crew here does an excellent job. That's kind of one of the reasons why we decided to not have Monday practice rounds both weeks. They can practice at the practice facility only. We're just trying to cut down on that number of divots out there.

But it is inevitable. That is probably the biggest concern that we have. But I think ultimately in the end, the staff here does such a great job and our agronomy team. I think we'll be fine. We'll have to really vary some of those teeing grounds to spread that out a bit.

But that is a legitimate concern.

**Q. Was there any consultation with Jack on how to set up both weeks?**

GARY YOUNG: No. The short answer on that one is no. You know, Mr. Nicklaus has always kind of stayed out of the setup. He very much likes to leave that up to our staff, and although in the past he might from time to time have a little bit of input, I'm not aware of any that he's had. This has been primarily Steve Rintoul, who has been our advance official here for the Memorial Tournament for probably a dozen years, Steve in conjunction with Dillard Pruitt, who is the advance official this week. They've worked really hard at trying to present a golf course that's going to have a lot of variety, and obviously when we talk about the setup, we're talking about varying the height of the rough, the speed of the greens. I don't know that Mr. Nicklaus has had any input on that. He's just kind of left it up to them to figure out.

**Q. If you throw out any type of wild weather, wind or anything, what would be your best guess on a difference in scoring, a winning score for both weeks? And I won't hold you to it, as far as you know.**

GARY YOUNG: Well, with the absence of wind, I would say this week could be -- it's still going to be a difficult golf course, but high teens, and I would expect next week to be more towards that 12-under range, 12 to 14. That would be my guess, best guess.

**Q. And then lastly, for this week, is there any one setup for a whole or a shot that you're most curious**

**about, excited about?**

GARY YOUNG: Well, I mentioned the 14th hole, making that drivable on the weekend. I'm anxious to see how that plays out. Also the par-3 4th hole, we have struggled to get a hole location on the right side of that green at all in the past. There's a hole location that's about 10 paces on to the green, six from the right, that would be a very interesting hole location. I think we'll be able to achieve that during week one.

**Q. With the slower greens?**

GARY YOUNG: Yeah, with the slower greens. I think you're going to see -- like I said, I think the setup guys will have some opportunities to go to some of those locations that have just been a hair too slopey in the past. With the 11-and-a-half to 12 range, I think we can do it, and it might provide some pretty good entertainment.

**Q. Guys most likely to complain this week or next?**

GARY YOUNG: I would say if they were playing this week and next week, you know, it's certainly going to play more difficult next week, so I would expect the complaints to come out then. They're going to need to make the adjustment. That's what it's all about. We did not want two cookie-cutter style weeks. We wanted the golf course to show its variety.

THE MODERATOR: Gary, we'll ask your opinion the last four weeks. The average score has been something like 20-under, the winning score. From your perspective, has there been any reason for that? Is it just these guys are playing really well, or is it the way the courses are set up?

GARY YOUNG: I think overall, other than Colonial, we've been to some golf courses that have had some soft conditions coming in, certainly softer than we would have liked. Travelers comes to mind. We'd had a lot of thunderstorms that time of year. I just think the opportunities have been there for scoring just because we have not been able to provide the firm, fast conditions that we hope to provide each week.

Going forward, hopefully we have that opportunity. This week, like I said, we're going to have to manage the heat this week. It's going to be difficult with the temperatures over 90 for as many days in a row as they have been. They need to get it this week. Next week the opportunity might not be there. It might start to firm up a bit.

THE MODERATOR: It's been a lot of years, as we mentioned at the top, that this has happened back-to-back weeks at the same venue. Do you foresee that happening

in the future at all?

GARY YOUNG: Certainly unusual circumstances here we're operating in. I would not rule it out. I mean, if the opportunity is there, certainly logistically from the TOUR's perspective, it works out well when you have a lot of moving parts like we do and you've got a great venue like this. It certainly is a great opportunity, and I think that it was nice that we had this available to us, a course of this stature. Having two weeks here is a big plus for everyone. But I wouldn't rule anything out in the future.

**Q. I'm just curious, the caddies, are they wearing those little white coveralls or do they have different bibs? In other words, is everything from the Memorial being applied this week or none of it?**

GARY YOUNG: They have bibs this week, their traditional caddie bib. Normally when the heat index gets above 95, we make that an optional thing for the caddie. We did it at Colonial and for the Charles Schwab, and to be honest with you, they had the option to not wear it because of the heat, and they ended up wearing it just because out of convenience. They're so used to operating with that, with all those pockets. We'll have traditional bibs.

**Q. I'm curious about what particular stresses course setup has as you prepare to have fans for the first TOUR event next week. Is there anything you guys are thinking through that normally you wouldn't have to think through because of the anticipation of having fans for the first time this summer?**

GARY YOUNG: Yeah, unfortunately the decision was made to not have fans next week here.

**Q. I missed that.**

GARY YOUNG: That's all right. There certainly was a lot of planning that went into it, but unfortunately, it's not going to happen.

THE MODERATOR: Gary, thank you for making the time to come in and chat with us, and good luck this next week, as well.

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