

The Memorial Tournament Presented By Workday

Tuesday, May 31, 2022

Dublin, Ohio, USA

Muirfield Village

Jack Nicklaus

Press Conference

DOUG MILNE: We'd like to welcome the tournament host, Mr. Jack Nicklaus, of the Memorial Tournament presented by Workday. Thanks for joining us for a few minutes. 47th edition, full capacity this year, a lot of good things to look forward to and coming off a good one last year with Patrick Cantlay adding to the list of wonderful champions of the tournament. Just a few opening comments from you if we could.

JACK NICKLAUS: Okay, well, last year after we redid the golf course, we couldn't do the things we wanted to do with the golf course to get it properly prepared for the tournament. The grass was too young and everything else, but I think we were extremely successful in having a good presentation last year.

This year now that we've had a year of maturity, the fairways are excellent. The greens are -- the guys were coming in today and telling me how firm they were. I like firm greens, but I don't like ridiculous greens. I like them so that if you play a good shot, you're rewarded and the ball will take it right out a little bit, but it won't hit and go.

Chad, are you listening to me? Chad Mark, our superintendent back here.

A bad shot is not rewarded but a good shot is.

So the greens are that way. The rough is not particularly thick this year. I don't know why that is, but I think there's plenty of it. Certainly around the greens there's plenty of it.

The golf course is excellent. I even played it. I played it for the first time. I played it Saturday and Sunday, and I hadn't been playing last year. I didn't play golf last year. Anyway, I cruised it around Sunday in 84. That was pretty good for me. Wow, that's pretty good, right? Yeah, without making a putt, without making a birdie.

Anyway, the golf course is good. As we say, we're going to have full crowds this year. Yesterday we had a pretty nice crowd, on Monday, yesterday. Tomorrow I think we're



PRESENTED BY



expecting a big crowd. I think Workday is -- Aneel Bhusri who's back in the back here, has gotten a star-studded field of athletes and personalities coming in tomorrow, so I think people will love to see that, so we're going to have a good day there. And the golf course is ready for Thursday.

Q. Jack, 47 years -- you've talked about this before -- but can you take us back to the vision for this tournament, and has it exceeded your expectations? What did you want to achieve? Was this a combination of giving back to Columbus and your own design?

JACK NICKLAUS: You've known me long enough, nothing ever exceeds my expectations. I've continued to try to do better. But I think the tournament has done fantastic. We started back -- we started the tournament in -- '76, I guess, was the first year of the tournament. We started out to do a tournament for the central Ohio area and around, to bring golf back here to a place where I was supported as a youngster, to thank them for all that they did for my life. And part of what that was, I wanted to bring first class golf here.

Ohio State football at that time was -- six Ohio State football times, wasn't much else happening in this town, didn't have any other professional sports except a AAA baseball team. I don't even remember what they were back then. They might have been the Clippers back then, I don't know. Doesn't make any difference.

We wanted to bring that in, and then Joe Dye worked with me, the first commissioner, and we came up with the idea of memorializing the great players of the past. We decided to do that but to form a captains' club, people who have been very influential in the game of golf, throughout the game of golf for many years. So we started out with a captains' club, which is who's who in the game, and we're still who's who in the game today.

That part is pretty good. It's continued to grow. We're honoring Ben Crenshaw this year, which is certainly very deserved. I feel like the tournament has continued to grow each year. Nationwide was a great sponsor for us. Nationwide did a good job because we were really supporting that hospital. Nationwide is still involved in the



tournament as a beneficiary, and they're still involved in a variety of things.

But with Workday coming in and the enthusiasm that Aneel is showing for the tournament and for what we're doing -- to bring in the cast of people that we have for tomorrow is fantastic. I've only met two of the three Peyton boys, but now I'm going to meet all three Peyton boys tomorrow. I mean Manning boys, I'm sorry, Peyton, Eli, and Cooper. I guess Cooper has got a son that's pretty good that Ohio State might want to be looking at.

Anyway, I think that we've grown very well. I think we've continued to grow -- you know, but the game of golf itself has grown. If you look at every tournament that we keep having, they seem to be getting better every year. Not only are we getting better, but everybody else is, too. It's a competition for the players that's getting better. We've got a great field this year. We've no qualms about that.

Not everybody is going to come and play because we've got so many good tournaments all around us, but we've got a great field, and I think we've grown continually -- I think Workday will help us grow beyond where we are and continue to grow the tournament as we've been trying to grow it.

Q. Was there ever a question, was it always going to be Muirfield Village, the course? Did you ever think of connecting with Scioto where you grew up and having a tournament there or was it I'm going to build this course --

JACK NICKLAUS: No, Scioto was not equipped to do this, to start with. Scioto is a wonderful golf course, and I grew up there. I haven't seen the new one. I hope to slip down there this week and see it.

When we started this -- let's go back. I'll even go back to 1966 sitting at the Masters. That was the year when Bob Barton came down and he flew down and died in a plane crash, he and his wife Linda. I was sitting around with Ivor Young and reflecting on what a great tournament the Masters was and wouldn't it be great to bring something like this back to Columbus. We didn't think about Scioto. Ivor just started looking for property. And he went around and looked for 10 or 11 different pieces of property he found in Columbus.

The first piece I looked at was this property right here, and it was sort of the section of where three, five, one, two -- sort of in there, maybe it was about 100 some acres. Then we added in another 100 acres which is just on the north side of the Kershevski (phonetic) piece and then we added in the 1,100-some acres I brought from a group in

Cincinnati, which took us back 11 and 12, 15, 14, those holes.

Ended up getting 1,156 acres or something like that, and we ended up saying, what do we want to do with this. Well, if I'd have had my druthers, I probably wouldn't have had housing. But you couldn't possibly financially do it without it.

So we did a public offering through the Ohio Company for -- \$9 million was what the offering was for, of which \$2.45 million was for the golf course and clubhouse. \$2.45 million to build a golf course and clubhouse. Well, I spent obviously the \$2.45 million on the golf course. I then made a trade with the developer and said, okay, I want the golf course, you can have the development. I wasn't interested in what was around the golf course. I wish I would have saved some extra land for parking and so forth because we ended up having to go and buy extra land later.

But we didn't do that. You don't really realize what you're going to do to start with.

What the devil was it -- so we decided -- they took that, and then I structured a deal with the membership that they had from 1974 till 2004 to buy the golf course back from me at the amount of money that I had in the land, which I don't mind telling you was \$445,000. So the membership bought this golf course back from me for \$445,000. That was back in the day when the Japanese were offering \$100 and \$200 million for golf courses, and I said no thank you, this is not going anywhere, it's staying right here.

They approached me, so I said no, I'm not interested in that. I'm interested in one thing. I'm interested in the Memorial Tournament and doing it properly. I wanted it to be the membership.

The other thing is I structured it so Jack Nicklaus couldn't make a profit from this. That's why I sold the club for what I did and why I didn't get into the development. I didn't want all the guys who were my contemporaries coming in here and saying, look, Jack is profiting off of us. I didn't want that. So I can honestly open my mouth to the guys that I played golf against and say, Jack Nicklaus never got a penny, so that was all put together on purpose.

Does that give you enough? That's the best off the top of my head, okay. (Laughter).

Q. Jack, as you look at the talent that's on the PGA TOUR right now, does it surprise you how good these kids are? These young lions every week.

JACK NICKLAUS: It's unbelievable that you look back on



the PGA TOUR right now -- when I played I thought we had a pretty good group of players. Just before us was the Hogan, Snead, Nelson era, then Arnold came along and it sort of dropped a little bit. Then Gary came along and I came along, so we built it back up, Trevino, Watson, Weiskopf, Miller, et cetera, we had a -- when I played, I thought we had a pretty darned good bunch of guys. Maybe 20 guys who could win a golf tournament.

All of a sudden, the TOUR -- it's not just the U.S. Tour anymore. This is a world Tour -- this world Tour has guys coming from everywhere in the world that are the best players from everywhere in the world that are now making their living and living in the United States. They're good. They're really good.

Tiger kept them down for a while, and then -- he kept winning every week and nobody could learn how to win. Well, all of a sudden when Tiger got hurt -- this was a while back -- and when Tiger got hurt, all of a sudden these young guys while Tiger was away for a couple years learned how to win golf tournaments. That all of a sudden sort of fueled some of these other young guys to say, hey, if these guys can do it, I can do it, too.

Right now I think we have more good players in the game of golf on the PGA TOUR than we have ever had in the history of the game, and I think it's wonderful.

Q. 18 majors, we thought Tiger might have a shot --

JACK NICKLAUS: Still think he might.

Q. With that said --

JACK NICKLAUS: I would never count him out, incidentally, of anything.

Q. With that said, do you ever sit back and just think about what you accomplished in your career?

JACK NICKLAUS: No. I really don't. And I don't mean that in a flippant way. What I mean is I've never looked back on what I did as something -- golf is a game to me, and I played the game and I played the game well. I enjoy the game. I love the game. Competition was what I played and what I really liked.

I loved being able to compete against these guys. Whether I walked away with 18 or 12 or 25, that was not important to me. What was important to me was that I prepared myself, I played well, and played a game the right way.

Now, the other thing that was far more important to me

actually than the game of golf was my family. To me, I was blessed with a good partner with Barbara, still am. She still puts up with me -- sometimes. I'm blessed with that. I've got five children, 22 grandchildren, three great-grandchildren now. And that to me is the most important part of my life. And of course sitting here, though, it's not because of my family. I am sitting here because I made a few four-foot putts, because it would have never happened without making a few four-foot putts, maybe a few 20-footers, too, along the way.

But anyway, that's my most important thing.

I think that's -- and then what we've been doing with that the last few years is the charitable of what Nationwide Children's Hospital has grown to be, been our financial recipient from this tournament from day one, what we've done in Florida with Nicklaus Children's Hospital in Miami and up and down the coast. And with Barbara -- it's changed my life. I've really enjoyed it. I've loved it. I spend a ton of time on the charity stuff because I like it. I love seeing the results, seeing these kids and seeing how they are.

Every tournament on the TOUR has this now. When we started, charity was not a big deal. Now charity is a -- 2, 4, 8, 12, 15 million dollars a year sometimes in these tournaments that go to help people.

Golf has done this. Golf has been able to do that. No other sport can do what we've done.

Q. As much as I've heard you talk about competition, it just made me curious, is there a difference in your eyes between your love of competition and your love of beating people, of winning?

JACK NICKLAUS: Oh, I think a little bit of both. Yeah, I love winning, obviously. Everybody loves to win. Nobody likes to lose. But the way I look at -- you come back to my 19 seconds in majors, and I look at the 19 seconds in the majors and I don't have any problem with those.

Early on, I gave away the '60 Open at Cherry Hills. I then gave away the '63 British Open, and I shouldn't have given either one of those tournaments away. But they were both learning experiences for me that allowed me to learn from them and be better the next time that I came out.

I think that's really important. I think that you learn from what you do. As long as I had properly prepared, as long as I had done the best I could do, and if somebody beat me, well done. That's sort of the way I looked at it, and that was the way to look at it.



Q. There's been a great kind of disruption in golf as I'm sure you're well aware, a threat from Greg Norman's group that they're getting ready to start. There were some comments you had in a Michael Bamberger piece and just being the first time we've seen you, I wonder how that conversation with you came about, and what was your reaction to it?

JACK NICKLAUS: Which conversation?

Q. You had mentioned --

JACK NICKLAUS: Michael called me and I talked to him.

Q. And he mentioned in the story that they had offered you a job that Greg now has. I'm curious how that conversation with that group came about and your reaction to it.

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, they obviously called me. And we've had a contract on a golf course in Saudi Arabia for over a couple of years. Essentially the same group.

So when they called Jackie -- my son Jackie organized the meeting, and they came into the Bear's Club. We met a couple of guys. John Rees and Paul Stringer from the Nicklaus companies were there because we were doing the golf course, and they proposed this thing to me.

You know, I did it out of courtesy to them because we're doing a golf course for them. I've got zero interest in wanting to do something like that. I don't care what kind of money they would have thrown at me. My allegiance has been to the PGA TOUR. I grew up on the PGA TOUR. I helped found the PGA TOUR as it is today.

My allegiance is there and it's going to stay there.

Q. Following up on that, with the intricacies of this LIV Golf TOUR and the PGA TOUR's protection of its business, ultimately what do you hope comes out of this that benefits the game, its players and of course the fans?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, I've been -- one of my big things has always been to grow the game of golf. If this helps grow the game of golf, you know, I don't have any -- what difference does it make to me where our players are coming from? They're coming from all over the world.

If it grows the game and benefits some people and spreads the game, fine. But I think we've had enough of that. Let's talk about the Memorial Tournament.

Q. With Justin Thomas not playing this year, and you

get players who can't make it every year, I'm just curious given his connection with you, how much he likes spending time with you, it seems to me like he's trying to play the week before majors this year. I was curious if he had a conversation with you.

JACK NICKLAUS: Yeah, JT called me. He called Barbara, then called me. He called the boss first because he knew if he could get by her, he could get by me.

Anyway, JT called and he said, I hate making this phone call. You know how much I love Muirfield and I love your tournament and I love what you're doing and the things you and I have been involved in together. I said, I know that. He says, but I tried something before the PGA; I played the week before, and I won the tournament. He said, I think I should do that again.

I said, well, I don't want to wish you bad luck, but I hope it's an unsuccessful experiment. I said, no, no, I'm just kidding. Don't write that down. I shouldn't say that. (Laughter.)

I said that to him. I said, JT, I understand; I had the same situation when I was your age. Everybody wanted us to play everywhere, and you can't play everywhere.

I understand. I said, I know that you'll be back. So I just wished him good luck. Go play. I'm saddened by him not playing. He's from this area. His grandfather, Zanesville, they grew up in basically Kentucky-Ohio border or Indiana border. He's been around this area.

He knows and likes our golf course, though. But everybody can't play.

Q. You've now redone this golf course and reimagined it to make it stronger. At the risk of sort of getting away from that a little bit, but related to it, the USGA and the R&A of course are looking at the golf ball and equipment and so forth, and I know that it's going to impact Muirfield Village, Augusta National, wherever, going forward. What would you like to see them eventually do? There's a comment period until September. I'm sure you probably have some thoughts --

JACK NICKLAUS: I'm not even familiar with what you're talking about, but I will tell you I have talked with the R&A and the USGA, and they both -- and when Mike Whan came down and talked to me and said, what do you think, I said, I think your plan is -- the first time I've seen you moving forward in the right direction. I think your plan is sensible, and I think it'll work. It's just going to take a couple years to get it in.

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

We just have to -- there's a million different ways the USGA or the R&A can get this done. I'm simply referring to the golf ball essentially. They're finally actually doing something.

The problem is that it's going to take until about 2026 to implement everything simply because of the agreements they have with the manufacturers. But they're getting there. I hope I'm still above ground to look at it when it happens.

Q. Jack, what happens if the PGA TOUR isn't necessarily in line with what you're talking about, what the USGA and R&A want to do, when they decide to have a local rule that basically allows players to play the equipment they're playing today? What would you feel about that, especially --

JACK NICKLAUS: That's not my issue. My issue is that the PGA TOUR doesn't make the rules of the game. The R&A and the USGA -- if the PGA tear wants to vary from that, and they haven't, I don't expect them to. So we'll -- but that's not for me to answer. I think that's a Jay Monahan question. I think Jay could answer that a lot better than I could.

Q. Now that sports gambling is legal in the state of Ohio and online sports books will be operational in the near future, do you think that's a good thing for this event, that starting next year people will be able to place bets from their phone around the course, and do you personally plan to place any wagers on the Buckeyes this fall?

JACK NICKLAUS: I'll tell you, I've placed my one and only bet on the game of golf. First of all, let me tell you, it's the way of the times. We're part of it. I think they offered it to, what, nine organizations within state of Ohio or something and we were the one golf tournament, so we're involved in that.

If we don't do it, somebody else is going to do it, and it's better to be involved where you control something where there was someplace you can't control.

My one and only wager I made in the game, I was 20 years old, I was playing the U.S. Open at Cherry Hills, and my dad came to me and he said, Jack -- I'm an amateur now, this is June. I'm getting married in July. He goes, Jack, you're 35 to 1. Do you want some of that? Dad, I'll take \$20 of that.

So I took \$20. He said, do you want win, place or show. I said, I'm not here for place or show.

So I'm coming down the stretch at the U.S. Open as a 20-year old amateur. I'm thinking about the \$700 that I might make to go start our marriage. Well, I didn't win, so I didn't get the \$700. I lost my \$20, my one and only bet in golf.

I hope I answered your question.

Q. Are you going to place any bets on the Buckeyes?

JACK NICKLAUS: I have never placed a bet on the Buckeyes. I just wish them well. I had dinner with Ryan Day the other night, first time I had actually met Ryan. What a nice young man. I would call him a young man. Got his head screwed on great. He says he's looking forward to this year. He's going to have a good team.

Q. You had many more similar runs than Scottie Scheffler has been on lately. What is it like when you're on a run similar to the one that Scheffler is on right now?

JACK NICKLAUS: It's a whole lot of fun. Scottie has played really well. You can't play everywhere, and he's a Texas guy, and I would have loved to have had him here. He finished third here last year. He'll be back.

When you're doing something like that and you feel like -- it's such a great feeling, that you're going out and you know that if you just go out and just play your game, you're going to be in the hunt at the end. That's pretty good. That's where he is right now. He knows he's going to be somewhere near. If he gets his "A" game out there, he's going to probably win. Pretty good feeling. I loved it. (Laughter.)

Q. You talk about the strength of the field, how important that is to this event. I wonder if any players decide to move on from the TOUR and put their status in jeopardy, if that would risk their invitational status to this event?

JACK NICKLAUS: I don't know what you're talking about. You'd better start over because I can't catch any of what you were saying.

Q. If a player opts to move on from the TOUR and join a competing Tour, does that put their invitation at risk at all to this event?

JACK NICKLAUS: I don't think that's -- the PGA TOUR will answer that. I don't think that's my question, frankly. We live by the rules of whatever the PGA TOUR is. That's what we do.



Q. Why are you playing so much golf?

JACK NICKLAUS: You know, honest to goodness, that's a pretty good question. That's probably the most important question I've had today. (Laughter.)

About two weeks ago, I took Jackie and J3, his son, and Charlie, who is one of his boys, up to Augusta. I had played a scramble, an odd three or four holes here or there. But inflammation has been my problem, and most of the inflammation I seem for some reason to have gotten out of me. I said, okay, I can play with you guys.

Really, you're going to play with us? I said, yeah. So I played nine holes. He said, we'll see you after. I said, what do you mean? I'm going to play the back nine. I whizzed it around and shot a slick 88 without a birdie, which I haven't made birdie yet this year incidentally.

But I enjoyed it. I said, well, I'm going to see if I can play again tomorrow. I played again the next day. Why am I playing? I don't know. I'm tired of not playing, I think. I really love to play golf. I don't enjoy playing golf the way I've been playing, that's for sure. But when you start to feel a little bit better -- I even hit a few shots that were pretty good on Sunday out here. I had a tee shot out at 17, I knocked it, what, 30 yards by those bunkers? From the ladies' tees -- excuse me, the forward tees.

You know, I enjoyed it. I had a chance to shoot my age both days, and I choked.

I don't know why I'm playing. I'm going to continue to play. You've got to do something for crying out loud. I've been sitting around feeling sorry for myself because I haven't been able to do anything. It's time to get out and do something.

Q. Where was the inflammation?

JACK NICKLAUS: Oh, everywhere, just arthritis and swelling. My ankles are all swollen up and I've gotten the swelling out of my ankles, which -- it's probably taken 20 pounds of water out of me.

When you've got inflammation everywhere, you just can't move. I'm doing very well. I feel better than I've felt in a long time.

Q. Will you let us know when you make your first birdie this year?

JACK NICKLAUS: You'll be the first to know.

Q. Did someone hit for the albatross at Augusta?

JACK NICKLAUS: I didn't even mention that. On the second day, we got to the 15th hole, and the boys played a mixture of front tees and back tees, going back and forth. I play far forward -- I have forward tees at Augusta. I don't know where Condoleezza Rice plays from, but she's got to play the same tees back here that the members play, and that's too long. Half the membership out there is over 80 years old. I don't know how they play the golf course. I'm serious actually. It's tough.

Anyway, we got around to 15 and I said, guys, you don't want to play that new tee, you'll be laying it up. So they played the back -- the next tee up. J3 hit a really nice drive down there, and they had the pins in every tough pin placement you could -- far left on 15, far left on 14. He birdied 14, too. Far right on 12, far back as you could get it on 11. All the tournament -- I don't know why -- I should never tell them I'm coming there because they do that to me all the time.

Anyway, we got down there and he killed a drive and played an 8-iron, hit just to the right of the pin, ball trickled down, boom, into the hole. Everybody is cheering, yelling, so forth. Went down and took our picture by the Sarazen Bridge. Has anybody made a 2 since Sarazen did? I'm sure somebody had to, but I don't know.

Q. An anonymous guy on media day in '93 made it but nobody ever found out who he was because he probably wasn't supposed to be out there.

JACK NICKLAUS: Yeah, could be. Nobody else that you know of, right? J3 has got it, Jackie.

Q. Out of your 18 holes at Augusta, is there one shot that you can remember that you looked at and said, wow, that's pretty nice?

JACK NICKLAUS: It's hard for me to find one. Let's see. That I thought were really good shots?

Okay, I hit one -- I usually play a pretty good shot at 16. I hit a couple shots at 16 that were pretty good, inside 20 feet, 15 feet. Still didn't make any putts.

Let's see. I think the round was really not very memorable. (Laughter.)

Q. I was at the PGA Seniors last week and talking to some guys about when they might want to stop playing professionally. What was the thing that made you decide to make that decision?

JACK NICKLAUS: I stopped making birdies. Pretty simple. Pretty simple. When you stop making birdies and shooting 60-something, it's time to go do something else.

I guess the last tournament I won was 1996. That was the Tradition. That was also the largest purse I ever won in a tournament, \$150,000 first prize. Biggest purse I ever had on the regular Tour was the Masters in '86, 144.

But anyway, I started to play -- I'd finish fifth or tenth or 25th or whatever it might be, and I just didn't really feel it was necessary to waste time out there doing that and take a place up from somebody else. You've got a lot of young guys that are turning 50 -- I call them young guys -- and it's time for them to come play. As I say, did I want to play an odd tournament here and there? Maybe, but I guess I played up until -- well, the last tournament I played was obviously St Andrews in 2005. I was 65. The Senior Tour prior to that I might have played -- from 60 to 65, I might have played three or four tournaments. That would be about it.

Q. Ben Crenshaw, co-honoree. Who is the best putter you ever saw, played against, and what makes a player a great putter?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, I'll answer that question a couple ways. There's a lot of guys -- not a lot, but several guys. Crenshaw, Faxon, I suppose I would fall in that category, Palmer, Player, Watson.

A guy becomes a great player when he makes putts when he has to make them. All those guys, including Ben and myself and everybody, made them when we had to make them. That to me is what makes -- it's speaking of pressure. The thing that sort of guided my career, 1959, the U.S. Amateur at Broadmoor, I had an eight-footer at the last hole to win and beat Charlie Coe 1-up. We were all even coming to the last hole. I made that putt.

Well, that told me that I could make a putt under pressure when it really counted for a significant event. That to me was the most important putt I ever made. Winning breeds winning, so then you do it again, you do it again. Pretty soon you can't wait to get to the 18th hole to do it again.

All those guys, they all picked their times, but they all did it at the time that they needed to do it.

Now, to pick one of them? It's pretty difficult. I'm not going to pick myself, but I thought I was a pretty good putter. I'm not going to pick Arnold, but I thought Arnold was a pretty darned good putter. And I'm not going to pick Ben, but Ben was a pretty darned good putter. They were all pretty good putters at different times and in different circumstances.

Q. Hogan, I don't think he had a whole lot of use for putting at the end. It kind of dropped off --

JACK NICKLAUS: Yeah, Hogan -- I played with Hogan in 1960, and that was a period when he was sort of freezing over the ball. He might stand there for 20 seconds over a putt and not move a muscle with the putter sitting on the ground behind the ball and then hit it.

But he somehow got -- he got enough putts in the hole in the U.S. Open in 1960 where I played and where I almost won. He made a ton of putts. But he also missed a ton of putts.

And then I don't really remember -- the last time I played with Hogan was the last round of the Masters in '66 where I won, and I don't remember what he did, but he played a really good round the day before to get himself in that position.

But Hogan was -- he had to be a good player at times. He was not long. He was long but not long by today's standards, but he figured out how to get it in the hall.

Q. Did you ever have anything similar with putting where you were just kind of --

JACK NICKLAUS: No, I did not. Where I couldn't draw it back? No, I never had any of that. I was very, very fortunate.

Q. How and why did you decide to take your preparation for majors to a higher level, and what was the first major you won where you thought, wow, my preparation for that was a big reason why I won?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, I go back to 1962. I played -- and nothing against Greensboro, mind you, because I enjoyed playing there. But I played Greensboro in '62 and didn't win the Masters. I finished 14th or something.

I skipped Greensboro in '63 and won the Masters because I went in the week before and practiced at Augusta.

'64 I liked Greensboro so I went back to Greensboro. I didn't win the Masters.

'65 I didn't go to Greensboro and went in the week before and prepared, and I won. I did the same thing in '66. Huh, how about that.

So I started looking at things, and sort of the light goes off and you think about, yeah, this is what I did and this is why, this is the result I got. A little bit like Justin Thomas. He

wanted to play the week before. I don't think that's the proper preparation. Gary Player in 1965 was -- he was up at the house and we were talking about the open at Bellerive coming up, and I said, Gary, give yourself a chance, go the week before, go with me and we'll go practice at Bellerive and see what -- so he says, Jack, I can't afford to -- I'm over here for just a few weeks, I can't afford to give up a week and go practice. I said, if you win the U.S. Open you can.

So Gary went with me to Bellerive, and sadly for me, he won. I wasn't in contention, though. I guess he beat Kel Nagle in a playoff or by a shot. Gary never did that again. Gary might have won more majors if he had gone back and prepared for them, but he was a young guy who still -- he wanted to get back home to his family and stuff, and I can understand that.

Q. Were you surprised that other players didn't follow your lead --

JACK NICKLAUS: Some do. Some do now. They do it in a little different way. A lot of times I would have something that I really had to play or felt like I should play before a major. Well, I'd go in there two weeks before and I'd spend three or four days doing what I wanted to do then, get my preparation out of the way. And then -- I played Westchester several times, which was before the U.S. Open. I don't remember whether I won after playing Westchester or not in the Open, but I did that and then I'd go to the Open first.

I did that when I won at Oakmont frankly. I went into Oakmont and played a couple of days before I went over to the Thunderbird, which was at Upper Montclair in '62, and I finished second in Upper Montclair and then won the next week.

DOUG MILNE: Thank you so much your time. We look forward to a wonderful week.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports