

The Memorial Tournament Presented By Workday

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Dublin, Ohio, USA

Muirfield Village

Collin Morikawa

Press Conference



PRESENTED BY



THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Collin Morikawa to the interview room here at the 2024 Memorial Tournament Presented By Workday. Collin, we're back at the site of your 2020 Workday Charity Open win. What do you like about the course here at Muirfield Village?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I love it. I mean, it's a golf course that tests everything. You could say that about a lot of golf course, but it truly does. The rough's thick, the greens can get pretty firm out here, depending on weather, and there's not a lot to just kind of get away and get lazy with on any holes. The par-5s play tough. They're gettable, but they can still play tough. That's the great thing about this golf course is from hole 1 you're staying focused all the way through the 18th.

THE MODERATOR: Olympic rankings came up today and you are currently listed as the fourth highest-ranked American. What would it mean to you to represent the United States in Paris for the Olympics this year?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, I got that opportunity a few years ago in Tokyo, and a very different Olympics, I think everyone would agree with that, but any time you have that opportunity and you have that chance you want it, knowing how tough it is to make the U.S. team especially, or really any other team. I realize there's two weeks, so, you know, it's part of my focus, but at the end of the day the goal this week is to win and come out on top on Sunday. So that's kind of what we're trying to do and prep for.

THE MODERATOR: All right. We'll open it up for questions.

Q. Jack Nicklaus was in here yesterday and suggested that he did the TOUR a favor by moving the tournament a week later because they asked him to fit into the schedule. Suggesting that the players had said that they would like to have this Signature Event, then a major, and then another Signature Event behind it. What's your thoughts on that, A, and B, if Jack had said, I'll do it for one year, but I would like to move it

back, would you be in support of that?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I mean, look, I'll play this tournament no matter when it is, to be honest. I think it's one of my favorite events. It's an event that I've played well at. I would say, you know, this year -- I went into this year, I added San Antonio because I wanted to play the week before the Masters. I wanted to play every week before a major this year. So I played San Antonio before PGA, we had Wells Fargo this week. So it lines up and it was kind of just a way for me to get -- not warmed up for a major, but to just get an extra tournament rep.

So I'm for it. I mean, if he wanted to move it back, I'm also for that. It wouldn't really change anything. We'll see how the prep goes in comparison to next year's major, whether I want to play the week before or not, but I think for me, you can always count me in on playing this event. So whether it's before or after or, you know, a week before or the week prior, I don't think it make that's big of a difference.

Q. I wanted to follow up on the Olympic question. Have you been following it? Like, do you even like look at the math at all to see? I guess it's you and Cantlay that are pretty close right now?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I mean, Cantlay is right behind. I think there's still six, seven, eight guys right behind us as well, and with the way the points all work and then you have this week, which is a lot, next week's a major, I think a lot of movement can happen. So, look, I knew -- let's call it two, three months ago where I stood, and I knew I had to start playing some good golf and we've played some good golf to put myself in contention. So at the end of the day, these next two weeks are going to be big and I know what's at stake.

Like I said, we've had other things that I've had to play for, whether it's Ryder Cups or Presidents Cups, you know, you're on the inside of the six, you're on outside of the six. All of that, it's all added things that you think about, but you got to be strong enough mentally to just not worry about that when you tee off.

Q. I wanted to ask you about last weekend, the clinic that did you with Tiger. I'm just wondering, sort of



from your perspective, when you watch him hit shots, if you didn't know all the physical issues he is going through, would he look like he could be as competitive as ever out here and do you think about like how tough that must be?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, I mean, he was making fun of me not being able to hit a draw, so I hit a draw, it was like a 5-yard draw. And then he hit a hook and I swear he was aiming like 3 feet from the line of people that were on the right side. The skill and the feel is still all there, right? So you wouldn't know. But you add that over time, over 18 holes, over a course of 72 holes, the entire week of prep, look, the guy's been through a lot. I'm very lucky to have that opportunity to go and do something like that, to talk to him, to hang out, because you go back and you look at your 15-year-old self, your 10-year-old self and you say, yeah, you're going to go spend a few hours with Tiger playing poker, hitting golf balls on the range, picking his brain, screwing around, like, that's -- you know, that's a dream, right? So that's pretty cool.

Q. You've clearly won here in the past, but you didn't win Jack's event and at Jack's event every champion gets greeted at the 18th green with a handshake. I'm curious what that moment, if you were to win on Sunday, how you would take that in with the handshake?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Oh, it would be so special. Look, what Jack has done for this game, what his voice does, what he represents, it's a lot. You can't replace history, you can't replace someone like that, so to have that chance hopefully come Sunday, it would mean the world. Like I said, talking about Tiger, it's the same thing talking about Jack. Yes, you know, he was a little bit before I got into golf, but history is history. When you have someone like that, one of the greats, if not the great, right? It's an absolute honor. So, just to be able to see him -- I felt gutted last year. I hurt myself on Sunday and I felt like I had a chance. I went in there and I was nearly sobbing because I had to go tell him that I had to withdraw. It sucks because you show up to certain events and you just, you have this thing about an event that you just love, and I love this golf course. Yes, there's been a couple changes where, you know, you question what he's done, but, look, what he did with 16 this year, he moved the tee box a little bit, I think it's going to be amazing. It's such a small, minute change that could mean a lot for a lot of guys coming down the stretch. So, it would be an honor to have that handshake on Sunday.

Q. You've been top 10 in half of your major appearances in your career. Obviously there's something to say about the setup of the golf course,

but do you feel like you have a different mindset those weeks, or why do you think that it's been so successful so far?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I mean, I enjoy tough golf courses. Majors usually play a little bit tougher. I feel like my game, I want to say I focus well every event, but when you have very thick rough or you have narrow fairways out there in these majors, like your mind kind of switches a little switch and it just focuses a little bit more. It's hard to tell yourself, I need to focus more, right, but I know what's at stake at majors, and obviously the best players are there, and every single one of them, and they're big fields, and, yeah, I don't know what it is, but I enjoy 'em and obviously it's nice to play well in them.

Q. Going back to the question about Tiger. Is there any part of that, when you see that and you see him shaping these shots, and he still has the hands and the feels, is there any part of you that, almost as a fan, like, just take a golf cart?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I mean, yeah, but his ego's pretty big, you know, as is all of ours. I just think he wants to keep doing it until he can't, and maybe there's something about a golf cart that's just, you know, ain't it. I would be taking a golf cart if they allowed me. I would love to.

Q. You mentioned the changes to 16. Assuming you've had a chance to see it. Wondering how that's going to change your approach on the hole and the way that it plays for guys this week.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, look, the bail out looks a little bit more open. Obviously there was that bunker there before, and the bunker was never bad, but it's not like you wanted to be in it. The little runoff on the side isn't as drastic as I thought it would be, so you could actually putt it or chip it across the green. It's still a tough tee shot, don't get me wrong. You're still hitting 7-iron, 6-iron, 5-iron, depending on the wind, to a small, narrow green that doesn't have a lot of depth. Even with the movement of the angle, it's still a tough tee shot, I mean, you're not going to get away with a bad shot out there.

Q. So you talked about Tiger game when you were with him last week. Can you talk about his poker game, too?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: We were sitting at different tables.

Q. You have no idea.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I didn't see it, but he was out. I'm sure he wanted to be out quick.



Q. The other thing is, I know you weren't on the U.S. team at Ryder Cup I think in France, but that golf course, I don't know how much you know about Le Golf National, but it seems like it would fit your game pretty well. Have you thought about that at all?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: No. No, I know nothing about it. Sorry.

Q. Well, let's see what happens.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, let's see what happens.

Q. On this recent run of great play your short game has really kicked in. Is there something that you're doing different or, you know, that necessarily wasn't always a strength of your game and now it certainly is. I'm just curious as to what it is you and Rick are working on.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: We haven't actually been working on anything. I think -- well, one, I've been missing more greens, so I've had an opportunity to showcase my short game, that's part of it. But I think it comes down to, you know what, I practiced a lot in college, short game, and it was, but it wasn't like just block practice, it was a lot of just competing. Like, we'll play for whatever, play to so many points per up-and-down, whatever, and that stuff. That's it. Like, you get a feel for just hitting shots, right. No one shot's ever going to be the same. So I think for me what I'm doing out there now is just I'm kind of attacking every shot as if, you know, it were a competition with my caddie or something like that, and you're trying to make an up-and-down. You're not trying to perfect hitting it exactly here and trying to have it run out exactly five yards. You can do it many ways, and you're not always, it's not always going to come out perfect, but you just are committing to that shot.

So, look, this week's going to test it. The rough's very, very long and you're going to have a lot of different lies. Depending where you hit it some will be short sided and some you're going to have a terrible lie and you're going to have to run it out 20 yards, so nothing is going to be easy this week.

Q. Is your short game prep any different for this week versus next week because of the different length of grass?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I mean, next week I'll worry about that on Monday. This week a lot of chipping out of the rough.