

# The Memorial Tournament Presented By Workday

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Dublin, Ohio, USA

Muirfield Village

## Collin Morikawa

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We have Collin Morikawa here at The Memorial Tournament Presented By Workday. Collin, making your sixth start here at Muirfield Village, had some good finishes here over the years. What do you most enjoy coming back here every year?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: It's a place I've always loved. This is probably the only golf course where I've stepped foot on it before I actually played and said, like, I love this place, no matter how I play, and it's kind of rare to find that, but thankfully the results have kind of followed from it. But it just fits. It's a tough golf course, it's playing really tough already so far on Wednesday, and it's only going to get tougher. So it's just great.

THE MODERATOR: We'll go right into questions.

**Q. From walking around a little bit that, I mean my shoes are soaked, somehow the greens still seem relatively firm, the rough seems really long, but I know this place is always really tough, does it seem any tougher this year or this is just how it goes?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: It seems tougher so far like through Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday than we have seen. Normally the weeks, as the week goes on rough grows a little bit, dries out. But for a Wednesday I mean you could play the tournament and it would feel like a Saturday, just with these conditions. Yeah, I think we know we're in for a tough test this week and it's not going to be easy by any means and that's what's great about this golf course, like we're not hitting like 5- and 4-irons every hole it's like you can have an 8-iron and still put yourself in a bad position.

**Q. How do you feel just personally about your golf game and where are you coming into this week?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, I'm in a weird spot right now. I feel like I'm really close, but yet sometimes you don't know what you're searching for. I know it's something small and that's the click that I need to just play free. But it's hard to find that. I can go out and play solid golf, but



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I'm not looking for just a solid golf and a decent result. There's one goal. It's been a little bit frustrating over the past kind of couple months, just everything feels all right but I know it's just not playing as cleanly as I could. So it's doing that.

**Q. Are you talking about your golf swing when you said there's some little thing that you're searching for or a mental trigger?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: It's a little bit of both. I think when I look back at my past few tournaments I've been making a lot of bogeys and making honestly some doubles, and that's just, one, you can't win golf tournaments like that making that many bogeys. And to me that's a little bit physical, a little bit mental. I think one, if I find one of them, that could be the trigger to clean up everything else. But I'm still back and forth honestly trying to figure out what I kind of lean on and say this is what I'm going to do for the rest of the week and see how it kind of plays out.

**Q. I'm a little lost, do you know exactly what it is you're looking for?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: No, I don't think golfers ever do. I think golfers always are trying to, we're always trying to get better, and sometimes we take a step in the wrong direction. I've done that for sure in the past. But it's hard to describe to your coach and your team to say, something's off. Yet when they look at everything, everything looks great, right. But it's a feeling as a player and a gut instinct to say, this is the shot I'm going to hit, I have full a hundred percent confidence that I can pull it off. So no, I think I'm looking for something in the swing mechanically and feel-wise in the swing that allows me to just play a little bit freer. I can go out and hit great shots and we can go out tomorrow and/or the rest of the week and play great, but there's a difference in having that full freedom and playing a little constrained and not knowing where the ball's going to go. I think there's always going to be an unknown in golf, but when you do feel like you're under control, that unknown, that unknown becomes, it disappears. Because even though you're going to hit bad shots you feel confident that those good shots are going to be great. That's that fine line I'm kind of teetering on.



**Q. How driven are you by results?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I mean, I am driven by results a little bit. I have to be. Because I know what goals I'm setting out. But I'm also knowing that the little things, I can go out and feel like I played great and feel that, like feel like I was in control and not have a great result. I mean, that's completely fine, too. So there's a little bit of both.

**Q. Is it like an outcome that you just don't like seeing that's kind of nagging in the back of your mind with some of the stuff, is that how it works?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: It's not necessarily just an outcome, it's -- how do I describe this? It's when you're over the ball having your full intention of what we're trying to do. And having every piece of the swing just kind of match. It sounds simple to just say, Hey, when you're over the ball, think about your target. Yet sometimes we all have swing thoughts that could match that piece, we all have -- like for me tempo has always been a thing. So there's always little things that can help piece each part into the shot. And it's, how do I just hit that shot with full confidence. I think right now I'm sometimes too far target oriented, which sounds crazy, and sometimes I'm too far or too much just over the ball. And it's a blend that you have to be -- and you see the best players in the world, you see Scottie, for example, and he just steps up and it's just a free swing. Like that's where I know I've been and that's where I want to get again.

**Q. On a slight flip side, is there a quality about your game or could be your mental game too that you just take a lot of pride in doing well. Like this is who I am, this is what I do really well as a professional golfer.**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, I think the way I plot through a golf course. I've taken a lot of pride, I think when I came out early on, to say, yeah, everyone always asks, like, Oh, are you going to go see this golf course, see this golf course? I've never really done that because I feel like I can kind of dissect a golf course really, really well that fits my game. And look, mentally, I feel like I'm one of the best out there. I feel like recently over the past kind of year it hasn't been as sharp, yet still at those not so sharp moments I still feel like I'm strong, and that's what keeps me in it. That's what you have -- you have to if you want to try and be the best.

**Q. In the weeks leading up to a major do you do anything with your game maybe while you're playing to mentally think or get prepared for a major to try to work on and have you, how do you prepare for a U.S. Open maybe like in particular at Oakmont?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, a good example would be obviously we have the U.S. Open in two weeks. I mean, for this week I'm focused on this week, but once I finish up on Sunday, it's going to be how do we look at this golf course where driving's going to be really important because of how long the rough is. Am I going to practice a little bit more out of the rough at home, chipping around the greens. Like I said, I haven't gone to Oakmont so I'll watch as much video as there is, but I think if you're going to win a golf tournament, every aspect of your golf game has to be on, especially at a major championship. And at a major championship, one, you have to just drive the ball great. For me that, for someone that doesn't hit it that far it's like I have to drive it even better. It's just how do I fine tune the little things. Going back to every week is I need to fine tune little things to get there.

**Q. Long par-3s, 250-plus. Oakmont has one 299. Are you a fan of those or the shorter ones?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I don't think anyone's really a big fan of 'em. I think the only fun one to play is Cypress Point, 16, because it's beautiful. View's beautiful, not -- the hole itself is just tough. So I think the memorable ones are the shorter ones. They're the ones that have risk and reward, right. I think when there's risk, we like risk, because we like taking it on. Sometimes that's why we have a caddie, we have to back away and we have to play smart or play the correct shot. But risk can be involved with a sand wedge, it can be involved with an 8-iron. I think when you just have 250 yards and you just start looking at dispersion, that's not really risk, that's just, we're just playing odds on is everyone's dispersion going to be wider. I would rather take on more risk, have everything a little tighter. I mean like 12's a great example. 12, 12 here is very, very hard. We've got 8-iron in our hands, yet a small error could mean back bunker, could mean water, could mean the tournament. So it's just things like that. And 12 is, you know, extremely hard. But that's the difference of 170 yards a lot of risk/reward. Not that you can play safe, but you just have to hit a golf shot, versus me teeing up 3-wood.

**Q. When you said you want to get back to where it was, when was that last for you?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Probably 2021. I've played, it's not like I haven't played good golf and solid golf, but from a full physical and mental cleanliness and just clarity I would say '21.

**Q. Also, do you think at times maybe you over think?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Absolutely. Yeah. Look, Joe, this



is the third week with Joe Greiner on the bag and he's already called me crazy a lot. And that's fine. Like, I think golfers are generally crazy. I know I am. I mean, you give me -- I had eight weeks off this off-season, you should hear about the amount of things I tried. Just, I mean I had seven different grips, different wraps on my grips, like I was going through it all. You just give me a little too much time and I just go down rabbit holes. But that's, to me, look, going back to this whole risk/reward thing, I don't mind taking risk and I don't mind trying to change because I want to keep getting better. If I just kind of stay where I'm at you're going to just keep getting lapped. And it doesn't mean you have to change everything, but look, I think I'm a very different player than I was in '21 and 2020, and not that I want to be that same exact player, but I want to be able to play as freely as I did a few years ago.

**Q. Just following on that a little bit, does any, do you think any of that early success that you had has, I don't know, have you been too hard on yourself maybe, or just, you know, not giving yourself the opportunity to sort of just assess and recognize what I have is still really good?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, I think what happened in a weird way, because when I look at '21 to '22 I wasn't trying to change anything and like get that much better or get distance or whatever. I just went through a bad patch of like my body stopped moving, things weren't in the right place, then I was just fighting it. So I was trying to maintain, honestly. And then I got to a point where it just kind of back fired. Whereas, like now, yeah, I think the people around me and my team definitely try and keep me a little more from being crazy, because even though the results look great, swing looks great, shots look great, yet deep down I know it's just, I'm not playing as clean of golf and as free of golf as I would like. So it's hard to articulate that, because no one else can be in my body and say, Yeah, maybe you were uncomfortable with an 8-iron in the middle of my hand or in the middle of the fairway, right.

So yeah, early on I definitely didn't enjoy the present as much as I do now, and it's definitely, you know, you look back and you realize how hard golf can be, and it sucks, because I would love to relive those moments. But it's very motivating for me to see all these guys playing well because I know I can do it. I know it's going to, I know I'm going to make it happen and will it at some point. It's just, you know, finding that right little stride and that right little thing that just clears it up. Like I said, it's very small, it sounds very big, but it's impactful for how I play and how I think I need to play.

**Q. What's something in those last three events that Joe said you're crazy?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Well, I mean, yesterday's a great example. I was hitting driver with my normal driver shaft and it was a little cooler with some wind. And a week ago I had a couple driver shafts that were built slightly different tipped. And I was like, Oh, I'm just going to use this one, body's not moving as good. Striped it down the fairway. And he's like, okay, you know, maybe you're not -- I mean, you know, I probably blame my clubs a little bit too much, yet everything's important, right, from the specs we have, to the grips you're using, to the grooves on the face, like everything matters. Like I said, you can sometimes take in too much of that, but if you look at the history of great players they know everything that they're using and why they're using it. So they're just little things, but, yeah, I mean, that was less than 24 hours ago.

**Q. You would have won the TOUR Championship last year under the format they're switching to. How do you feel about the change that's coming?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, I mean, could'a, should'a, would'a, right, that was last year, this is this year. I think it's good. Golf's so hard to put in a playoff aspect because people can go on runs. People -- you could be the best player in January or February and not be the best player in July or August. But for us making that TOUR Championship is very important. Every year. No matter how you play, when you look back and you say you made the TOUR Championship, no matter what your goals are -- yes, some guys have different goals, but you look back and you're like, okay, you know, '22 and '23 were two of my, I felt like, the worst years I was playing golf, yet I made the TOUR Championship. And when you look back and you get there on Monday you're like, Okay, we're doing something right, we're finding a way to play golf and be the best on TOUR. And now you give yourself a chance to win the FedExCup. And that's all that matters. I think when I've started at roughly even par or 1-under you're like, Man, I just got to ball out. Like, I got to go crazy. Hopefully I have four insane days and we'll see. But now, like every other sport, you have a chance to win essentially your championship. And that's what you get here. It's just golf, golf's really tough because, you know, how do you reward that in a way that someone had played really, really well from January through August essentially for however many events we play, but this is what they're making it, and I love it because it's one tournament, you want to be there, and you want to win it.

**Q. Have you failed a driver's test in the past?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Not that I'm aware of. No. I don't think I swing it fast enough. Or I don't hit enough drivers on the range. One or the other.



**Q. Do you feel that there's some players that in the past have given a certain drive like a backup driver to be tested knowing they wouldn't even be using it?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I sure hope not. I mean, I'm sure someone has done it. People joke about doing it, but I don't think anyone actually does. All our clubs have lifespans on them. We know it. And like my SIM driver that I played for like three and a half years, somehow never failed -- I was going say never passed -- never failed. But like I said, it's just, the amount of shots people hit, the reps you take, you keep hitting it in the center, they have lifespans. So I don't think people do that. I think people joke about it, but I don't think people do it. And if they do, then, I mean, sure. Is it going to help? I don't think it's going to help. When these fail, we're on such fine margins that they give us this like green, yellow, red. Like we want our drivers to be in yellow, it's passing, but it's like you want it to be fast, you don't want it to be slow. But if it's close to failing or if it's failing and it's close to cracking, I mean, what are you gaining? You're not gaining anything. Guys aren't going to hit it 25 yards further. I don't think it's really changing much. It's just you got to have a line somewhere and that's where they have drawn the line.

**Q. Your words not mine, but have you always been crazy or is this kind of a more recently developing thing?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: No, it's always been there. From the wraps on my golf clubs to just how things look and trying a bunch of things, like it's in my DNA. It's just, I love just having all those variables and seeing what works and what doesn't. I don't mind more information. I want that information. I can filter it all out. But, yeah, sometimes you go off a little bit too far. But for what I think I need to do, I'm still searching for that one little thing that just wipes everything clean and says, go out and play.

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