

TOUR Championship

Wednesday, September 2, 2020

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

East Lake Golf Club

Commissioner Jay

Monahan

Press Conference

LAURA NEAL: Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for joining us and welcome officially to the TOUR Championship 2020 here at East Lake Golf Club. I'd like to welcome our commissioner, Jay Monahan, to our first in-person press conference in quite some time, and certainly under better circumstances than the last time we did this, which I know you're going to address in your opening remarks as well as a couple announcements and topics you'd like to cover before we take questions from the media.

JAY MONAHAN: Good afternoon. It's great to see all of you today in person. It's been a long road. Hard to believe it was 174 days ago on March 12 when we were forced to cancel THE PLAYERS Championship due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The next morning, many of us in this room gathered for a press conference at TPC Sawgrass as we further discussed the decision and its implications, which were mostly unknown at that point.

As gut wrenching as that day and the weeks to follow were, as we ultimately canceled or postponed nearly 30 percent of our season, the adaptability, innovation, and collaboration that has brought us to this week is incredibly gratifying.

It's humbling to think about what has been accomplished with our successful return. Thanks to the cooperation and partnership with our players, sponsors, media partners, and tournament organizations. We can't thank these groups enough for their loyalty and support through some very challenging times.

As invited guests in each market, we stated at the outset that the health and well-being of all associated with our tournaments would be the number one priority as we returned to competition. At the Charles Schwab Challenge, we said we did not have all the answers. We would have to adjust as necessary, as we continued to



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take guidance from the CDC and medical experts.

We also made a promise to be transparent with our health and safety plans, including our testing program.

It hasn't been perfect, and we're not claiming victory by any stretch. In fact, we continue to learn and adapt. But I'm so proud of the team we put into place in March to help solve this giant jigsaw puzzle. I'm also very thankful for the collaboration with golf's governing bodies, with our reimagined schedule that also includes events into the fall.

An important piece has been the unprecedented collaboration and input we received from the PGA TOUR Player Advisory Council, chaired by Charley Hoffman and the player directors, as we're still relying on their counsel today as we move forward.

I'm also proud of our player membership for adapting quickly and successfully following the protocols. They have been vigilant personally, but also have looked out for each other and each other's families in the communities in which we play. They've understood and been a big part of the changes we needed to make along the way as we've learned and adapted to this crisis.

We will continue our adaptive work through the fall and into 2021 as we look toward reintroducing pro-ams, corporate partner activations, and spectators when we feel it is safe to do so.

These will be critical as we look to maximize tournaments' charitable contributions going forward. While we haven't had spectators at our events, as you can see from this slide, we've had incredible support both domestically and internationally this summer across all platforms from our existing fans and new fans looking to engage with live sports.

This also includes the early success of our official gaming operators that were extremely excited about helping build a new audience and drive deeper engagement.

Given that golf lends itself naturally to social distancing, recreational play has seen a surge in recent months. As one of the few professional sports competing earlier this summer, I'm certain our tournaments and our players played a role in inspiring participation during the last few



months, and we look forward to building on all this momentum as we head into the end of the year and into 2021.

Now I know you in the media have faced many of these same challenges in the last six months and have been forced to adapt to the way you cover golf. You've been with us every step of the way and covering the TOUR through the pandemic. It certainly was easy to have doubts or questions as to whether or not we could accomplish our goals, especially with so many unknowns, and we're most appreciative of the fact the asked questions were critical if necessary but most importantly remained objective throughout.

As a sport, we have persevered through this pandemic and have found a way to keep our TOUR moving forward. Thank you for your coverage, your own adaptability, and all the personal sacrifices you've had to make.

With all that said, we're here finally in Atlanta, crossing a finishing line together, so to speak, for what really has been an extraordinary season. We're thrilled to have the opportunity to showcase the PGA TOUR's top 30 players to a global audience with Atlanta and historic East Lake Golf Club as a backdrop.

In 1995, Tom and Ann Cousins made the groundwork for real and positive change with the creation of the East Lake Foundation. Three years later, East Lake Golf Club hosted the TOUR Championship for the first time, giving the world a window into the local success story that was created with this purpose-built community. This year's TOUR Championship, on the leadership of executive director Allison Fillmore, is special in that it represents the 20th playing here at East Lake. The amazing progress we've seen is possible through the TOUR Championship's two proud partners in Coca-Cola and Southern Company, as they continue to support the TOUR championship's initiatives, East Lake Foundation, Purpose-Built Schools Atlanta, The Grove Park Foundation, and First Tee of Metro Atlanta.

Today I'm proud to announce that despite a myriad of challenges the event has faced in 2020 - no spectators, no corporate hospitality, no pro-am experiences - the TOUR Championship, with the support of Coca-Cola and Southern Company, is projected to match or exceed last year's record charitable impact of \$3½ million. That's true commitment towards the Atlanta community, and we congratulate all involved for this tremendous accomplishment.

So while it's not a traditional TOUR championship week and we will certainly miss hosting the tremendous crowds

here on-site, we know the competition will be as compelling as ever for those watching around the world. This season has produced incredible moments and a premier list of winners, setting us up for a worthy finale as we crown the 14th FedExCup champion on Monday. Our thanks to our largest partner FedEx for their continued support of our season-long competition and what has become one of the pinnacle achievements of our sport, winning the FedExCup.

Especially strong has been the competitive friction since the return to golf. Eight of the 13 winners have been inside the top 10 in the official world golf ranking. And that doesn't include 23 year old Collin Morikawa, who is currently fifth in the FedExCup standings on the strength of two wins, including the PGA Championship. The future of the PGA TOUR is very bright.

We are also looking forward to our second year of the FedExCup starting strokes format: one scoreboard, one championship, one trophy.

Tonight is one of the very special evenings of the year as we'll be presenting the Payne Stewart Award to Zach Johnson, thanks to the support of Southern Company and CEO Tom Fanning. Zach is the first winner of the event who didn't know Payne personally, but they certainly have quite a bit in common: loyalty to their Midwest roots, fierce competitors in both individual and team competition, and a passion for family and impacting the lives of those in need.

Like so many, I'm thrilled for Zach and know this means a lot to him, his family, and his many friends on TOUR. We continue to be inspired by the reach of Payne's legacy, most beautifully lived out by Tracey Stewart and their children, Chelsea and Aaron.

While the focus this week is on the season finale, I wanted to provide a few updates as we look forward to next season. We're excited today to present the full 2020-2021 PGA TOUR schedule, a super season of 50 fully sponsored events and capped off by the 15th edition of the FedExCup Playoffs.

If you're a golf fan, this is a dream season with more significant events than ever before, including the Olympic Games. What more can you ask for?

In closing, I wanted to end by revisiting an incredibly important topic. I touched earlier on what has been done in the Atlanta community to help those in need since 1995. While we are so proud of that impact and it's at the heart of this event's history, we're also painfully aware there is much more to do.

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The many tragedies this summer have sparked much needed ongoing conversations about racial and social injustice, and with the passing of Georgia Congressman John Lewis, an American hero and a towering figure of the civil rights movement right here in Atlanta, we should all be further inspired to be part of the solution.

Mr. Lewis' words were simple but powerful. When we see something that's not right, not fair, or not just, we have a moral obligation to speak up and speak out, to do something about it. The PGA TOUR's Inclusion Leadership Council has been working to reimagine the TOUR's role in leading diversity and inclusion efforts since 2014.

In essence, how do we use the platform that we've established over the past 80 years to make deeper and more specific commitments around social justice efforts in our communities.

There are specifics to come in this space, and the work may never be complete, but as we close out this season of change, I felt it important to reinforce our commitment. A significant part of that commitment has been through the leadership of Marsha Oliver, helping guide us through this process as our vice president for community and inclusion.

Marsha's thoughtfulness and perspective has already proven invaluable, and I look forward to working with her as she helps guide the PGA TOUR towards being part of the solution.

Thank you all again. I'm happy to take questions.

Q. You said a lot about when it's safe, et cetera, but do you have contingency plans, if you want to call it that, for when you're thinking about pro-ams, when you're thinking about fans?

JAY MONAHAN: Yes. So we, as you know, on the Korn Ferry TOUR and PGA TOUR Champions, we have successfully reinstated pro-ams, and in a recent call with our Player Advisory Council have made the commitment to reinstate pro-ams starting at Corales, Punta Cana. We will start there.

We will be reintroducing programs, essentially Phase II of our five-phase return starting this fall, and then I think as you look beyond the fall and into '21, Andy Pazder, Tyler Dennis, John Norris working with our Tournament Advisory Council. Every tournament is starting to plan for multiple potential outcomes, and hopefully planning towards the return of what we know as normal, and that's fans on-site.

But I'm really proud of the work that the team has done to

systematically rebuild our way back up to that, and our tournaments are eager to reinstate the pro-ams. It's obviously a very important revenue source and source of connection to the communities.

Q. As a follow, as tournaments try to plan for plan A and plan B, how much of that involves cost of building infrastructure? At what point, so we don't have another Tampa or Memorial where they have structures build and then it goes for naught?

JAY MONAHAN: I think generally speaking when you get six -- it all depends on what the buildout plan is what is intended to be, but when we're getting inside that six- to eight-week window, we're making decisions about what phase we'll be returning in.

And just given the consistently fluid nature of the virus and the way different communities are responding, each discussion is a different discussion. And so you may see different tournaments returning at different levels as we get into the end of the year and into '21.

Q. What impact do you think the idea of rapid in-home testing could have on spectators returning as we've seen the FDA has approved some of these things now? Hopefully they're going to be mass produced shortly. I'm guessing you guys may be hearing about this quicker than we do, but I'm wondering what impact that could have and how important that is to get fans back?

JAY MONAHAN: Yeah, I think to answer that question, I go back to the way that we've answered every question around the virus, and that is you've got Dr. Hospel, our medical experts in conversation with all the relevant constituents trying to understand where we are in each phase and each area of testing, and ultimately whether or not we can apply that to how we return.

At this point, we're going with the system that we have. We're going to reinstate pro-ams, participants in pro-ams will be tested, and we're encouraged by the fact that you're continuing to see more options, which creates more potential for a quicker return of our fans.

But we'll come back to our original premise, which is looking at all those options, which we'll do, and Andy Levinson, who has been leading our efforts internally, has been remarkable on that front.

When we feel like it's safe to return fans out here, that's when fans will return. We owe that to them, to make sure that we feel like -- and we're supported locally in every market we play in, that that is supported by the local



government authorities.

Q. If I could take you back to when you first restarted things and there were so many unknowns, how deep were your doubts that we'd actually be here today, having survived all this?

JAY MONAHAN: You know, when you commit to a plan, you commit to a plan because you believe in your heart and you believe based on all the quality people that we have around the table and input we're getting that it's a plan that can sustain us.

I was confident that we had the right plan, but I was uncertain as to whether or not, like everybody else, you'd be able to get to this point.

But I go back to kind of some of my opening comments. The one thing -- I knew that we had a very well-thought out plan that was supported by our communities we were returning, supported by our sponsors. Our players -- I can't understate this enough -- to look at those players that are on our Player Advisory Council, our player directors, the amount of input they gave us in returning and the responsibility they took in our return, that gave us confidence.

Our confidence was shaken in those first couple weeks with a few incidents and situations, but we expected that to happen. That's the nature of what we were dealing with.

You know, we were reasonably determined to make sure that we were adjusting in the right way so that we could put ourselves in a position to conclude this FedExCup season, and we feel really good about the work that was done.

Q. I know with the way the summer has been as far as as divided as our country has been, diversity and inclusion is an important part of the TOUR now moving forward, and it's an important thing to you. Can you get into some of the specifics of what the TOUR is going to be doing moving forward to kind of make sure that happens?

JAY MONAHAN: Absolutely. Yeah, I think -- to answer that question, it's probably helpful to provide a little bit of context. When you think of the PGA TOUR, and Deane Beman said this beautifully, he said, I consider us to be more than a sports league; we're a public trust, and it's our job to balance the interest of players, community tournaments, and the game of golf.

When you look at happens out here every single week and you think about the business model, the TOUR is a 501(c)6, tax exempt membership organization. Our

tournaments are run by host organizations in those communities, and they are run for the purposes of generating dollars for charity and making a huge impact in those communities.

And so we've now surpassed \$3 billion since inception. Over \$200 million raised through our tournaments last year. So when we pledged to be part of the solution, we also pledged to really dig into the foundation of our business. The way that we raise money, the way that we raise awareness is by engaging our community tournament organizations.

And so since we've started, you know, kind of redoubled those efforts and really thought through the recent incidents and how we can make a bigger impact, we worked very closely with our Tournament Advisory Council led by Steve Wilmot, and all of our tournaments are going to be identifying racial and social injustice causes in their local markets going forward.

Because, again, they know their markets better than anybody else. They're going to know the organizations that can make a big impact, and they're going to make that part of their charitable program and charitable platform, so that in every community you look at on the PGA TOUR, every tournament is committed to doing so, particularly once we return to tournament golf as normal.

And I think it's a big statement that with the number of tournaments we have they all quickly have responded and said that they are excited for this opportunity, excited for this challenge. And I think as you look out over the next 10 years, I think that we would project it to generate at least \$100 million for those causes over the next 10 years, and that's something that we're going to hold ourselves accountable to.

The money is one thing, but being engaged in the community and being part of the solution through the tournament host organizations is something that you're going to see us make a lot of progress on.

We've talked a lot about the First Tee through the years. The First Tee was founded in 1997 by Tim Finchem with President Bush, and the work that's been done through the years on the First Tee is absolutely remarkable.

So you look at where we are today. If you look at the First Tee participants -- First Tee now, 150 chapters, well over 10,000 elementary schools that we're in. It's 52 percent non-Caucasian, 38 percent female.

But when you talk to our players and when you go into the communities, when you talk to tournament organizations,

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we feel like one of the opportunities that we have, of those 11,000 elementary schools, 58 percent are Title 1. We want to increase that percentage. We want to go into under privileged, underserved communities, provide access to the First Tee, provide access to the game.

We're starting to think about once we've provided that access, how do we give these kids an opportunity to stay on a continuum, whether it's playing the game of golf or continuing or pursuing a career in the game of golf.

But we are quietly in the process of reaching out, and we're going to initiate a significant capital campaign under Greg McLaughlin's leadership and with the tremendous support of our Board of Governors, and similar to what we're going to do through our tournaments you are going to see us raise and invest significant dollars in growing the First Tee along those lines. That's something I'm really, really excited about.

You talk about, for us, one of the things that we've been focused on is you look at the professional game at the highest level, it's fairly homogenous. We've seen a number of black players, black superstars that have emanated and come to the top of the game, but we want to generate more.

We have -- going back to 2013, we got together with Ken Bentley and the Advocate's Professional Golf Association. We have provided financial resources. We have provided access to our TPC network and our golf courses.

And as you think about where we are right now and look forward, we announced PGA TOUR University. One of the things that we're going to do is we're going to work with HBCUs to identify the top five African-American golfers, get them sponsored to have access to the APGA, and then ultimately access to Korn Ferry qualifying school.

We are going to commit resources with the PGA TOUR performance centers so that those individuals have access to the best instruction, the best technology, the best know-how, and you're going to see us alongside the PGA of America continue to identify new golf courses and new ways to be helpful to the APGA. Again, something we've been doing for a while, but you'll see us really step up our efforts on that front.

And then also for us, you look at our -- going back to the host organizations, given that we've got volunteer leadership and volunteers in each community, we, on a national level, when you think about mentorship and providing career opportunities and putting ourselves in a position where we can learn more from every market we play in, under Marsha's leadership have spent a lot of time

trying to identify national organizations that we can partner with that can be helpful at the local level.

And so we're proud to be partnering with the 100 Black Men of America, an organization we think is going to be a big part -- we're going to learn a lot from and benefit a lot from, and we certainly plan to be a great contributor and partner to that organization.

You know, I think that the key for us, you go back to 2014. We formed our Inclusion Leadership Council. We have eight executives that are part of that council. We have six employee resource groups that have provided invaluable feedback, particularly over the last couple of years, providing very valuable feedback right now. And we've really looked at who we are as an organization, how we reflect society, and under Allison Keller's leadership, I'm just really proud of the way that our workforce, our people continue to get behind all of our equity and inclusion efforts.

We're not perfect, but we have a long way to go. I said we'd be part of the solution. These are just some of the things that we've identified that we can do right now, and I just think it's important to -- I think when you're here at East Lake and you think about 1995, we are perpetually doing good in every market where we play, and this is another opportunity to demonstrate that that's what we can do, and we're up to it.

Q. Given the financial struggles, obviously, that everybody is going through and clearly the TOUR is having to shell out a lot for things that you wouldn't have normally had to, do you foresee any possibility of a decrease in purses, or can that be alleviated if you don't get spectators back at some certain point?

JAY MONAHAN: Well, I think given the nature of the virus, we still live in a world of uncertainty, so it's hard to answer that question with certainty. But again, 30 percent of our events we haven't held. We have had a decrease this year.

I think for us, you look at the support we've had from our title sponsors, from our tournament organizations, the fact that our players have generated over \$35 million for COVID-related charities. We're stepping up our efforts in the diversity, equity, and inclusion space.

We're inspiring so many of our fans and people that haven't watched the game like we never have before, and the game is accelerating. I think we have a great opportunity, and I'm hopeful that we're going to get through next year. We're going to get back to normal fast, and that puts us in a position where we continue on the normal

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growth pattern that we're projected to be on this year that unfortunately we were not able to be on because of the events associated with COVID.

Q. Two unrelated questions: With HSBC being canceled for the year, are there any plans to elevate Bermuda to a full-service golf tournament, full FedExCup points?

JAY MONAHAN: Bermuda will be full FedExCup points.

Q. How much has the pandemic slowed the progress, introduction, whatever you want to call it, of gaming?

JAY MONAHAN: It's accelerated it. When you speak to -- you saw that we've announced four betting operator deals. We've got our daily fantasy agreement with DraftKings. I think given the fact that we came back early, the amount of activity that we were hearing from our partners was unprecedented.

I think that has proven a lot of what we felt like -- a lot of what we knew, and by accelerating, I say that those same partners are going to continue to invest more and more in the game because the game itself is gaining share relative to other sports.

Q. Following up on the question about the finances thing, I think people would have understood even this year if purses were decreased in light of other sports and athletes having taken a little bit of a hit. How were you able to maintain purses at this level? And we get to this closing event, which is played for so much money, how sensitive are you to playing for that kind of money in this kind of environment?

JAY MONAHAN: Yeah, I think -- listen, what I'm most sensitive to is are we being the great partner that we have always been in the markets where we play, and are we accomplishing in this really challenging environment all that our sponsors and our community partners want us to accomplish. I think our players have done a remarkable job of that since we returned.

You go back to when we were trying to stand the TOUR back up and reset the schedule, and going back to your earlier question, at that point in time we set out a schedule, but we also weren't sure how long we could sustain that schedule, and we're still not sure of that going forward.

But I think that when you're an organization that generates the amount of money that we have generated and will continue to generate for the communities where we play and we continue to just do our job as a great community partner, I'm proud of the fact that the purses that we play

for continue to attract the best players in the world that are allowing us to continue to do that work.

I step back and say, you know, this week, \$3½ million for the East Lake Foundation. I was on the phone with Mr. Cousins and Ron Price numerous times over the last several weeks and that was really important to him, and we've done that, and hopefully we'll exceed it.

You go back through our tournaments, I think the response that we've had -- of all the uncertainty, what we could do in the communities was one of our biggest concerns, and we've done a really good job of that.

To answer your question directly, you know, to be the No. 1 Tour in the world, to get players to play here and to play the schedule that we play and to be able to generate the dollars we have, it's a competitive marketplace, and we feel like it's really important for us to be able to present the best possible opportunities.

That's our job for our membership, and hopefully that's what we're doing.

LAURA NEAL: Commissioner, thank you so much. Have a great week.

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