

Sanderson Farms Championship

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Jackson, Mississippi, USA

Country Club of Jackson

Peter Malnati

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome Peter Malnati to the media center. Peter, just tell us about what it's like to return here to Jackson. Obviously you're the 2015 Sanderson Farms Championship winner. What is it like to come back here and take in the city again here in 2024?

PETER MALNATI: Yeah, it's always awesome to come here because I feel like I was actually -- I feel like I was literally adopted by Jackson, Mississippi, before I won because a family that lives here on the golf course, they let me stay with them that first year I was here in 2015 and then I won the tournament.

I've been back and stayed with them every year. They feel like family now. It's really cool to see.

I feel like I know everyone in the Century Club here that puts on the tournament. I got to know Joe Sanderson really well when he was our huge sponsor. It feels in every way like a hometown event even though it's not my hometown. I feel thoroughly adopted.

Q. When you have those personal relationships like that, how special is it to come back here outside of the golf course? What is that like to come and have that sort of relationship with the people you've met here and been able to spend time with over the years?

PETER MALNATI: Yeah, it's really cool because my whole career I've played a lot of golf. I essentially play every tournament I get into. It was my dream to play on the PGA TOUR, and I never really dreamed that I'd get to do it for 10 years, which I have.

So I play week after week after week, which means I pack up and leave home week after week after week, so to come to a place where it feels like I packed up at home but I'm coming to a place that has embraced me so much that it feels like a second home is really, really nice.

Q. What is the name of the family that you've gotten to



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say with?

PETER MALNATI: I stay with the Boyles family, Durr and Robin Boyles. Everyone here at the club knows them. They call Robin "The Queen."

Yeah, I call her my Mississippi mama. It's pretty cool to have that sense of, like, real true family.

Q. Are there any traditions you have with them or any special meals that they have that you look forward to every year?

PETER MALNATI: Yeah, so they have a really beautiful kind of covered but outdoor living area at the back of the house and we'll get carry-out from Amerigo. The year I won here, the first year I was here, I ate Amerigo like three or four times that week, so now we think that's the secret. Even though it hasn't worked since, it still tastes delicious, so we'll have it multiple times during the week, which is really great.

Q. Focusing back on the competition, how important are these fall events to come out and compete to potentially improve your status going into 2025? How important is it to come out here and have the opportunity to play and compete?

PETER MALNATI: I mean, these fall events, I'll tell you, I'm obviously in a different situation this fall than I was last fall. Last fall I was around 116th on the FedExCup going into the fall, so I was literally fighting for my job.

This year having won earlier and made it to Memphis for the FedEx championship, FedEx St. Jude Championship, I have a different approach this fall. But the landscape of professional golf is changing and becoming one that really rewards the top performers, as it should. Like I said, I dreamed of competing on the PGA TOUR, so it still feels like a dream come true to be here, but being here, I want to be one of those top players.

The fall now gives you the opportunity, even coming off a good year, a really, really good year for me, the fall gives me an opportunity to play my way into a couple of those



Signature Events, which that's where the top players are striving to play. That's where I want to play. The fall gives me that opportunity.

These events and this fall, we may have awarded our FedExCup Trophy already, but there's guys out here this week and over these next five, six tournaments that are literally playing for livelihoods, playing for their jobs. There's guys like me, a lot of us, who are striving to take that next step forward. These events carry a lot of weight. They're really important.

Q. Obviously as a past winner, when you come back out here, do you feel like you have any advantages just having familiarity with the area? You mentioned knowing where to eat, knowing where you're staying. How does that affect you when you get on the course?

PETER MALNATI: Well, there is a comfort level that is -- obviously inside the ropes and outside the ropes are two different things, but if life is hard and stressful outside the ropes, that's certainly going to come inside a little bit.

Being in a place where I feel so comfortable -- there's another thing, and I've talked about this a lot with my own family, my wife, my two boys, my mom and dad. It's the same here with my family that's adopted me here. There is a great comfort in knowing that they're going to love me whether I shoot 64 and win the tournament again or whether I shoot 80 and miss the cut. They're going to love me. That's a comforting feeling and it's good to know because I obviously -- golf is a game where you fail a lot. To know that that failure doesn't define you, doesn't define how people see you, that's good, and I get lots of reminder of that here, which is really nice.

Q. Since we've seen you at Memphis, what has the Malnati family been up to?

PETER MALNATI: We got a little time off, which was really nice. I was planning on taking a six-week break from competitive golf and a four-week break from golf, period, which is long for me because I still love to play and practice. I've never transitioned where it felt like work because I was going to take a four-week break and be a dad and just really soak up time at home. Then I found out that the top 70 on the PGA TOUR could get into the DP World Tour's BMW Wentworth championship, and I got into that, and I was like, well, I can't miss this opportunity to go. So I went, and it was really cool. My wife and I celebrated our 10-year anniversary last year, except we didn't really celebrate it because we had a 10 month old. We did nothing. I'm not even sure I took her to dinner.

She was able to fly over after the tournament in London

and we spent two and a half days in London to celebrate our 10-year anniversary, which was really cool.

Then this past week once we got home from that we kind of hunkered down as the storm battered -- fortunately for us it didn't batter us, but it did batter our neighbors a lot. We sort of hunkered down and were together as a family through that, which that gave us comfort being together. Obviously a lot of people hurting and we're sad for that in our community and especially communities just east of us in the mountains of North Carolina. We got to spend a lot of good time together as a family, and that was really great.

As a PGA TOUR player and a professional athlete who travels 30 weeks a year, when we get some time off, it's seldom that we look at each other and say, let's go somewhere. We just wanted to be home. It was nice that we got that little excursion to London for a few days together. But for the most part we just soaked up time at home.

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