

# American Century Championship

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Lake Tahoe, Nevada, USA

Edgewood Tahoe

## Tony Romo

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We have Tony Romo joining us. This will be your 11th time here at the American Century Championship. Obviously you've won this tournament twice back to back in 2018, 2019. Last year you had to withdraw due to a wrist injury, I believe, in the second round. You're back this year. I understand you played in a tournament a week and a half ago in Wisconsin, the Fisher tournament, very good tournament for you.

TONY ROMO: I played pretty well. It was the Ray Fisher up in Wisconsin. And I probably played in it 10 times, I want to say, roughly over the years.

But it was my best tournament up there that I've ever played in. I shot really good scores for me. I've been playing pretty well. And I went up there. It was par 72. And I shot 70 day one, 67 in the second round. 64 in the third. And then 70 in the fourth. So I think the game's pretty sharp coming in. And hopefully we'll be able to duplicate it here.

THE MODERATOR: Looks like the oddsmakers know about your prowess. They have you at the favorite listed at 3-2. Even over defending champion Mardy Fish at 2-1. How accurate are they?

TONY ROMO: Well, they're just odds; they're just guessing, you know. But I feel like last year Mardy played some incredible golf. I know he set the course record, I believe. And he shot 63. And that's going to be hard to beat in any year.

But, yeah, I ended up breaking a bone in my wrist last year, hook of the hand. I tried to play through it on Saturday. That was kind of silly. It took a while to come back and really kind of got back to full strength this spring and the game's been pretty good. I feel good coming in, but there's a lot of good players.

Mardy showed you last year -- when I first started, there was four or five guys who could win, you really felt like. I



think there's more than that now. You've got 10, 15 guys, really, which is a pretty deep field. And it shows you the players are just improving. They're getting better instruction. And they're working on their game.

You see a guy like Kyle Williams last year, just come out of nowhere for this field, but for those of us who know, he's always had the ability to hit the golf ball really well. You'll see another person like that sneak in. And it makes it really fun.

**Q. What's your favorite on-course betting story, maybe not the most money, but what's one you like to bring up with some regularity?**

TONY ROMO: That's a good question. Which one could I tell? One that's a good one would be with I think Spieth -- Jordan told this before, but Jordan Spieth, we play a little bit in Dallas. He's there. And so we're playing at Maridoe Club in Dallas. There's a bunch of people following because it's an event of some kind. I can't remember exactly what it was.

But there were people out there for a tournament and we're playing the 17th hole, this is a par-3. And everyone's up there around the green. It's kind of an island green, you've got water around it. It's a little bit tough. But he hits a tee shot.

Me and him are obviously at that point betting a dollar a hole. And he hits it and birdies double and eagles triple.

So let's say you're playing for a dollar, maybe a little more, but let's say it's a dollar right here. You don't want to lose to a birdie because that doubles and eagle triples. It's a par-3 and he hits the ball, and it was during the COVID time. So they had these cups that came up about halfway so you didn't have to reach all the way down.

So the flag sticks didn't come out. They had these saucers that were halfway up. He hits it and the ball goes in the cup. It's a hole in one, but because the saucers and everything were up higher, it actually hit in the hole, rattled around, and went back in the water.

So he goes up. Everyone goes crazy. It's a hole in one. He gets up there. We're cheering and everything. I said that's an unbelievable shot. I'm so happy for you but you made a 5, I made a 3 here, so you lost. So you owe me. And he's like, no, I made a hole in one, that's crazy. If the cup was normal and everything. I agree with you, but, you know, the rules are the rules and it's golf. You still owe me that \$2 on that hole.

**Q. NFL question. The pandemic last year cut down a lot of the offseason training. And some of the veteran players during the season were making the argument that there should be less offseason training, it didn't really affect the play. You called games every week. Do you think there was a difference in the level of play? Do you think the league should cut down on any offseason training? What are your thoughts there?**

TONY ROMO: That's a good question. I think the reality is, like, when you watch the game -- I think football was still played at a very high level last year. I don't think there was a huge drop-off. I think having fans -- I don't think anyone will -- you look at just the numbers. Before the year started I told people that just the scoring aspect of the league is going to go up. So I don't know where it landed and maybe it's the highest or pretty close to scoring or yards per team in the NFL.

But not having fans was such a huge difference for home teams, because you practice home and away. So when you're practicing Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday before you go into a game -- if I'm going to go play at Seattle and you're going to their home stadium, you can't communicate once you leave the huddle.

So if you're a quarterback and you're on the road and everyone's screaming and it's loud, you know very quickly all the stuff that you do at home with the cadence to draw them offsides, that's not there. The second part is you're not communicating to change the play near as often.

So you see the defense they're in. All of a sudden you look over and when I played with Jason Witten, I would just be like shorter, shorter, shorter, run your route shorter. I'd tell him, quicker, quicker, quicker. There's 50 things you would say.

That's gone on the road. That's such an advantage at home. Last year, quarterbacks never really had to play on the road through the most of the year until fans came back toward the end. So to me that helped scoring. That helped the quarterback and offensive systems, because you had the ability to communicate throughout a game as if you were at home. 16 weeks out of the year.

I think that's going to come back, the mean is going to come back to normal this year. As far as the offseason stuff, I think defenses more than the offenses need the time in the offseason and more reps, because the more that the offenses advance, the motions, the more you see people getting in different alignments it's very difficult on defenses to get exotic. Because if you haven't had enough reps, you can't accidentally give up a touchdown because this guy didn't know to rotate over here. You keep the game simple. I think the defenses will come back a little better this year.

**Q. Your two victories, you had a Stableford 71. What do you need to do -- what part of your game is going to carry the 71 or better this year? And how do you think the heat is going to affect, the warmer temperatures are going to affect not only you but the other contenders?**

TONY ROMO: Yeah, I mean, it's like any sport you play outside. Your job when you practice all the time is to try and get good enough to overcome the elements. So in football, it's like can you throw the ball? Great, that's indoors. Can you throw it in the wind when it's howling out there? It's hot. All of a sudden your hands are sweaty. All these things are things you do in practice.

You start -- indoors I'm not sweating. Throw a football. Golf is the same thing. You start off with perfect conditions, no wind. Now you've got a wind it's out of the right. Okay. I'm good with that. Now it's out of the left. I'm not quite as good. You have to practice that. The guys who put in the time and put themselves in the elements, whatever it is.

It's not as if heat is going to be as hard as 30-mile-an-hour-wind gusts. I think the guys who are good are going to play good. And like anything, elements bring in another case for guys who aren't quite there.

**Q. How about your game and the 71 scores from the past beating that? My wife just put you down in the press pool for 73.**

TONY ROMO: I like her already. She's very nice. I think what you're trying to do is you're not really thinking of a score when you first start off. You're just trying to play each hole. I think more now than in the past I think when I had a good round going two years ago, three or 10 or whatever it was, I think when I got to 3-under or 4-under, I just want to get in the clubhouse, I'm on the 13th hole. You end up going one over to finish.

I feel now I feel more comfortable wanting more holes. It feels like there's more holes to have a chance to birdie. I

think overall my game is a little bit more consistent. I'm not scared that tomorrow I'm not going to quite have the same swing. I'm like I gotta get out there, do a million things.

It's much more repeatable since I've worked on the sequencing of how the body and the weight shift. It's much closer to football than I've ever realized throwing a ball the way that the body works. So that's helped quite a bit this year.

So I think I feel good about the game coming in. It's golf. It's never easy. You've got a lot of good players, but I'm excited for the challenge.

**Q. The Bucks and Chiefs are understandable favorites for next season. Do you have a team you have your eye on that could potentially exceed expectations?**

TONY ROMO: I really think the Chargers have a chance to really make some noise this year. They've got a new coach who I think has shown the ability to adapt and stay ahead of the curve a little bit when it comes to -- so much of this game is your ability to have a system and make it simple for all the players. And they can play fast and then can you also adjust week-to-week and year to year and make it still simple for everyone around you. I think that's a coach's job.

I think when you have a quarterback, those things are even easier. I think they have that combination. But there's a few teams that have a chance to make a leap. The obvious teams, I'm talking about someone come from a little bit further back. I think the 49ers are going to be back in play again this year.

I think they have a great coach. And I think that when healthy they've got a lot of talent. There's a couple other teams, but I won't bore you with everyone.

**Q. In terms of this week, if you're not betting on yourself, who are you taking?**

TONY ROMO: I know there's one guy. Mardy won last year. He's got to be right there. Mardy Fish and Mark Mulder are always guys that are going to be in the mix. When you're here on Sunday, they're going to be there.

I think you saw what Kyle Williams did last year. I don't think that was a fluke. I actually think he's that good. I think he's going to be around. Derek Lowe. Steph's got a lot of game. Just this time of year it's tough with him having played a lot. So he's just starting his offseason. It might have been sooner than he's used to so maybe he's coming in really sharp.

I think there's a bunch of guys. I know I'm missing one or two other ones. But it's a deeper field than it's been. Every few years it gets deeper and deeper.

**Q. You mentioned the 49ers, as a former quarterback you've got the rookie they picked Trey Lance and Jimmy Garoppolo. As a former QB, what's your take on that situation?**

TONY ROMO: Well, I mean, one thing in the NFL there's always competition. So you're really never -- your job as a player is just to keep getting better and improve. Figure out what you weren't as good at, that you needed to be the year before. As the quarterback you're trying to figure out your weaknesses and make them strengths. And I feel like they're always going to throw competition at you. Obviously for Jimmy his job is he goes plays good football, he's fine. If he doesn't play good football, well, nobody's fine.

I think that plays out. I think the organization, obviously, liked Trey Lance, that's why they took him. But his development, you never know, each kid develops at a different rate. You see a kid who develops really quickly or is this a two-year, three, four-year process, you never know. You'll see that, though, when you watch guys play, some guys take to it quicker than others.

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