

American Century Championship

Wednesday, July 7, 2021

Lake Tahoe, Nevada, USA

Edgewood Tahoe

Mark Mulder

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Mark Mulder, three-time champion here at the American Century Championship. I believe this is your 12th time here at the American Century Championship.

MARK MULDER: That many already?

THE MODERATOR: That many already. I think nine top 10 finishes. Obviously three-time defending champion, three years in a row. Still a record. You've got a couple of guys in front of you with Mardy's finish last year. You've got Romo's playing strong. I think you're listed at 4-1 at the books. Tell us what kind of shape your game is in and what you're looking forward to this week.

MARK MULDER: The game is good. But to be honest, none of that really matters. I've come into this tournament before and won it playing terrible. And I've come into it playing well.

So I think when the lights go on on Friday morning, that's when things change a little bit. And I know I'm excited to see the fans back. Last year was just, for me personally, there was no energy on the course.

I couldn't really focus. I couldn't get into it mentally. There just wasn't -- felt like a hit-and-giggle with my buddies on a Tuesday or something. I'm excited to see everyone back out there and feed off that energy, hopefully.

THE MODERATOR: Does that mean you're hoping that people are screaming on hole 17?

MARK MULDER: And every other hole as well. Last year it was you hit a bad shot, you go find it, hit it again. There wasn't much energy out there. You're trying to create it yourself. I couldn't really get it going.

Q. You mentioned earlier you have the family up here. So we've had the kids out on the green when you've won it three times. The kids are a little older now. Tell



us about your 13-year-old.

MARK MULDER: My oldest son is obsessed with golf. He's playing a lot. Looks at me each day when we're here and says, "You're going to win, right?" I tell him every time, "I don't know. I'll let you know on Sunday afternoon." He loves the game. He plays a lot. He plays in a ton of tournaments.

It's fun. There's a lot of father/son golf, which is good and bad, because I tend to not concentrate on a lot of those rounds. I end up having a lot of bad rounds with him. Now he's starting to beat me. So that hits the ego a little bit.

Q. He's beating you, really?

MARK MULDER: Yes, he plays a lot further up, but he still beats me. (Laughter).

Q. If you can't bet on yourself this week, where's your money going?

MARK MULDER: Wow, well, I haven't -- I've only seen -- I didn't play today. I saw a few of the guys yesterday. It's kind of hard to say because tomorrow you'll see a bunch of us hitting balls. It's hard to go against Mardy.

I think in my opinion I don't know if anyone really hits it better than he does from tee to green. In past years, I suppose you could say maybe he'd struggle putting at times. But last year he putted great, obviously. You can't put up the numbers he did and not putt well. He'd be hard for me to not put money on.

Q. What's your favorite on-course betting story, maybe not the most money won, but a story you enjoy telling, let's say?

MARK MULDER: I don't know if I really have one. My favorite ones are when I'm down, when I'm getting my butt whooped for 16, 17 holes, I win it all back on the 18th. Or you win even more on the last couple of holes because you pressed a few more times.

Honestly, I really don't have one that I really remember



stands out, other than those kind of rounds where you're trying to be -- similar to here, I might be losing to some buddies early, but I'll get there.

Q. Are you an aggressive presser?

MARK MULDER: I'm not. I'm not. I'm kind of the slow and steady. Once things start flipping on the back nine I start adding onto it.

Q. The year you won, for the first time, you scored an 82. Previous year of 57. And then after the 82, obviously you won two more times. What was the biggest adjustment you made from the 57 to the 82? What's your game looking like now compared to -- I would imagine it's closer to the 82 than the 57.

MARK MULDER: Yeah, it is. But I think any of those years it's how close are you going to hit it and how many putts are you going to make.

Just, for example, last year's tournament, I probably have never -- I was never playing better coming into this tournament. And then two holes in it was like uh-ho. So things change.

I mean, there's a reason we're amateurs. And my game is very inconsistent from time to time. And I'll go on streaks two weeks to a month where I play terrible and I'll flip it the other way.

So it's just the timing of when the tournament starts and how I'm hitting it. I'm hitting it good right now. Doesn't mean I'm going to go make a ton of putts. You just don't know. That's how it is for us, I like to think.

Q. A question I asked Romo a few moments ago, how do you think the heat's going to affect some of the players?

MARK MULDER: I brought a lot more lighter-colored shirts. I didn't bring a black shirt. I don't think I even brought a dark blue one. I live in Scottsdale. I'm not there so much in the summertime until August or September when 105, 110 every day. It will be fine. It just beats on you as the day goes on because we're not exactly playing three-, three-and-a-half-hour rounds like I would at home. They'll be a lot longer.

To be fair, the tee boxes, there's not a whole lot of shade. You're finding it when you're standing next to the green in a fairway waiting. You're trying to find as much shade as you can when you're waiting, that's all it is.

Q. You're here in Nevada. Your old team, the A's, have

been kicking the tires a little bit in Las Vegas, having a hard time working things out in Oakland, any thoughts where the team may end up?

MARK MULDER: I don't know where they're going to end up. I just know I've said this many times before, we were supposed to have a new stadium when I was there in the early 2000s. How's that working out?

I just don't see how you could possibly put a stadium -- you're not going to put it on the site they're on right now. I mean, the location is awful. Some of the other sites they're proposing, the pictures look amazing. But what are the odds of that actually happening?

I just feel they're so slim and none. They're going to get a new stadium when they're in a different city. And that's sad. It really is. There's so much politics. There's so much fighting. I mean, that whole area is not good. And it's really sad because I love that area.

And I don't want to see the team leave. There's so much history, all of it. But there's no way they're going to get a new stadium in Oakland. If they do, I'd be shocked.

Q. Upcoming All-Star Game, I know you mentioned you haven't been following this year that much. But do you have a feel for anything or any particular players you're interested in seeing?

MARK MULDER: No, I mean, we were just talking about Ohtani. The thing that interested me about him, I'd love to know his routine because I can't wrap my head around how he can get in his workouts.

As a pitcher, if you pitch on a Monday, hardest cardio lifting day is Tuesday and Wednesday. He has to go hit those nights. I know he's only DHing, but how are you keeping your body ready to do that and still staying strong and still lifting and doing the things that you need to do in order to be successful and last throughout the six-, seven-month season.

So I would be fascinated to hear his routine, because to keep yourself, I don't know, rested, I guess you could say -- because I know the work hitters have to put in no matter if the guy is a DH or not. I saw the amount of lifting they did, saw the amount of tee work, the cage work, the flipping with the hitting coach, whatever it might be, the hours that they put in every day, but then he still has to go throw sides and he still has to prepare himself to start every fifth day.

I think that's what makes it incredible. And I'd be anxious to see how he holds up towards the end of the season. Because I think what he's doing is amazing. And that's

why that whole routine of what he has, I'd be fascinated to know what it is.

Q. Obviously you're one of the favorites. You and Mardy and Tony and Smoltz. Anybody that you see potential dark horse out there?

MARK MULDER: I haven't looked -- Kyle Williams played well. I haven't really looked a whole lot at anybody new or anything like that.

It's three days. You make a bunch of birdies and you're going to be there. Whether it's Steph -- there's a lot of guys who can go make a bunch of birdies. It's who is not going to make the doubles. I think the minus-2s is where it hurts you.

I had someone say to me a long time ago, nine birdies and nine bogeys is 27 points. 18 pars is 18 points. So there's no laying up. There's no being safe.

Yes, you've got to lay up if you're in trouble to avoid that double bogey, but you're still trying to make as many birdies as possible.

Q. Personally, would you put a hundred down on Barkley to finish in the top 70 at 7 or 8-to-1 odds?

MARK MULDER: Seems like there's too many people -- my guess is there are too many people who are doing that. I'd probably go the other way because I'm a terrible gambler. What everyone else thinks, I'll just do the opposite.

Q. He started at 17-1 now it's down to that.

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