

American Century Championship

Sunday, July 10, 2022

Lake Tahoe, Nevada, USA

Edgewood Tahoe

Mark Mulder

Joe Pavelski

Press Conference



Q. We have two of the three playoff contenders, Mark Mulder, Joe Pavelski. Guys, it's always tough when you don't pull it out, when you don't win one. We know the feelings are raw. Mark, you had a tough back nine, tell us what was going on back there. You were struggling.

MARK MULDER: Gosh, I didn't try to, but, man, did I get conservative. Like I said, I've been here before. I knew what to do. And for some reason, I just didn't hit the shots I needed to make. It's as simple as that.

It wasn't -- I wasn't nervous, I wasn't scared, I wasn't anything. I had a lead. I just played very conservative, unfortunately. It's as simple as that.

Q. Joe, you played a great round, I think you had the most points with 27 points, if not mistaken. High-point round. Nicely done. You really played well.

JOE PAVELSKI: Yeah, it was good. The first day I did not drive the ball good. That's usually a strength. The irons, the putting was fine. Kind of going into those next couple days, it was all about driving the ball, keeping it in play.

And I did that. I hit the ball really good. Had some looks. Had a lot of good putts today too. Made birdie on 8 and 9 and got a few more coming down the stretch.

It was fun. It was fun getting into contention knowing I missed a four-footer for birdie, five-footer on 16, which we all do along the week, but I thought I was going to need that one and one on 18. Take a look at the board, and you're there. Battled back and made one on 18, had to wedge one out and chip one out of the woods and hit a great wedge and made a putt. It was good. It was exciting to get in that playoff and have a crack at it.

Q. It's the first three-way playoff we've had in

tournament history, and it's the fifth playoff total in the first back-to-back years where we've had a playoff. You were both clutch. What a great way to start a playoff. Was the confidence there? Were there nerves? What were you both thinking?

MARK MULDER: For me, I just got done, so I think it was probably a tad bit easier for me to just go back to 18 tee and swing. I know they were just a group of two in front of me, but it's still a few minutes of sitting around and waiting and have to watch what I do, I guess, because if I made birdie, I'd won.

You got to sit around for a minute, but for me, it was no problem, turn around, hit another tee shot. So it wasn't that big of a deal.

Q. Peter Jacobson mentioned that on the air. He said Joe finished first, and he said, if I'm Joe, I'm going to go hit a few chips and roll a few putts before I get going again just to get a little bit better feel. Joe, I don't know if you had time to do that.

JOE PAVELSKI: I went to the bathroom quick. It was like there was no time. You're waiting to see what's going to happen, it's exciting. It's such a good event with everyone around, there's excitement. You kind of want to be a part of it.

It was quick, but jump in the cart and get to the tee box. And you're first up, grab that driver, and you're like, oh, yeah, I haven't even taken a swing yet. So you get a couple. You get in that position, you're like, all right, make a swing. Let it go. There's nothing to be worried about.

I think the one thing I wish I would have hit was probably a putt. I had that opportunity on the first playoff. It was good. These greens get rolling, and it feels like every putt you hit out there is downhill. And you don't want to leave it short, and you want to give it a chance. And just gave it a little extra. It wasn't as smooth.

Q. It's tough to have an uphill putt where that pin was, unless it was your second one, in all reality. Everything is downhill and sloping towards the pond.



On your second shot in the playoff, what were you hitting? How far did you have in and didn't quite catch it? The second hole of the playoff.

JOE PAVELSKI: I don't know what I had, it's just kind of a feel, probably 30 -- oh, I had I think 245 in, hit a 3-iron, driving iron up there, left it 20, 30 yards short. Hit a good shot, gave myself a chance. Would have liked to clipped a chip shot a little better, closer. But hit a really good putt. I thought I made it.

Q. Mark, was your second shot on the second playoff up against the pond, was that down deep in the grass? It looked like you had to whack one to get it out of there.

MARK MULDER: Yeah, I took -- it was deep in the long stuff. So I just tried to take a full swing, hoping maybe it carries the water and lands on the green and rolls to the other side.

I didn't have much of a chance. But I didn't want to try and baby it. I didn't want to try and hit the perfect shot. That way if the grass catches it, which it did, and it came up way short.

I put a good swing on it. What are you going to do? I had to try to go for it, and then obviously hit the next one on, but it wasn't enough. That's the way it goes. That's what happens when you catch the tree on the left-hand side.

Q. Joe, you were bringing a lot of memories back, because if you would have won this, you would have been the second guy in tournament history to be an active player and win the tournament, the only other one being Mario Lemieux.

JOE PAVELSKI: I did not know that. It was right there --

MARK MULDER: Way to mess it up.

JOE PAVELSKI: That's about how my boys said it too.

Q. Mark, what were the length of the putts on the regulation 18th green?

MARK MULDER: Of my -- of the first time when I played it, when I just neat needed a two-putt to win?

Q. Right.

MARK MULDER: I probably had 50 feet, give or take.

Q. And then what?

MARK MULDER: The one I made was -- wait. The first playoff hole was probably --

Q. I'm talking about regulation now.

MARK MULDER: Oh, it was probably 50 feet, and then I probably had 9 to 10 feet on the next one.

Q. Joe, how long was the putt that you had to win the tournament?

JOE PAVELSKI: I'm trying to think. 15, 20? I think it was about 18 feet. I would've had it 17, 18 feet. Kind of a little slider. Just need to get it going. Got it going a little bit too fast.

Q. I had an interview with TJ Oshie after he finished. I mentioned to him it seems like hockey players, football players, MLB pitchers do the best in the tournament overall. Eye-hand contact for hockey players, game management for pitchers, game management for quarterbacks. The three of you, all represent those fields, ended up in the first three-way playoff in competition history. So how -- is that assumption that I make correct? Or I think it's something I heard from one of you guys saying anyway.

JOE PAVELSKI: I mean, you got to play this game. You got to play it a lot to get good at it and maintain. I've seen some -- I've had some bad teammate -- bad golfers as teammates. But if you get guys that play, there's some really good ones as well. There's some guys that hit, they line up, get the reps.

It's a great sport. I think it's something -- outside our sport, it's another way we get to compete. It's such a great event, go against all these guys that love the game and play it and compete. It's great to be out here.

Q. When your season ended, did you get in as much practice as you wanted?

JOE PAVELSKI: Yeah, as much as I could get in a hurry. There's always more golf out there to be played. Got enough in. The short game is where it shows up at times. But you're always trying to get a little bit more, it's just you got three months to play as much as you can.

Q. How does adrenaline of today's playoff compare to anything you've done at the highest level of your representative sports?

MARK MULDER: For me 17 and 18, I'll probably never hit certain clubs that far again. I've said it in years past. 17 and 18, I'll hit less club from whatever number I have than

at any other time during the year.

That adrenaline, I feed off that stuff. I love feeling the energy of the crowd. You try to swing easy, but there's really no such thing on those last few holes. You're taking that club that's a little less than the number and hitting it hard. That's how it works for me.

JOE PAVELSKI: I think with us, with hockey, you can go out, you can be physical, it happens so fast, it's reactionary. Golf, there's a little bit more finesse to it. And we don't get to get the reps in to really dial it in. Anything can happen out there.

Golf has a funny thing of making you feel certain ways. On the first tee, your name is getting announced, hitting that first tee shot, certain putts. There's times you have it all under control, and there's time where it gets away from you. But you just grind through it and enjoy it. It's great to be out there.

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