

# Abu Dhabi HSBC Golf Championship

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Abu Dhabi, UAE

Yas Links

## Collin Morikawa

### Press Conference

NEIL AHERN: Welcome to the Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship.

**Q. Just wonder, what the feelings are as you come back onto the DP World Tour having departed this part of the world just up the road having won The Race to Dubai, and here you are kicking off 2022 here again?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Feels great. You know, I've been announced for a handful of months now as the Champion Golfer of the Year, but this is the first time someone brought that up of being the reigning Race to Dubai Champion, and there's a lot of weight that's on your shoulders right now. It's a great weight to have and I want to come back as strong as ever. I want to start these first two weeks off on a real high note and hopefully come out with a couple trophies.

**Q. We saw how emotional you were in the victory in Dubai last November. I just wonder how you in the intervening period have reflected on it and what it has meant for you.**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, there's a lot that's been going on. I'd say even since I've turned pro, it's a very unusual 2 1/2 years of turning pro for me in professional golf, obviously with COVID and a lot of other things in the world.

It's just embracing being in the present, I think that's the biggest thing is how do I enjoy the time wherever I am in the world, be with family, friends, whoever it maybe, and it's just really fun. Just travelling to these place and meeting people.

**Q. I don't know whether you've had a chance to see the course here and the challenge that is awaiting this week, but what do you make of it and regardless of the course, obviously a very strong field here.**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, so I saw the front nine yesterday. I'll see the back nine today. It's a very good golf course. Coming from Kapalua where the fairways are



about a hundred yards wide, this looks pretty narrow.

I think the conditions are going to prove tough. We're going to have a lot of wind this week, a lot of different winds from what we are seeing on Monday and Tuesday compared to what the tournament is going to be. A lot of slopes in these greens, a lot of undulations and a lot of run-offs.

You've got to be sharp and you've got to know this course, and especially being the first tournament of the year for the DP World Tour, the new regulations and rules on the greens book. Normally for me, I'm not using it for putts. I'm using it for approach shots and I've already played a tournament with the new rules.

But when you have greens like this and you have a lot of new slopes and you have to learn a golf course, I'm going to have to do my homework. Like I'm going to have to spend a little more time out there preparing and learning what to do because if I don't know where a slope is and I somehow hit it there and I'm a little surprised, that's going to be a problem for the entire week.

**Q. I also wanted to ask you one question about the final day in the Bahamas. You've not had many days like that in your short professional career so far. What does that teach you? Do you think there's more learning in a day like that than just getting over the frustration?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, the frustration goes away. If I was still frustrated about it, I would not be able to play this tournament to the best of my abilities.

So yeah, I was frustrated for a couple days or a day, and you get over it and then I'm motivated. So now it's more motivation but what you learn from a round like that is just a lot, right. We talked about putting, right. How do I not pull my putt. How do I work on my putting. How do I have something to check on in my putting that know I'm not going to start like that the first four holes.

And then when you're put in times of mud balls and you have a bad chip, and I shoot whatever I shot, had 40-something on the front nine, you just look back and a

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couple different breaks here, a couple different breaks there, and you know, I'm still in the tournament.

It was a weird Sunday because I felt great going into it. Game felt good. Warmup felt great. First couple holes felt good. It was just something I couldn't get out of it and I went from trying to win the tournament to just trying to hit a decent putt. Just trying to start the ball on line and then that's the worst thing when you're trying to win a tournament is when you're thinking about things, right.

When we're out there playing well and winning tournaments, you're thinking about nothing other than hitting a good shot and I just wasn't doing that. Sometimes you figure out little fixes and figure it out.

**Q. You've obviously had so many highs in your career at the moment, but the disappointments you've had, are they just as important in terms of learning how to deal with stuff like that, all the highs are great, but the lows, as well; they are the ones that can sometimes define players.**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, I mean, for me, it's not -- look, I get over things pretty easily, and I think for me it's motivation, right. How do I learn off these bad events and how do I, you know, if I miss a cut or whatever it may be, how do I not have that happen again.

But you know, I don't look at it as highs and lows. I think that's for me the wrong way of how I put it in my head. For me, it's just you have a good week, you have a bad week, things happen and that's what we do. We're playing half the weeks of the year. There's going to be some bad days.

But it's just about managing how bad it gets and how bad it could get, and obviously what happened at the Bahamas, you know, we talked about that. It wasn't great. But for me, it's learning about those things, and making sure I never have those happen again.

And sometimes you have to write them down. Sometimes you just have to talk about it with your coach or your caddie or whoever it may be. But looking at it as a low is probably not how I put it as.

**Q. I know you've got a lot of golf to play between now and mid July, but how excited are you to be going to St Andrews as the defending Open Champion in the 150th Open, which is obviously a special occasion?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, it's really special. Look, whenever you're defending a tournament, it means you've done a great thing in the previous year but when it's the 150th anniversary of The Open Championship, obviously

there's a lot of weight on your shoulders. There's going to be a lot of obligations that are on my back for that entire week.

But at the end of the day it's going to be a place that I've never played golf at, a place that I've never been, so I'm still going to have to remember that like every other week, I've got to be ready by Thursday.

So I'm going to have to make sure I space out every media obligation, whatever I have going on for the week, and really space it out to where I feel relaxed and ready to play golf, because it is a tournament that I absolutely do want to defend.

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