

U.S. Open Championship 2022

Friday, June 17, 2022

Brookline, Massachusetts, USA

The Country Club

Collin Morikawa

Flash Interview



THE MODERATOR: Collin Morikawa, 4-under 66. Pretty clean round, only the one bogey. Did you feel like you found something out there?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I think it was a continuation of yesterday. I just didn't let off steam on the back nine. It was stalling a little bit throughout the back nine. Got a fortunate break and a shot on 8, and unfortunately, missed the putt, but that kind of kept the round going.

Overall, it's been similarly the same over the past two days, and hopefully we can continue that for the next two.

Q. Are you starting to think the two-yard draw might have a future?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: No.

Q. No?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: No, that's a great question. No, I think what it proves is just you can play this game with many shots. I remember the first time I played with Tiger, and he hit every shot that called for it. Pin is on the right; you hit a little cut. Pin is on the left; you hit a little draw.

I think this is just going to hopefully make my iron play and make my game a little bit more well-rounded rather than just hitting a cut. But this week we're just going to work with what we have, and right now it's a little baby draw.

Q. You said that your preparation for the last couple tournaments was also pretty good, and you were frustrated that it didn't carry over into the actual tournament. Is there anything different this time that it's carrying over?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I wish I had an answer because then I'd go back and hit myself in the head on why I didn't do that. No, I think that's something I'll have to reflect on later on off the week and see how everything plays out.

This week I think I was just really sticking and knowing what the shots were going to be like, and I stuck to this

little shot shape that I have and was going to play it and figure out a way to play it, and yeah, right now I don't have an answer.

Q. Do you think it has anything to do possibly with this being a major? Is there added focus?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Not necessarily. At PGA the prep felt really good. There was added focus.

Last week I only had a week to practice. I didn't tell myself until Thursday what I really had to do and what shot shape I was going to play and then I really stuck with it.

I think this is the first time where I really had to make a decision last-minute like that where I told myself in practice what I was going to have to do. So far it's just playing golf. It's just hitting different shots, looking at it a little differently, and knowing where your misses are going to be.

Q. Collin, we see you kind of sticking your finish. Today you had a lot of one-arm loose finishes. Does that tell you something about the shot when that happens?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: It just shows maybe I'm not hitting it as center, but it doesn't mean I can't play well, and it doesn't mean the misses aren't going to be good.

I think even when I do play well, I'm going to miss shots, I'm going to have one-handed finishes. Today was just maybe slightly off in timing, but hopefully that was kind of the bad one out of the way swing-wise and we'll be back on tempo come the next two.

Q. You guys avoided the rain today. Just curious how the course was playing this afternoon?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, we got lucky. Jon and I were talking late in the round that for a few holes that it didn't look great, and then I think we got kind of a good draw out of it. A lot of the day kind of calmed down, was really nice, really sunny.

Fairways are bouncy, and you've got to keep it in the

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fairways out here. You can play out of the first cut, but you get five, six, seven yards off the fairway, you're going to be trying to run up to greens, and sometimes you can't do that out here.

But for the most part the greens are still -- I'd say they're receptive. There was probably two or three greens out here that are getting a little bouncy, and you really have to make sure you hit your spots. But for the most part if you're playing out of the fairway, you have a good shot at staying somewhat aggressive to some of these pins.

Q. What do you make of how tight the leaderboard is and some of the names at the top?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, it's a major championship. It's the U.S. Open. No one has taken it deep so far and kind of run away, but you know what, right now my game feels really good. The last few days is a huge confidence booster for me heading into this weekend, and hopefully we can kind of make some separation somehow.

Q. Twice before this week you've opened a major tournament with a round in the 60s. Both times you've left with the trophy. Do you believe in destiny?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: That's such a terrible stat. I mean, I've played 11 majors. It's not a big enough stat to really make anything out of it, but hopefully. I would love to make it three for three. Why not?

Q. When you were younger, did you ever maybe think to yourself what you wanted to achieve by certain ages, like first major, things like that? And then I guess, secondly, I know we're only halfway through the tournament, but is it kind of mind-boggling to think that potentially on Sunday you could only have one leg left for the career slam?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: No, I never put an age on it. Never really thought about it. I just wanted to win golf tournaments, win majors, and compete against the best in the world, and luckily, I've been able to do that.

No, I mean, I can't really talk about what it would be like to win this one. I've got to focus on tomorrow. I've got to stick to my game plan. I've got to make sure I don't run out of steam, which I kind of have been through that kind of little stretch after nine holes. I've just got to figure out a way to focus a little bit deeper and really get dialed in for the next 36.

Q. I guess you said yesterday on 8 is what you're talking about? Did you say yesterday on 8 was kind of a turning point? You got lucky on a bounce or

something like that?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: No, today. Yeah, today I mis-hit that iron shot. I just got lucky.

Q. Then you had the putt. Can you just talk about that?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, I'd say in previous weeks that would be a little worrisome, but this week -- everything is matched up, right, so when I hit that putt, I knew exactly what it was going to do.

I knew maybe I was going to get a little lucky and catch the left lip, but I just knew the tempo was a little off, and that's been a big thing this week.

I threw in practice strokes. I haven't done that for quite some time now. It's not like I haven't, but it's been matching really well, and it just happened to be a putt that I didn't match up.

It was a couple balls outside the hole, so it wasn't like it was the easiest putt. I know it was a short putt, but on these putts out here with a lot of slope you've got to match up speeds perfectly, and it just happened to be a bad stroke. So I'm not too worried about it really.

Q. 66 out here. Did you see that at the beginning of the week, or did you even see it this morning?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yesterday I said I thought I'd see a 66, even a 65 from those afternoon guys. The winds picked up.

Today I thought a couple under was going to be a really good score just based on what the wind forecast was going to be like, but we got lucky.

I finally got a good side of the draw, and it kind of calmed down a little bit on a couple holes, especially when we made the turn on to the front side. Didn't take advantage, but it was nice to see some decent weather kind of fall my way.

Q. How much do you rely on your caddie, especially in a major like this one?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, J.J. has been one of the most important people in my life, in my career so far. I don't think people realize how much you trust him. He's got to understand your game. He's got to understand how you're hitting it, what kind of shots you're hitting. It always comes down to him.

He's kind of my double-check. Do you like this? Do you like this? And I've got to trust him to say whether he likes it or not.

A lot of it relies on our caddies, but at the end of the day we still have to hit the shots, so we've got to be committed, but they're a huge role in how tournaments kind of play out.

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