

Golf Channel

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Brandel Chamblee

Notah Begay

Masters Preview Roundtable



THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everybody, and given what an eventful week it's been, really appreciate you making some time to take part in today's call as we look ahead to next week. Golf Channel will dedicate more than 50 hours of live coverage surrounding the final men's major of 2020, led by Golf Central Live From the Masters throughout the week.

Joining us this afternoon are two Golf Channel analysts who will be on-site at Augusta National all week, contributing to Golf Central after the Masters, Brandel Chamblee and Notah Begay, and in addition to the insight on this call you can also check out the latest episode of the Brandel Chamblee podcast with Jaime Diaz previewing the Masters. The episode was released earlier today and is available wherever you listen to your podcasts.

Before we kick things off, I just wanted to extend, I guess, a few reminders to everybody on the call. First of all, this call is being transcribed, so we will distribute the transcript later this afternoon to those of you on the call, and if for some reason you don't receive it, just send me an email and I'll be happy to get it to you.

Secondly, this call it utilizing a roundtable format, which I know most of you should be familiar with. With that in mind, I would appreciate it if media can keep their lines muted at all times except for when asking a question, and also would like to ask for your patience in doing your best not to step on one another when trying to ask a question. We should have plenty of opportunity for everyone to ask a question or two.

Lastly, I would like to ask that you state your name and media affiliation whenever asking a question. That's about it.

Brandel, Notah, thank you both for making the time this afternoon. We really appreciate it. Before we open up the call for questions I was hoping you both would maybe kick us off with some initial comments, some thoughts, what you're looking for going into next week.

NOTAH BEGAY: Well, I mean, I think the three most compelling story lines aside from the golf course in tournament condition in November and just kind of the curiosity surrounding that from the media standpoint, analysts such as myself and Brandel and in particular the players, just what is the course going to offer, I think, with the forecast looking pretty good with the exception of some rain projections. Maybe that'll change, but looking at the temperatures, my biggest concern for some of the players and in particular Tiger was just if -- it can get uncomfortably cold there at this time of year and it appears they're going to catch a good break in the weather.

So the golf course is probably the most curious talking point from my point of view, and how is Bryson going to come off of his U.S. Open win and how is he going to respond at a venue that historically favors length, but can he put together the magic again in terms of just how he literally went and beat Winged Foot to death with his driver, terrible accuracy, long drives and ended up winning by a convincing margin.

Current world No. 1 Dustin Johnson, how is he going to -- he shot 2-over yesterday in Houston, which I thought was a pretty good start after dealing with COVID, and you just never know how players are going to come back from injuries, and we take it for granted in terms of watching them because they make it look so easy time and time again, but Brooks Koepka I don't think has fully recovered from his break dealing with his knee, and Dustin Johnson, curious to see how the next few days play out for him, but how is he going to come in. He was statistically playing the best golf of anybody in the world over the last couple months, but you take a forced break with physical challenges and I don't know how severe the COVID virus did affect him, but I think there's some interesting points there to look at.

And then lastly, just Tiger, how is he going to get through 72 holes and get his body to cooperate. I think nobody knows the venue better than Tiger, but is that going to be enough. His game needs to show up. I covered him at ZOZO and there was definite signs of rust, there was definite signs of inconsistency, there was definite signs of just not knowing how certain shots were going to come out of the barrel. He was posing on a couple shots that he hit, approach shots, and one would come up six yards short, the other would come up six yards too far, which tells me



he's not calibrated yet, so is he going to be able to get calibrated in time to defend his Masters championship.

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: I'll just pick up and say I think all of us are curious as to how Augusta will play in November. We've all looked at the forecast, it looks like it's going to be pretty favorable for some chance of some firm conditions, which I think would be best for all of us and certainly the players. We'll find out if azaleas can in fact bloom in November. I think we'll all find out that they do and can when Augusta is running things.

Also want to see if this tsunami that is Bryson DeChambeau will completely alter the landscape of golf. There's a chance, and I can't think of another time where we went into a tournament where there was the possibility of a player having such seismic changes brought about because of what he's about to do or could possibly do there. You heard Jack Nicklaus's comments recently that Bryson could possibly drive the first green. That's preposterous. It's the toughest drive -- I'm not saying what Jack said was preposterous; it's preposterous that Bryson DeChambeau, and we're all thinking along those lines. Toughest drive on the golf course and he might just have a flip to that green.

There's been a lot of talk about the power in the game and is it disproportionate, has it become too heavily balanced in the game or tilted towards those that have it and those that don't -- against those that don't. He could be the proverbial straw that breaks the camel's back. Beyond Bryson, I'm looking at two young players who have had almost unprecedented success as youngsters, Collin Morikawa, Matt Wolff. Of course we all know that the last and arguably the first person to win there in their debut was Fuzzy Zoeller in 1979, and I don't think we really count Gene Sarazen but if you want to throw Gene in there you can.

There is a strong possibility that Collin -- either Collin or Matt Wolff breaks that trend, and then beyond that you start to look at players who have no weaknesses, and even though your eye goes to Dustin or Jon Rahm or Justin Thomas, all of them have weaknesses. You start to look at the top 15 players in the world because since the World Rankings began in 1986 that's the average winner. It's not a tournament for everybody, it's a tournament for the very best players in the world, so you start to look at those in the 15 with no weaknesses, and there's two that come to mind, Xander Schauffele and Patrick Cantlay.

Outside of that, there's plenty more to chew on, but that's what has my attention right now.

Q. Just was wondering about a Bryson question; you

mentioned, Brandel, the first hole and just sort of the outside chance that perhaps could he drive that hole. What are some of the other holes that you see him playing differently than anybody has ever seen those holes played before with his kind of length?

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: Well, if you remember Tiger talking about how many players could carry it 320 yards -- and it's easy for all of us to get carried away. Bryson has averaged carrying it 314 yards in 2020.

Now, I feel like maybe after the pandemic it's on the increase, so I'm curious to see if he can, in fact, carry it 320 yards because the bunkers at 1 or the bunker on the right at 1 and the bunkers on the left at 5 and the bunker on 8, these are all at 316, 318 yards. So if he can, in fact, carry the bunkers at 1, 5 and 8, you know, look, I have at various times in my life argued for and against bifurcation -- not bifurcation, for and against the rollback. All of us have some nostalgic and historical connection to Augusta National, and it seems like every single shot has historical context. And there is the possibility that he's going to show up there and do things that not only have we never seen in golf but by far we've never seen at Augusta National.

You know, again, I've argued against making changes in the game for one person or one golf course, but that golf course is so important to the game, I think has such a strong connection to all of us that to see somebody dismantle it the way that he possibly could, I think it'll have us talking for a long time, and changes I think will be sped up if that's the case.

Having said that, I mean, there is a penalty for -- I know there's wiggle room at Augusta, but there is a penalty for missing tee shots. Left at 2 is a huge penalty, right; at 5, even left at 5 is a penalty; 7 is -- you've got to walk single file down that -- left at 10 we know is dangerous, left at 11 is dangerous, left at 13 is dangerous. It's not like he gets to go out there and drive with impunity. I'm very curious as to what he does.

He is the type of player that seems to be able to recreate himself like Tiger, going into Augusta, I am not -- I am wildly curious about what he's going to do off the tee, but what you really need more than anything at Augusta National is the ability to be able to pick it off of hook lies and hit high cuts, and pick it off of downhill lies. He's a very much -- even his rehearsals will tell you that he's a very in-to-out guy and the players that play best there are out-to-in; they cut across the ball. I've never thought he matched up well with Augusta National, but I don't know that that would be lost on him. So maybe in the break he's come up with a different way to hit iron shots, and if he does that with the drives, well, maybe it's the U.S. Open all

over again. But none of us are that familiar historically speaking or nostalgically speaking with Winged Foot. I mean, we are a little, but we can't immediately tell you where everybody used to hit it, but we can at Augusta. And if he's doing things there that nobody else has ever seen or done, well, you know, it's going to be a tsunami in the world of golf.

NOTAH BEGAY: On that point, I think Brandel brings up a wonderful point about the importance of the venue and the tradition and the history, but one other way to look at it is that the Masters and its membership and leadership and decision-making bodies have the unilateral authority to impose any sort of regulatory stipulations that they feel might protect the golf course in the future in terms of maybe making it a requirement to play a uniform ball, because I don't think they have the hurdles that a USGA or the PGA of America or the R&A has in terms of similar types of regulatory changes that would directly address the -- I don't call it a distance problem, I just call it a -- Bryson has done nothing wrong. He's made himself better. He has played within the rules. So to hold him sort of up like he's done something wrong I think is ridiculous, so to speak.

But if there was sort of a uniform ball put in place, I promise you every person invited to Augusta would still show up to play the tournament.

Q. What do you think a Masters is going to be like without spectators?

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: Well, I think since we've come back from the pandemic and played all these events without spectators, after a shot or two -- I can't say that I've really noticed watching on TV, but I think Augusta National will be the one place that will be from a spectator standpoint at home or from those watching on TV at home, I think it's going to be a lesser event.

You think about the roars that sort of echo through the pines there that let you know that something seismic or epic just happened. It just adds to the excitement of the event. There is no other event in my opinion that even comes close to -- not even the Ryder Cup in my opinion comes close to bringing about the excitement that the Masters does. Again, we hear those roars and we think was that so-and-so on 15, was it 13, was it 16, and you're not going to have those roars anymore to let you know that something just -- consequential just happened.

I think of all the events since we've come back after the pandemic, this is going to be the one that I think you will miss the crowd. We will all miss the crowd, and of course the crowd are the most well behaved crowd in all of golf, so

you didn't hear as many ridiculous comments coming from the spectators that sort of detracts from the viewing experience. This is just nothing but top-shelf viewing experience for all of us, and the crowd was a huge part of it.

I will certainly miss them.

NOTAH BEGAY: And from my viewpoint, having been out at Winged Foot and followed Bryson on certain days out there and with the stakes escalating, a New York crowd would have dramatically -- I don't know that it would have changed the outcome, but it would have dramatically made it a heck of a lot more entertaining simply because it's such an animated subset of the American population, the wolf chants and there's a lot of people that don't like Bryson, there's a lot of people that do like Bryson. I think it would have been a much different viewing experience from a television standpoint with a crowd.

And I think Augusta it's going to be sorely missed because in my practice rounds there and having walked the grounds with Tiger on a couple occasions, he would talk about just knowing what was going on in those closing holes just by the sounds of the roars. You know who you're chasing, and he was always so good at handicapping the field come the last nine or ten holes that he knew where they were at and he knew the general areas of the golf course, and so he could kind of keep a mental score in his head just based upon the sounds of what the crowd was telling him was happening in a lot of other places on the golf course, and we're going to miss that.

Q. I'm wondering if you can point to something that you've seen in Jon Rahm that suggests that he has the maturity now and his emotions are under control to succeed at a major championship because we know he's a great player, he's gotten to world No. 1, he's won some big tournaments, but the majors he hasn't really been there on a Sunday yet. Just curious your thoughts.

NOTAH BEGAY: I think for Jon it's going to come down to, I think -- I honestly feel like he needs to get better at assessing when and where to push the gas down and when to play conservative. There were two instances at the ZOZO Championship where it was a Saturday round, he was making a run up the leaderboard, and he had the very reachable 16th, and I watched him hit, it had to have been a 3-iron or 4-iron off the tee which prevented him from reaching the green. Meanwhile, the rest of the field is hitting 3-woods and 5-woods and squeezing it into a relatively tight driving area, getting around the green, which doesn't always produce a birdie, but getting around the green and creating a great scoring opportunity, which

statistically Brandel will confirm that if you can get around the green on a par-5 on the PGA TOUR you'd better do it every single time, otherwise you're losing strokes to the field.

I saw him do it the exact next day when he was right in contention.

But then I think back to THE PLAYERS Championship where he tries to hit the impossible second shot on the 11th hole when he's in the lead, and it just spoke to me that the ability to step out of yourself and look into the situational aspects of a round of golf and see where you're at, see where the rest of the field is at, see the situation that you're being faced with and understand that he has to create scoring opportunities on that particular hole, and I believe he parred the hole both days, and theoretically could have lost two shots to the field, and he just ended up missing out on a playoff.

I think that's what has to happen, number one. I think he's well capable of getting himself in contention, but when he does get in contention, to have a better understanding of when you need to roll the dice and play aggressive, especially risk-reward holes, 13, 15, and holes like 12 where you certainly better not shoot at that pin regardless of where you are in the field if it's right, no matter how good you're hitting it that day.

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: Yeah, I would agree with almost every bit of what Notah just said. You know, he's going to win major championships. There's no question about that. He's played in 16 majors, and he's already had four top 10s and three top 5s. He's played well at Augusta already. Played three times, finished 27th, 4th and 9th.

The weaknesses that he has are that his golf swing gets quick, certainly quicker on Sunday than it is on Thursday when he's in the lead. He hasn't yet figured out how to be the same person in the lead that he is chasing or building that lead to the first three rounds. You know, short quick golf swings tend to be that way.

You look at Tiger Woods, he walks slow, and you don't even have to have it in slow motion to watch his transition. It's that rhythmic, that beautiful. Same with Jack, same with Phil.

I can't think of a short quick golf swing that has won the Masters. That's not to say he won't because he can -- because of his power he can get sort of past some of the more difficult aspects of the golf course, where he's got shorter irons into greens. But yes, he has to figure out how to slow things down such that he can be the same person on Sunday that he is Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and

that's -- when I hear people talk about the maturation process for Jon Rahm they typically will refer to his temper. I don't see it that way. I don't think his temper hurts him one bit. As a matter of fact, I can make the argument that he's better when he's angry than he is when he's not. Certainly his birdie percentage goes up when he's angry. His birdie percentage goes up when he makes a bogey.

There's been a lot of really good angry golfers. I don't know anybody more angry than Tiger when they played. I don't know that his anger hurts him at all, it's just that his tempo does. He's got to figure out how to own that space, that space from transition to backswing to downswing, and then it's, here we go, we're off to the races.

If he sneaks up on the lead, if he doesn't have the lead and he's chasing on Sunday and not in the lead, he'll be, I think, a formidable contender. If he's got the -- it's a little more problematic for him, which is crazy, right. Everybody always says they want the lead and everybody thinks they want the lead, but not that many people are as good with the lead -- very few people are as good with the lead as they are chasing.

Q. I wanted to ask Brandel, what does it mean to be a first-round leader at the Masters as opposed to maybe other tournaments, and later in life what does that mean that you can look back at that and what do you do with that crystal?

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: You know, it's funny, Notah -- I mean, Notah may remember how many PGA TOUR events he led after one round. I can't tell you how many I led after a round. But every round at Augusta it is -- and major championships for that matter, but particularly at Augusta because they do commemorate sort of whole experiences and day experiences, they commemorate it there with crystal. I just moved into a new house, and I know exactly where the gob lets are that I got for making an eagle at Augusta, I know exactly where the vase is that I got for having the equal low round of the day. Again, all of us have some nostalgic connection with that place, but if you've played it once you've likely left there with -- you've probably left there with some crystal for an eagle or -- it makes you feel warm and fuzzy all over for sure.

I think it's -- the fact that more people remember that than anything else I think speaks to the mediocrity of my career, but I won't deny the fact that I have especially fond memories of the Masters because of one day and one hole. That's not to say the rest of the week wasn't marvelous, as well; it was. When people say there's nothing like the Masters, that's what they're talking about is all those little bitty traditions that they have there. No other event -- they pat you on the back, you're making an eagle

or shooting a low round, they don't even know it. But at Augusta they pay attention to all the little things.

If I'd only had a good ghost writer that week.

Q. Quick question about last year. When something happens like that, I think a lot of stuff gets immediately forgotten and the only thing anybody talks about is Tiger winning and probably rightly so. What's maybe one or two things that you think kind of get overlooked about last year's Masters, whether it's a player who probably should have won the tournament and didn't or a surprise that you think maybe has been forgotten?

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: Oh, a lot. I think people overlook the fact that Dustin Johnson and Xander Schauffele finished second because Dustin wasn't one of the ones in the mix on the 12th hole, certainly wasn't at the very top of the leaderboard. I think we overlook the fact that Finau has now gone 10th and 5th in the last two Masters. We talk so much at the Masters about the par-5s and about taking chances and about laying up or going for it on the par-5s and being able to draw it here and fade it there, but -- and yeah, we do talk about the uniqueness of the 12th hole there, but the 12th hole is really -- it is a referendum on whether or not you have the right stuff to win the Masters.

By and large if you win the Masters you have not made a double bogey. I mean, you can go back 10 years and that's 720 holes in regulation that the winners have played and there's been two double bogeys in a lot of those. You go back further and it's about the same. You just -- the double bogey says so much about the type of strategy that you're playing, that you're employing that week, the control of your technique that week, the control of your ability to scramble and your cognitive status that week, where you're at.

That 12th hole challenges all those. I don't know that there's ever been a clearer example of what made Tiger Woods Tiger Woods throughout his career and where everybody else struggles than what took place last year on the 12th hole. For all the talk about how far everybody hits it now, it's that little bitty hole, the shortest hole on the golf course, which almost every year gives up the most double bogeys and others, and three of the four that were closest to winning that championship found the water.

Again, that is the difference between -- well, there's a lot of differences, but that is probably the larger difference between Tiger Woods and everybody else. You don't close out 54-hole leads in the 90 percent range without having demonstrably the greatest mind in the history of golf. That's all about his calmness.

You watch Tiger Woods walk to the first hole with a 54-hole lead or walk in between a green and a tee when he's in contention, and nobody walks slower, nobody is more calm. He's not fidgety, and it's very hard to go through and -- Notah just mentioned the shot that Jon Rahm hit on the 11th hole at THE PLAYERS Championship the year before last, and it's very hard to find or think of a corresponding shot that Tiger has ever hit in a situation like that.

It's because he is -- in a gambling game, he's the house. Everybody else is splitting eights and he's the house.

You saw it right there at the 12th. It's a little bit of an irony that we talk about how long you have to be and this, that or the other that you have to do, but really what he did at the 12th demonstrates I think more acutely what you have to have at Augusta National to win.

NOTAH BEGAY: Sort of further on that point, I get Brandel and I can sit here and wonder whether that's an innate ability or learned ability. I would say it's more innate than learned. I've known Tiger over 30 years now, and I've never seen anything different. I've played him head-to-head in the U.S. Junior in 1990 at Lake Merced, and we played together in college, and even though our team had four seniors and one freshman and we had just won a national championship, he was our sort of emotional baseline. He was always calm. He was always very wise for his age when it came to golf.

Now, off the golf course, he was sort of just like us, another 17- or 18-year-old kid. But once you stepped into that world and that realm, he became a different person.

I think he's refined that skill through the years, but I think it's always been a part of just his emotional DNA just how calm he stays and how his heartbeat almost slows down as the pressure starts to escalate, and those are things -- those are just remarks that he's made to me in passing in terms of just how he feels like when everything is on the table, it moves so slow to him, and we hear that term in sports. You hear it from NFL quarterbacks that everything seems to be moving in slow motion, major league pitchers, great batters in the major leagues, they can see the ball differently than everybody else. That's just who Tiger is.

I think that a player like Jon Rahm, his skill set I think will allow him, I agree with Brandel, to win majors, but he's going to have to work hard on that part of his game because he does have a very quick short swing, and to maintain the cadence and the flow that you have to have throughout the 72-hole requirements of a major can be a bit challenging when you have a quicker tempo to your swing.

Q. Brandel, I was wondering if I could ask you guys what you think of the rumor that Bryson might try to drive it into the fairway on 14, and how far would you have to hit it to get it there?

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: Well, I'm sure that, again, this is the advantage that players are using today, and we've seen it, I think, in the lack of a need for great experience. You know, players are using Google Earth, they're using their dispersion cones and laying it on the golf course and then they're using saber metrics to find angles that veterans, it never occurred to them, and they're playing the game in a very highly sophisticated way, much like Tiger played the game.

And some of these young players that are coming out are, in fact, playing the teacher role and not the student role. Along those lines, Bryson will know exactly how far he can carry whatever driver he shows up there with, and he will map out a dispersion cone over every hole but certainly on 13, he'll know how high he can hit it, at what distance, and then what wiggle room he's got to play with with the trees on the left. Apparently there's a new tree that's sort of hanging out or looming, Bryson will know how high the darned tree is. And he'll know at what point in his tee shot the ball should reach a trajectory to get over it.

In fact, let's say he shows up with a 48-inch driver and it's some semblance of what we all saw on Instagram. He's not going to be swinging that free, but let's just say he is carrying the ball over 320 yards, which would be crazy in November, but with a 48-inch driver it's reasonable. He's going to carry it -- he's going to be out there 360, 370, which would put him, depending upon how much he goes left there, which would put him close to the 14th fairway, which would put him with a short iron -- just a flip into that green.

You know, it may well be that one hole -- it could well be just one swing of the club that changes this game. To find another corresponding time in the history of this game where one person, one club, one change to this game, maybe you could argue Adam Scott winning the Masters, but I'm not sure we could come up with another one that was that important.

Literally when he gets on that tee, the entire world of golf is going to hold its breath. If he teased us before he got there with some similarly stupefying tee shots.

Q. I just wanted to ask you about kind of compare Matthew Wolff and Bryson DeChambeau. I thought it was interesting at the U.S. Open on the 9th hole on Sunday when Bryson hit it 375 and Wolff hit it 381.

Bryson has done all these things, he lifted weights, he went to the gym, drank protein shakes, did all that stuff to get there, and here Matthew has done none of those things and was six yards past him. Are we going to see more guys like Matthew Wolff? I don't know how many guys are going to try to do what Bryson has done, but it seems like this distance revolution is probably not going to be limited to just these two guys. Any thoughts you guys have would be great.

NOTAH BEGAY: I think that's a great comparison. You're looking at sort of natural God-given speed versus developed and built speed, which is why I think what Bryson has done is even that much more impressive. He's kind of found this, what I would call the holy grail of power, and he's actually been successful in achieving increased distance and ball speeds without sacrificing the other elements of the game, and if you even look at his putting stats, it's gotten measurably better.

I think that's the model that more people are going to follow. I don't know to that extent. It's pretty intense what he's doing. To maintain that kind of additional muscle mass on your frame is quite an undertaking. It's quite a commitment. It's not something that just kind of -- you build it and it stays there, you've got to maintain it, you've got to make sure that all of your provisions to prevent injury are in there. It's not just the tournament swings that are a detriment to his overall health and mobility but the guy will go and he'll hit 50 to 100 drivers swinging at those speeds on the range.

That's a lot of stress to put on your body, and the fact that he's been able to sustain it for the better part of a year now and not be hurt is pretty impressive. But we're always going to have guys like a Matthew Wolff who grew up in the Tiger Woods era, watching Tiger dominate Augusta National like he started out his first Masters was in 1995 and he hit pitching wedge into 15 and that basically set the world of golf on its heels. Kids growing up like Matt Wolff just grew up trying to hit it harder, and when you start at a younger age and you swing faster, you swing harder, you're going to have more kids that hit it further.

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: Yeah, look, I've said this for ages. You look at all the time Dustin Johnson spent in the gym and Brooks Koepka spent in the gym and Rory McIlroy spent in the gym, and a guy who wouldn't know how to find a gym hit it past them and drove it better than them and that's Bubba Watson. I've always thought now even with Bryson DeChambeau going to the gym you're looking at the wrong and chasing the wrong rabbit because you have a better example in Bubba Watson and now a better example in Matthew Wolff of how to create speed. You can skip a lot of those things they're doing in the gym and

just turn more with your lower body, and that's exactly what Bubba Watson did. That's exactly what John Daly did, and that's exactly what Matthew Wolff does.

Matthew Wolff is just fortunate that he wasn't encumbered by teaching early on in his career, so he came to that the same way Bubba did and the same way John Daly did. Every single one of them would have been told not to turn that much. Matthew is also lucky he ran into George Gankas after he had already created that swing, and George is -- at the time, now there's more and more teachers like this, but at the time he was one of the few teachers that believed in a big hip turn and that believed it was okay to lift your lead heel, which Bubba does and John Daly does. And they all -- Daly never went to the gym; that's for sure. Bubba Watson didn't go to the gym. I don't know about Matt Wolff, but Matt Wolff had that power when he was a kid. Matt Wolff is not a particularly -- he's six foot tall, I guess, and he's athletic looking, but it's the golf swing that you can learn from. Everybody is looking and talking about how much weight Bryson has put on, but it is the long drive elements that have added, I would argue, the bulk of the distance. He has copied long drive hitters which turn more, lift their trail arm more and extend and rotate through the shot. He's just copied long drive elements.

Bubba probably wasn't trying to copy long drive elements, Bubba was just out there trying to hit it as far as he could, so he just learned to recruit the most movement. Same with John Daly and same with Matt Wolff. While it's easy to get caught up with what Bryson is doing, it's just much easier to incorporate some of the movements of Daly and Bubba and Matt Wolff to hit it farther.

Q. Notah, you're kind of the ultimate Tiger insider. I'm just curious, when did you feel last year that Tiger was going to win the Masters? And also, could you give a little insight into what you think Tiger is doing this week to prep?

NOTAH BEGAY: Well, it was basically for me the clincher was the tee shot on 17 on Sunday. That tee shot his historically -- it doesn't set up well for him. Three out of four times, especially with, as markedly harder as it's become over the years, he always hits it in the trees for some reason. He absolutely just striped it, and I'm just like, this is done, because he loves the tee shot on 18, even though for some the tee shot on 18 is harder than the tee shot on 17. But that was when I knew that his swing was under control, and what we've talked about on this call, is just his tempo, his composure.

He didn't get encumbered by the moment. You know, I probably was way more emotional than he was just

because I know for a very fact everything that he had to go through everything to get to that point to actually have it. So many players have walked into those two holes coming off the 16th creating some energy with a birdie, and the jacket is right there. You've got one arm in it, and you just have to do what you've done your whole career, which is just play your average game basically and make a couple pars, and so many have failed.

When I saw him hit that shot, I knew from just his reaction, his expressions on his face and how he was walking that it was over at that point.

Q. Any insight as to what he's working on this week?

NOTAH BEGAY: You know, so the practice sessions heading into ZOZO were wonderful. The practice rounds at ZOZO were great. Got off to a horrible start in his opening round for whatever reason. Kind of brought it back on Friday and then struggled over the weekend.

So I don't think that it's any single thing in particular. We did see that the putter needs to wake up, but again, you look at his putting performance at the last major, he missed nine putts inside 10 feet over 36 holes at Winged Foot. But that's a place that he's only played a handful of times. But he's going back to a place where he's won five times and knows those greens better than anybody, knows they're going to be fast, knows they're going to be relatively firm. Brandel mentioned it's a little uncertain just how firm.

So I think there's a better chance for the putter to wake up at that point, but it just comes down to that. I think he's going to -- getting on the grounds there is going to wake up some things, some adrenaline, some focus in his game. I think tee to green he'll be solid. It's just he's got to make those critical putts to keep rounds going and to avoid double bogeys and all the things that you have to do that he understands very clearly are requirements to win the Masters.

Q. Are you concerned about lack of reps or do we make too much of that with Tiger?

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: Well, I'm certainly not a believer in rust. I mean, Tiger played, what, six times in 2008 and should have won all six of them, could have won all six of them. Hogan famously played a handful of tournaments from 40 or 50 on and would win most of them. It's about whether or not he can physically do the things that he wants to do or that he is swinging the way he wants to. You know, form will win the day.

I think that he's been out of sorts, and I don't attribute it to rust at all. I think whatever it is that he's working on in his

golf game in the last year and a half or last year I'd say, since his win at ZOZO, either he's just not physically able to do the things that he wants to do or he's lost his way a little bit in what he's trying to do.

I'm not a -- I don't buy into it being rust at all. It may be age. His club head speed at the ZOZO that we just played at Sherwood Forest, his club head speed was down to 112, 113, 114 miles an hour. He was 116 for most of 2020. That's a significant drop for him to fall almost down to the average club head speed on the PGA TOUR. And without a corresponding benefit of accuracy. You know, that's definitely a hurdle.

He won the Masters last year. Yes, he did hit some key drives. Notah alluded to the one he hit at 17. He also hit a brilliant tee shot at 7 on Sunday. It was a trap cut 3-wood, and he hit a brilliant tee shot on 14. So I mean, these are -- I mean, he didn't drive it particularly well on 5, but 7 and 14 and 17, key drives on Sunday, and he absolutely put them where he wanted to. But on the whole he drove it very poorly last year and won the Masters.

But he had more pop than he has displayed this year. And he hit his irons tremendous. He's got less pop, he's still driving it inaccurate and his irons aren't as sharp. Hopefully whatever form he had in those practice rounds that Notah is talking about or whatever he's going to work on from the ZOZO to the Masters, he'll find something because there is no place that treats its former champions or elderly players better than Augusta National.

He still has some time if his body is holding up. It looks like it is. His swing looks plenty long to me. But it was surprisingly very slow at Sherwood.

THE MODERATOR: I want to thank everyone for taking the time to join us this afternoon, obviously including Brandel and Notah.

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