

Men's Olympic Golf Competition

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Saitama City, Saitama, Japan

Kasumigaseki Country Club

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Quick Quotes

Q. Thank you for coming today here. What is your role in this Olympic game? What do you do for this Olympic games?

KERRY HAIGH: So David and I, David works for the European Tour, the European PGA TOUR. I work for the PGA of America. We are part of the IGF and our role and responsibility is for the golf course, how it is set up, how it plays, what were the speed of greens, height of rough, width of the fairways, hole locations, tee locations. So everything to do with how the golf course plays for both a men's Olympics and the women's Olympic golf competition.

DAVID GARLAND: We both did the Olympics in Rio. So we were both there doing the same job. So second Olympics doing this.

Q. I'm sure you have done lots of major tournaments before and what is the difference of the course setting from the major tournaments and Olympic games?

KERRY HAIGH: So, yeah, we both work for 30 plus years doing exactly what we're doing is setting up golf courses for our biggest events in the world. I'm responsible for the PGA Championship, Ryder Cup, David does the Ryder Cup and their PGA Championship and also works at other major championships. So in terms of setting it up, this to us is just as important as a major championship and we treat it the same and we try and set the golf course up based on its design and architecture for the best players in the world to hopefully showcase their skills, make it a tough, challenging, interesting, but exciting test of golf for both the men and the women.

Q. To win a gold medal what score are you getting?

DAVID GARLAND: We never set the course with a score



in mind. We set what is a tough, fair challenge and then it depends how the players play. In any big tournament we never set a score to or we want to be 1-, 10-, 20-under par, it's not done that way.

KERRY HAIGH: I think our focus is on making it a great test of golf, we'll certainly dependent upon what the weather brings, if we get wind or not and all the factors that come into making the players score whatever they score and to David's point, we do not worry about what the winning score is, just hope that it's a great test of golf and the best player this week wins.

Q. So you worked for the Rio Olympic games and did you learn something and then did you learn something from there and then did you bring something new for this course?

DAVID GARLAND: The golf courses from Rio to here are completely different. The golf course in Rio was a brand-new golf course, very few trees and completely different in terms of design, etcetera. But from experience you have to take what the golf course gives you. Now here the golf course is an old traditional golf course that has been modernized and is excellent and the greens have lots of contours and slopes and give us lots of opportunities to put different hole locations and make it slightly different every day, to test the players. So we're very happy. But there's nothing specific, I would say, that we maybe learned from Rio to bring now, because it's, we have used all our experience with our 30 years of very big golf tournaments to Rio and to here.

Q. Tom Fazio redesigned this course recently and why did it happen that the 2020 Committee asked Tom Fazio to redesign this course or what the process of redesigning this course? Do you know the history of it?

KERRY HAIGH: To be honest, I don't know the history, that was before we were involved, but I would assume that, like most clubs, they want to continue to make it a great championship venue, which it already was and has been and they're really just trying to keep up with the changes in golf and technology and they have done a wonderful job



doing what was done.

DAVID GARLAND: The golfers now hit the ball so far, right? So sometimes on maybe older, very old golf courses, bunkers, the players always fly too easy. So I think you put the tees back, sometimes there's not room or you move the tees in your redesign to keep it modern and relative to the game we have and they have done a very good job here. So organizing Committee, golf club and Fazio have done a great job.

Q. IGF asked Kasumigaseki Country Club to close for two months to get prepared. Is that like how it works for the Olympic games and for the next Olympics games do you think you will take that same process, that the course has to close for two months to get prepared and to set up the IGF standard?

KERRY HAIGH: Yeah, I'm not sure, we were not involved in the discussions of when the golf course was closed, but we certainly very much commend the course and the club for doing so, because the conditioning of the golf course is unbelievably good, as good as any golf course you will find, because there's been so little play on the golf course. So they're to be commended, but we were not involved in those discussions.

DAVID GARLAND: And in Rio, because it was a brand-new golf course, no one had ever played before Olympics. But again, you want to showcase the very best of Japan golf and again we have to thank the club for doing that, because every player thinks the golf course is in fantastic condition. No complaints on conditioning.

Q. I've been to the course and I checked the course setting and then it's not too long, not too short, it's kind of decent length to cover the hole, so the players cannot see the ball in the rough, which is in a decent range and also like around the greens the grass is kind of against the greens, the grass grows up against the green, is that like how you intended it to do or is that your intention?

KERRY HAIGH: With regards to the rough, we're very happy with the rough. We did mow all of the rough yesterday afternoon, I don't know what time you went around, but right about three inches of height. To your point, the ball sits down and the hope is that the players will have difficulty controlling the ball if they're in the rough. So the spin. So there is some penalty for hitting the ball off the fairway. So I think again very happy with the height of the rough and how it is playing and around the greens the rough is the similar height. I'm not quite sure what you meant with the standard, we did put a bevel cut around the tall grass from the short grass and have sloped it. So if

that's the point you were making, but we are extremely happy with how the rough is today and hopefully it will play very fairly.

DAVID GARLAND: If this bit was green, if this was a green and then we come into rough, and this was the rough, (Indicating), right? We cut here (Indicating) so the player has a shot, rather than the ball being up against the grass. So we make it just a little bit shorter only at the very beginning and then high. So it goes from there and then it's there (Indicating).

Q. In terms of length of fairways or like grass, do you have any Olympic standard for that? Length of fairway or rough?

KERRY HAIGH: We do not have an Olympic standard. To David's point earlier, we look at each golf course, the type of grasses and what we feel is appropriate for the time of year, the temperatures, etcetera. So we do have a sheet which we can give to you with the mowing heights of every grass. And we can get that to you.

DAVID GARLAND: Again, just because in Rio, no rough. No rough at all. So by design of the architect it goes fairway and then it goes to scrub land, because it was down in a very natural area and there's like rough and much more, very natural. So it went from fairway to natural land whether it be sand and scrub.

Q. I heard you fertilized, like you put twice as much as normal. So what about the density of the grass?

DAVID GARLAND: The density is because it's a special grass, Zoysia, which is a very dense grass. But to insure that we got to this quality with the agronomy guy, Mr. Dennis Ingram, he's been taking that. I don't know how much fertilizer has been applied, but it's all we can say is the golf course is fantastic condition.

KERRY HAIGH: The agronomist, Dennis Ingram, has been here for 11 weeks, every day, working with the team to prepare the golf course as we see it. Magnificent.

Q. I'm sure you have set up lots of golf courses, the Japanese grass is almost like same as American zoysiagrass?

DAVID GARLAND: Yes.

KERRY HAIGH: Yes, we have both worked with a similar type of zoysiagrass, so I think we are familiar with how it reacts and how it plays.

Q. Is it similar to Bellerive?



KERRY HAIGH: Yes, Bellerive was one. Yes.

DAVID GARLAND: It's like here under the trees, yes.

Q. So you're familiar with that type of grass?

DAVID GARLAND: Yeah, because I think it's, it might be just a -- I don't know, it might be more of the -- I never heard the word or the term, but it might be more of a national name for that grass. That grass might be called something else in maybe Singapore or maybe called something different in Korea, I don't know, but it's a very similar type of grass. But I don't know this grass.

Q. So you have those kind of grasses in the U.S. as well?

DAVID GARLAND: Yes, I don't work in the U.S. very much, Kerry is from the United States, I'm in Europe.

Q. Can you talk about more sand in the bunkers than usual? Are you doing that?

KERRY HAIGH: No, I think at every major championship and obviously the Olympics is exactly the same, that part of the preparation is to test how deep the sand is on the faces and in the bases and to either move sand around or add sand where needed, so that they present a consistent and a fair challenge. So the faces we try and firm and the bases have enough sand so you can play a good bunker shot out of the bases. So very consistent with what we do for all our big events.

Q. The Olympic games was postponed to this year, so did you have any troubles or did you have any like anything that was hard to cope with for yourself?

DAVID GARLAND: Not -- I think to have maybe two years from a visit, because it was difficult to come into Japan because of the COVID regulations, that made some planning tricky. But Dennis Ingram made enough visits from agronomy and we got photographs, so it was just a different way, as we have all had to adapt to live under COVID is different, we have adapted rather than maybe making more trips.

Q. Can you talk about the Stimp and compaction of greens. Do you have an idea of how fast and how steep?

DAVID GARLAND: I don't know what the compaction is but on the Stimp they're about 11 feet six inches. Because we have got to keep the greens for two weeks. We need them for the ladies as well. So you need to balance, not

just one week, it's two weeks.

KERRY HAIGH: And I would say that the speed of the greens is what we feel is appropriate for the amount of slope in the greens and there is quite a lot of movement in those greens and the speed is appropriate for these to make, to still allow us to set very challenging hole locations on the greens. The compaction, we very much relate it to Mother Nature and how much rain we do or do not get and the heat and the humidity, having to keep the grass alive. But we monitor it and we'll do our best to make it, as I say, a great challenge for the men and women.

Q. For the women's competitions are you going to cut down the grasses a little bit?

KERRY HAIGH: Yes, for the women's Olympics the golf course is pretty much the same, the speed of the greens will be very, very similar and we will cut the grass between the men's and the women's and depending how it plays, how much rain we get will determine if we adjust the height in any way.

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