

PGA Championship

Thursday, May 16, 2024

Louisville, Kentucky, USA

Valhalla Golf Club

Jimmy Kirchdorfer

Quick Quotes



Q. It started and now it's for real. Tell me about all the work behind this and how you made it happen.

JIMMY KIRCHDORFER: I just drove through the gates. We've had practice rounds. Just drove through the gates and it just hit me: There's a major championship being played. I looked over on 18. There's a major championship being played on the golf course.

And that was a great feeling. So much time went into it. The PGA of America's staff, I'm so impressed, Ryan Ogle, the championship director and the staff he put together; and every detail, they think about. Because they do this every year, and we don't.

So it's impressive to me as a business person to watch the execution that they do. I'm proud that we've provided a lot of volunteers, this community has, 3,000, and that all seems to be well-orchestrated and working really well, and we're getting rave reviews from the players on the conditioning of the golf course because a lot of time, and remember, we closed the golf course on November 6 just to keep it closed through the winter to let John and his staff be able to do the maintenance they needed to do.

Q. Compared to 2014, how many things have changed?

JIMMY KIRCHDORFER: A lot. A lot since '14. Mainly it's the fairway grasses. It is now zoysia, Zeon Zoysia, which is cut really tight, but you have a less chance of getting mud when it's wet than the bent. Maybe a little easier surface to chip off of and a heartier grass.

But the great thing about it is it's more sustainable, requires less water and less chemistry to grow it, which allows our staff to focus on other parts of the golf course. The rough is healthy and thick this time of year. You can get some -- we cut it to three inches around the beginning of the week, and it will keep growing all week. The greens are growing fantastic and just everything the staff has done.

Q. Some examples of the initial feedback of any

comment you're getting from the community, from your members, from the stakeholders in Kentucky?

JIMMY KIRCHDORFER: I see a lot of smiles on people's faces when I see people from our community. A lot of people are grateful that the PGA has come back and holding this event, and they have brought so many great championships and a Ryder Cup to this community, and there's so many great memories throughout the community.

I think it brings back great memories. People are saying, I was here with my father; Tiger had an epic duel with Bob May, or I was here with a great friend in 2008. It just brings back great memories of those coming back here.

Q. So the last thing is, there was a question yesterday about the future of Valhalla and the PGA. What would be your vision?

JIMMY KIRCHDORFER: Well, the reason Junior, Ches, David and I bought the club was to continue to have major championships in this community. And there's no doubt that there will continue to be major golf events come back here. This community has shown up for this. We have set record hospitality sales and ticket sales, and I'm proud of the Louisville community and the Kentucky community for how they supported it and the investments that Junior, Ches and I and David have made in this facility makes it an even better venue for that.

So I have no doubt that we're going to continue to have major golf events in the future at Valhalla.

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