

The Memorial Tournament Presented By Workday

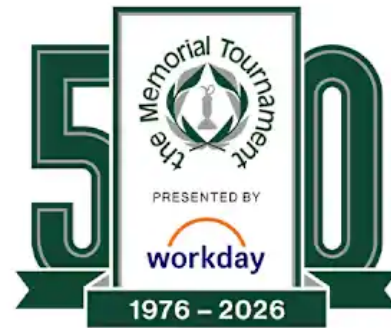
Tuesday, June 2, 2026

Dublin, Ohio, USA

Muirfield Village

Jack Nicklaus

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome the tournament host and founder of The Memorial Tournament Presented By Workday, Mr. Jack Nicklaus, to the interview room. We're honored to have Mr. Jack Nicklaus, the founder and tournament host, with us as usual every year for our little chit chat.

Jack, it's a special year. We're celebrating the 50th anniversary of this event. You've got beautiful new logo. It's everywhere. People are aware of it.

JACK NICKLAUS: It looks nice.

THE MODERATOR: It does look nice.

JACK NICKLAUS: Who came up with that?

THE MODERATOR: Somebody on your team, that's for sure. They're really good.

I wanted to ask you the first question. How old were you and where were you when you first came up with this idea of starting the Memorial tournament, building Muirfield Village? It's 50 years on from now. I mean, it's pretty fascinating to me how does that start and come to fruition.

JACK NICKLAUS: Okay. Well, it started in 1966. That was the year that we were at the Masters, and Bob and Linda Barton and Jim and Jeretta Long were flying down to watch the Masters and crashed an airplane in Bristol, Tennessee. Lost their lives. Bob was probably one of my closest friends. I wasn't going to play. I decided I wasn't going to play the Masters, and his sister Margie said, No, no, no, Jack. Bob wants you to play. You play. Don't do that. So I played.

And that week we had a lot of time to reflect on what was going on. So Ivor Young, who is one of my three -- four guys that sort of founded this place, we sat and talked, and he said, Wouldn't it be great to bring something back to Columbus similar to what is here at Augusta? Augusta does such a great job and has such a great tournament.

Wouldn't that be great for the city of Columbus?

And I said, Okay. I say city of Columbus because Dublin really didn't exist back then. Dublin was about 500 people, maybe, if that many. And so Ivor started looking for property. He picked about 11 sites around town. This was the first one I looked at, and I looked at two or three others, and I said, Hey, Ivor, I real really like that property. I said, I've walked that as a kid. My dad and I used to walk through it hunting. Never shot anything. Maybe it was void of animals, I guess. I mean, there's more animals now than there was when we were here.

But anyway, we picked this site, and I think started out, and I bought 150 acres, which is right sort of where we are. Then I bought another 100 acres right next to it. It was George Treschewski's place. I can't remember who the first people were. So I had 250 acres. I said, Oh, that's just not going to get it done. I said, I want that land up there. The Williams family in Cincinnati owned that, and it was 1,100-and-some acres, and so I went and bought that, and now I had enough land. I had more land than I wanted. And I said, How am I going to do this? How do I pay for it?

And so we ended up -- Putt Pierman was a friend of mine. He came along and said, I think I can get that financed for you. We went to the Ohio Company. The Ohio Company did a public financing. Those of you who know all this, you're just listening to it again. We did a public financing. We had 2.45 million for the golf course and a clubhouse. That got through and was used up at the golf course.

At that point I took the golf course. And the people who were my partners in the development, I said, Look, guys, I'm really not interested in the development. I'm interested in the golf course. I'll just trade you. I'll give you the development, which they were delighted to have. Golf courses were not winners. And so I took the golf course and they took that. And we had 187 acres, I believe, that we took for the golf course.

And then I structured Muirfield so that I couldn't make any

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money. And I did that on purpose. I was a playing golf at the time and, you know, I didn't want my fellow competitors saying, oh, hey, Jack's just profiting off of us coming into his town. So I structured Muirfield where I couldn't make a dime. As I said, I did that on purpose.

So I paid -- I paid \$155,000 for the 187 acres, and I gave the club an option to buy that from me at any time, which they did after about 10 years. They paid me 155,000 for Muirfield Village Golf Club. How about that? How would you like to try to buy that land today for that? You couldn't even come close to buying a lot.

Anyway, we built the golf course. 2.45 did not take us to the -- build the clubhouse. We had these very expensive memberships. I think a membership was a \$10,000 membership and 9,000 refundable (laughing). I sort of laugh at it today because we still have some of those out there, some guys who are some of the original members.

And then we went ahead and built the clubhouse, obviously financed the clubhouse. We used the old Treschewski house on No. 6 as the original clubhouse until we could get this one built. And then this clubhouse here sits just in Franklin County. And Franklin County and Delaware County -- Delaware County was a dry county at the time. So we ended up taking -- used a cherry-picker out here where the clubhouse is, and we went up from that to get an elevation where I wanted the 18th green, but the clubhouse had to be in Franklin County because the 18th green, I think, sat in Delaware County. The county went through there.

So we had to do that and -- let's see. I don't know. I should say the rest is history. But we built the clubhouse. Joe Dey came out during -- who was then commissioner came out and walked the property with me. And this is sort of actually your question, I think. And we're trying to figure out what kind of a tournament we had. And prior to that, I had talked with Joe, and he says we needed to sort of pay our dues a little bit to get the date I wanted.

And so we sponsored and worked with Charlie Mechem to do the Kings Island Open down in Cincinnati at Kings Island. And so we did two years of that, maybe three years. And that became the forerunner of the Memorial Tournament. And Joe worked with us to get the date around Memorial Day, and they said, Well, what could be the theme of the tournament? And Joe was very good at helping the theme. He said, Why don't you honor some of the golfers of the past. That's never been done before. And some of the people who have made significant contributions to the game.

And I said, That's great. I says, Well, how do I do that?

Because I says, I can't do that myself. I don't think that I want to be in that position. He says, Well, why don't we get a group of golfing statesmen and let's call them the Captains Club.

And so we formed the Captains Club. And the Captains Club was, you know, guys like Byron Nelson and Chick Evans and -- was Gene Sarazen one of my originals? Yeah. Sarazen. Let's see, Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Sean Connery, all walks of life. Presidents of the USGA, captains of the R & A. And that group has come together, and it's still that group. And I only ask two things of 'em. One is to select the honoree every year, and two, perpetuate your membership. And that took it out of my hands.

And I'm not a member of the Captains Club. I never have been a member of the Captains Club. And I said, I want to be out of that position. They do the exemptions. They do all the -- they do everything that relates to the structure of the tournament.

THE MODERATOR: Can you imagine being here now 50 years later after having the idea in your head of building the golf course?

JACK NICKLAUS: Yeah, 51 years later, actually. You know, can't pass up 50. That was Barbara. Where is Barbara? She's back here somewhere. There she is. Hi, Miss Barbara.

I mean, did I have any idea? You know, first of all, we didn't -- the name of the tournament, it's called the Memorial Tournament. And the reason it's called the Memorial Tournament is that the Masters also is called the Masters Tournament. And why is the Masters called a tournament? Well, it's called a tournament because Bobby Jones did not want it to be called a championship. Jones felt like he was using what the USGA and the R & A and the PGA and the players that played best in those three championships made up his field at the Masters, and he wanted -- it would be presumptuous to call it a championship, so he called it a tournament.

And I didn't want to be presumptuous here in calling this any more than a tournament because I felt like our goal was to be of service to the game of golf and to try to further the game, bring the game back to the place where I grew up, bring it back to the people here. Originally Muirfield Village was -- the original sewer and water, it was taken from the city of Columbus across the river north, and we shipped it back to the town of Dublin, and then we became part of the town of Dublin, and it just continued to grow.

We had great support from Dublin. Dublin's now -- what's



Dublin, probably 70,000 people, I would guess? Somebody have any idea? What is it? 50,000? About 60,000 people in Dublin. Well, Dublin's done fairly well. I think we probably had a pretty big influence on that. We're very proud of that. And we've had great support from the whole Central Ohio and actually the whole golfing world. Did that answer your question?

THE MODERATOR: Yes, it did.

JACK NICKLAUS: Maybe a little too long.

THE MODERATOR: And it's turned into an amazing tournament with a terrific field this week, one of the best, and we're all looking forward to it.

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, thank you.

THE MODERATOR: The golf course is in great shape. Let's jump into some questions.

Q. In April, Rory McIlroy joined you and Tiger and Nick Faldo as the only players to go back-to-back at the Masters. Knowing your personal relationship with Rory and the talks that you had with him trying to get him in the right mental space to get over the line, I'm wondering how gratifying it's been for you to see him and what he's done in Augusta the last couple years.

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, I was delighted for Rory, obviously. You know, I told you -- I mean, I didn't tell you. We sat down -- I think we sat down two years ago, the weekend before the Masters, and had lunch. And I said, Okay, Rory, tell me, how are you going to play the golf course? And he says, You want all of it? I said, Yeah, give it to me shot for shot.

And so Rory went through it shot for shot, and he said, What do you think? And I said, Well, I wouldn't change a thing. I think it's exactly the way you should play it. He varied from it one time. He varied from it on the 3rd hole. He said if the pin was left, he was not going to drive it, but he would drive it every other time.

Well, he drove it on Sunday on that and put it right at the base of the hill and made birdie. But he gave himself a chance to make more than that. But that birdie probably won the tournament for him that first year.

And so this year, I saw him on the practice tee just before he was teeing off, and why he was out there that early -- because I was getting ready to go to the first tee to do our opening, and I put my hands on his shoulders, and I said to him, No effing double bogeys.

So anyway, he had Amanda Balionis and she did an interview, and she said, What did you do? And he repeated what I had said to him. And I think that's the key to it. The key for him was not to make double bogeys. He did end up making a couple the last couple rounds, but he didn't make any the first two rounds. So I was very happy for Rory. I was delighted for him. I've been a big Rory fan. Now he's only got one thing left on his resume that he really needs to have and that's to win here. So you tell him that he's got to do that.

Q. A great tournament would start with a great golf course, but when you started this and wanted it to be the best it can be, what else makes a great tournament to make it stand out from the others? Start with the course and then what?

JACK NICKLAUS: I think there's a lot of things. I mean, first of all, the course, the date. I think the purse to some degree, not a major degree. If you have a really good golf course and you really have it in great condition, the players, by their comments of what it is, sort of help advance that. I think most of the players that have come here have really liked the golf course and really liked the condition.

But also, you know, one thing I tried to do is I knew how I would like to be treated as a player and where I went and what I did. And, you know, there's some tournaments that did it pretty well. Some did it fair. I think we do it pretty well here. And I think the whole idea of making sure that the players are taken care of from a practice facility -- to be able to get from the practice facility to the putting green and the first tee, to be able to -- you know, I think autographs are great for the kids and so forth, but there's a certain time and place for 'em, and to me, it's not on the golf course. The practice area and that area is fine.

So that was one of the things we did. Augusta does the same thing with that. I think that we saw all those things that people -- that I liked to have done as a player. You have your courtesy cars. You have -- you try to just -- I'm forgetting 90 percent of it, but, you know, I always sort of liked the way things -- so we try to do that here. The way I would like to be treated, the way that I thought a player should be treated, that's what we wanted to do here. So that's part of help building what you're doing.

I think that the support you get from the golfing community and the press, obviously. You know, you guys have given us great press. You've given us great respect as far as what we do and what we try to do. That's very important to what we do.

Q. The second part of that, you were in a sweet spot in

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terms of the Masters in April. There was nothing in May at the time and then on to June, July, and August. Given where golf is now with all these \$20 million Signature Events and rescheduling, is it harder to stand out now than it was then?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, I don't want to comment on the TOUR's schedule because I'm not exactly in favor of what they're doing right now. But I really haven't had a conversation. I want to sit down with Brian and Jay and have that conversation. I mean, I hate to see tournaments bunched too much together with too many big tournaments too close together. That's a problem, I think. And I think that's going to be a problem for the TOUR in the future.

But anyway, that's neither here nor there. I probably shouldn't have brought it up here. I'll get chastised for that later. Anyway, I think it's harder for your tournaments to stand out. I mean, if you looked at the schedule, we're involved in the Cognizant down in Florida, and, you know, we have Pebble Beach and Los Angeles, Tiger's event, and then Cognizant, and then we had Bay Hill and THE PLAYERS. I mean, what chance does that tournament have? I mean, it sits right in the middle of those. They don't have a chance.

The other tournaments also say, you know, I got four out of five. It's hard for guys to play that. See, the problem is not so much from the standpoint of players, it's hard for the players to really be focused to play that much and be on top of their game. And that, to me, is -- I look at it from the way I was as a player. I could play a couple weeks in a row, maybe three weeks in a row, but I needed some time off to be able to recharge the batteries. And I think everybody needs to recharge their batteries.

So to jam it all in in one period of time, and then leave the rest of the year open, I think it's tough. I don't know whether that answers your question or not. But I mean, I think that's -- I don't think it's a problem yet, but I think it will be if we don't address it.

Q. 18 majors is going to be hard to beat --

JACK NICKLAUS: Hard to what?

Q. Hard to beat. 18 majors won.

JACK NICKLAUS: Might be.

Q. What gets talked about less, and some people think just as --

JACK NICKLAUS: I'm sorry?

Q. What gets talked about less but just as impressive is 19 second place --

JACK NICKLAUS: Not in my mind, but that's okay.

Q. Do you ever think about the seconds? Do you have regrets?

JACK NICKLAUS: No, I never worried about any of the seconds. The seconds to me, as long as I prepared myself and gave it my best effort, and I got beat, that was okay. Somebody just played better than I did. And I never really had a big problem with that. Early in my career I gave away the U.S. Open in 1960. I gave away the British Open in 1963. But those are learning experiences. I think you to have learning experiences -- and I sort of gave away the U.S. Open in '61 also.

But learning experiences help sort of mold your thinking of how you go about what you do in the future. It's part of how you prepare yourself, how you're ready to play, how you're ready to go into it. And as I said, as long as I've done that and been there and prepared properly. You know, there's 144 guys usually out there, or maybe not anymore, maybe 70 guys now, 72 guys here, that can beat you, and you just got to be just a little bit better than they are and a little bit better prepared.

Q. Did you like to -- well, obviously, you always liked to be in the lead. Did you like to sit on the lead or did you like to come from behind?

JACK NICKLAUS: I think it's always easier to come from a little bit behind. I was in the lead, I think, in 12 majors going to the last round, and I won 10 of 'em. I don't know which ones I choked on. I can't remember. But I didn't win two of 'em, I guess.

But, you know, Tiger won every one of his from being in front except for the last one when Y.E. Yang beat him up at Hazeltine. And I think that sort of shocked Tiger that somebody could do that. But, you know, that happens. If you look at a record book, it may be a little harder on you to be leading, but it's probably -- historically, it gives you a better chance to win.

Q. U.S. Senior Open is at Scioto. That's where you learned the game. What did Scioto do for you in terms of the way you play?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, first of all, Scioto has all the out of bounds on the right. So I was not going to learn how to play golf aiming out of bounds and hooking it back. So I would much rather aim at the center of the golf course and cut it, and that's how I learned to play left-to-right, because

of the golf course. And I think that's the biggest thing that Scioto did for me, learning how to -- I could hit it as hard as I wanted to when I wanted to, but I also learned how to keep it in play. And I think that the nature of Scioto was that.

Q. Adam Scott in a couple weeks will tee it up at Shinnecock not only to play the U.S. Open, but it will be his 100th consecutive major championship start. It's not 146 straight, which have you done, but can you give us your opinion on how significant that accomplishment is for Adam?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, I just took a picture with Adam about it just a few minutes ago. And first thing he says is, A hundred, it feels like an eternity, and you got 46 more. He says, I don't think I'll make that.

Well, anyway, it doesn't make any difference. But anyway, I think to be prepared and be able to play and stay healthy so you can play is quite an achievement. So Adam has kept himself in shape. He plays well. I don't know how old Adam is now. What is he? 45 maybe? 45? So he's got a few more years to play in him. Whether he'll get 40 more, I don't know. But anyway, he's been a good player and he's been right there. On a lot of tournaments, he's had a lot of opportunity to win a lot more than he has. I think he's just won one of the majors. But he's been a good, good player.

Q. I wanted to ask about something way, way down the road. It was just announced that the U.S. Open is coming to Inverness in 2045, which is crazy to think about.

JACK NICKLAUS: 2045?

Q. Yeah.

JACK NICKLAUS: I hope you have a nice event.

Q. What do you think about -- I think it's going to be the first major championship back in Ohio in more than 50 years. What do you think about a major coming back to kind of one of the classic tracks?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, I played my first one there, as you know. I played a lot of exhibitions at Inverness, played a lot of tournaments there. I wanted to throw darts at the leaderboard on the 4th tee. You don't understand that comment yet, but I'm going to tell you the comment. Because I birdied the first hole, I parred the second hole, parred the third hole, and I went on the 4th tee and looked at the leaderboard, and Jack Nicklaus was right on the leaderboard as a 17-year-old kid. I immediately made double bogey at the 4th hole. My name went down. So it

was up for about 10 minutes.

But I'm obviously being facetious about that. But I've always liked Inverness. I think it's a nice golf course. It's an old Ross golf course, if I'm not mistaken. They have kept the tradition of it pretty well. I don't know, they probably have redone the golf course. I don't know. But there's a little there.

Q. Does Toledo hold a special place in your memory at all? It's where you met Arnie, four majors, your first U.S. Open, the list goes on and on. When you look back, does Toledo play a big part?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, I met Arnie -- no, I didn't meet Arnie in Toledo. I didn't meet him there. I was a 15-year-old playing at Sylvania in the Ohio Amateur, and I came off the practice tee on Tuesday afternoon. It was pouring down rain. I was the only person on the golf course, and I was walking into the into the clubhouse. There's only one person on the practice range, and here was this guy who looked like Popeye hitting 9-irons and hitting 'em about quail high.

And I said, Man, is that guy strong. And I said -- and I walked to the clubhouse and I said, Who in the world is that on the practice tee out there hitting balls? They said, Well, that's our defending champion, Arnold Palmer. And that was my first sighting of Arnold. I didn't meet Arnold until I was 18, three years later.

Q. You mentioned walking Rory through how to play Augusta. Have you done the same for this course?

JACK NICKLAUS: Here? For him? He hasn't asked me.

Q. Why do you think this place has been kind of kryptonite for him?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, I don't know. Maybe because he hasn't asked me. I don't know. (Laughing). No, I don't know. You know, I think that this golf course is a golf course that really requires patience. I mean, I was talking earlier to Kris Reitan -- is that his name? Is that how you pronounce it? Yeah, I was talking with him about it, and he asked me about the golf course a little bit, and I said, Kris, it's a golf course -- I didn't design it for big hitters, didn't design it for short hitters, didn't design it for the middle. I tried to design it so we could take care of everybody and try to give a fair shake to every kind of player. And when you get that, you can't just stand up and just whack away at it on every hole.

I tried that in my early years. I didn't do very well. So it's a golf course that takes a little bit of patience and learning.

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The golf course plays better -- I think plays better playing left-to-right. But that's the way I played, so that's the way I would think. It's a golf course that plays better in the air. The greens really require a little bit of elevation a lot of times to keep the ball in play. I never played with spin. I played with trajectory, not spin. I think spin gets you in a little bit of trouble.

Some of our greens here, if you take 3, 6, 9, 10, 14, 15, 17, and 18, too much spin is -- if you spin the ball off of those greens, what happens? Not a good result. And I never played that way. I always tried to play -- because I found out that I can spin the ball just like anybody else can spin the ball. Any of these guys can do anything they want. So you start playing more with trajectory.

So those are the things I think you have to learn on this golf course. I think Augusta's a trajectory golf course also. I don't even remember what your question was.

Q. How do you want --

JACK NICKLAUS: I would love to see Rory play well here, obviously, yeah.

Q. How do you still want to impact the game at this stage in your life?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, I'm not really trying to impact the game any, I'm trying to make sure that just what we do here is right for the game. Anything that, anything that the TOUR or anybody wants to sit down and ask me and talk about, I hope that I can, through the experience that I've had, be of some influence or what do you call it? Something to bounce off of, something to bounce, somebody to bounce off things. And I'm too old to worry about trying to create new stuff, I'm just trying to make sure that the game of golf -- the game of golf's a great game, it gave me everything that I had the opportunity to do. Most of these, most of the people out there, same thing, the players. And a lot of you are in here writing because of golf and it's given you the ability -- I know most of you write other sports too -- but it's a great game. It's a game that I love and it's a game that I want to see the traditions of the game being upheld. I think that the golf has been in its recent years has been a big, big, big benefit to charity. Charity's been a big part of the game of golf and bigger than any other sport. I would like to see that continue. I just think that to be able to show and demonstrate to people that how to sort of kind of, not tell one how to live their life, but I think most of these golfers out here, they play the round of golf, they finish the round, they take their hat off, they shake each other's hand, and they say, Well done, or they say, Oh, you played like crap today -- I don't know what they're going to say. But it's always a nice

salutation.

Arnold and I, we had as much of a competition as any two guys could ever have. And we walked off the 18th green, shook hands and shook hands and, you know, it's, Where are you going to dinner tonight? Well, go grab Winnie, I'll grab Barbara, we'll go to dinner. That's the kind of thing that you make the friendships through the game those are the kind of influences I have. I don't like to see confrontation. I don't like to see bad blood. I don't like to see those kind of things happen. I don't think you have a lot of that in golf. I think we're very blessed by the nature that the game has is a civil game.

Q. You've been one of the loudest supporters in the game on the, on rolling back the golf ball. I was wondering what your reaction was to hearing the news a couple weeks ago that Cam Young was potentially playing a golf ball that would conform under the new proposed standard from the USGA?

JACK NICKLAUS: What was it you said? Who could what? Who would play?

Q. Cam Young is reportedly playing a golf ball that would conform under the new standard already.

JACK NICKLAUS: I didn't know that. Can you tell me why?

Q. Apparently it would pass the new test for golf balls that's going to go into effect.

JACK NICKLAUS: Yeah, but why is he doing it?

Q. I don't think it was -- you would have to ask him.

JACK NICKLAUS: No, I'm asking you because you're the one who is talking to me about it.

Q. As far as I know that wasn't the intention to create a golf ball like that. It just happened to pass the test.

JACK NICKLAUS: Was he complaining about it?

Q. No, he's not.

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, you know, maybe it's okay. You know, I think that Cam has had a great run and he's played very, very well this year. I'm very happy for him. And, you know, most of the guys, whatever the golf ball is, they pass the golf ball back to what, 2030 now? I mean, it was 2026, then it went to 2028, I think it's back to 2030. And it's crazy. I keep saying, it's like throwing a deck chair off the Titanic anyway. It's not very much. And, you know, I

mean, it's like, it's going to amount to -- well it's going to amount to you to probably less than a yard. Do you play golf?

Q. Yeah.

JACK NICKLAUS: Do you play it decently?

Q. I like to think so sometimes.

JACK NICKLAUS: Okay, well, it won't make any difference about a yard to you. Maybe two at the absolute most. And you'll never know that. And, you know, to the pro maybe, to a Rory or maybe as long as there is, might have maybe 12 to 14 yards it might pull him back. It might be a benefit. Might keep him out of trouble. I don't know. But you know, I mean, it's insignificant. The only thing that's good about it is that it's actually reined in the game back a little bit and pulled it back to where it shouldn't get any further than that. Let's hope not. I mean, we run out of real estate. We run out of time to play. We run out of money. We run out of water. You run out of all kinds of things. I mean, you know, we're not all like Augusta where we can go buy another golf course if we need to lengthen the tee. I mean, it just, I say that facetiously, but it's, you know, they had the ability to be able to do some of those things. Not many other people can do that. I mean, if I want to lengthen this golf course anymore I got to go buy Dublin Road, you know. You can't make that happen. And so that's only the 6th hole. But we're limited by what we've got. So you can keep making it so we're, to where the game can't be played. I mean if Cam's playing a ball that's happy with and it conforms, you know, tell him to give it to the other guys and let 'em try it.

Q. You think that the rollback would go far enough as it stands right now, even though Cam is playing a ball that would, against players who aren't?

JACK NICKLAUS: Yeah, against what?

Q. He's playing this golf ball against players that are using golf balls conforming under the current standard.

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, it can't make much difference. But, you know, most of the golf balls, most of the reason why the guys will complain about the golf ball being brought back is because of the manufacturers. And I mean, the manufacturer complains to a player and says, No, no, don't you tell 'em that you want that golf ball rolled back, otherwise you aren't going to be working for us. You know, we got manufacturers that are in there because they can tell the players that they got to do that. I think we had one instance of that earlier by a fellow who used to play out

here. But -- and it was -- it's the -- and I don't understand why a manufacturer would worry about that from the standpoint because, you know, if you make the best golf ball you're going to continue to make the golf ball whether it goes five yards further or five yards shorter. It's not a big deal. It's just now getting to the point where we got to buy more land to build, to do anything. I mean, we had, we have probably, in this country today we probably have, if you don't touch the golf courses that are out there, and play 'em the way they are, we probably don't have 20, 25 maybe 30 golf courses that are really of championship caliber, really, without fooling around with 'em. If the ball was brought back a little bit, you know, we would have a lot more golf courses. Anyway, it's not a popular subject.

Q. You were pretty nonchalant with my two yards you're giving away.

JACK NICKLAUS: I'm sorry?

Q. You were pretty nonchalant with my two yards you gave away.

JACK NICKLAUS: What about your two yards?

Q. You just said it's only going to affect me one or two yards. That's a lot for me.

JACK NICKLAUS: I doubt if it will affect you six inches. I've seen you play. I mean, no way it would be any more than that.

Q. Can you tell me your favorite fishing story.

JACK NICKLAUS: Fishing story?

Q. Yeah.

JACK NICKLAUS: Oh, I don't know. My favorite fishing story, you mean that I was involved in?

Q. Yes.

JACK NICKLAUS: I suppose it was my marlin I caught in Australia. Is that what you want to talk about?

Q. Exactly.

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, yeah, it was a big fish. Yeah, we were, Crenshaw, Pate.

Q. Jerry or Steve?

JACK NICKLAUS: I'm sorry?

Q. Jerry or Steve.

JACK NICKLAUS: It was the Great Barrier Reef, yeah. But I'm thinking Lietzke, Crenshaw, Pate, I think was there another one? I don't know. Anyway, Pandel Savic and Bob Hoag were with us too. We were fishing up there. Kerry Packer from Australia always took us before the Australian Open. Anyway, we went there, fished three or four days, caught a few fish. The last, next to last day I caught, I got on to a big fish. And it was the fish jumped 10 times. Jerry Pate has it all on super 8. And it took six hours and 25 minutes to catch the fish. Largest black marlin by measurement that's ever been caught. Weighed -- lost probably over 10 percent of its weight, so it weighed 1,358 when we weighed it. Seven and a half feet long, short measurement. Seven foot girth, 29 and a half inches at the base of the tail. Big fish. And anyway, the fish got mounted and brought across the Pacific and the box that was in there, every place it stopped was, Great fish, Jack. Nice going. Great. I still have the box. It was 1978, I still got the box the fish was shipped in. And anyway, took it and put it in the living room of our house and Barbara immediately put a red flag on the pectoral fin because it was right about neck high. Ended up building a guest house to put it in. That's the short version.

Q. Is it still, is it in Florida?

JACK NICKLAUS: Yeah. Yeah.

Q. The other question, when you and Gardner Dickinson were talking about splitting away from the PGA of America, did you envision what you see today as the PGA TOUR?

JACK NICKLAUS: Nobody had any vision. I think basically the TOUR back in those days, the PGA of America, when you signed the entry form to play at a golf tournament, they took all your rights. And so the PGA of America had the rights to everything that you did. And we didn't think it was fair that we -- you know, there was some endorsement things you could do and so what the PGA of America really sort of controlled that and I think that we, the players wanted to control their own destiny more. And that was when Arnold and Gardner and I were on the board and we were the ones that we, 1968, we broke away from the TOUR or broke away from the PGA of America and formed what was then the ATP I think we called it, Association of Tournament Players. And we hired a fellow named Sam Gates as an attorney to put that thing together. We then hired Joe Dey as our first commissioner. And the TOUR's just grown from there. We had some conflicts with some of the tournaments that supported the PGA of America, the Canadian Open did, so we weren't eligible to play in the Canadian Open for a

couple of years. But that was sort of the forerunners, is that what you're talking about? What are you getting to? What do you want? What do you want? What controversy do you want?

Q. Well, you started it with the schedule thing. I just, just the idea that obviously this is, we're in a much more evolving TOUR now with private equity money coming in, splitting off. You talked about charitable contributions. The TOUR now is, I mean, you know, a for-profit organization that it wasn't before. There's a lot of differences between now and what it was 50 or 60 --

JACK NICKLAUS: Big, big difference, yeah.

Q. And that was all I was asking about is what you were thinking back in the day.

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, I told you. Yeah, I told you. I think today, you know, unfortunately or probably fortunately, I haven't been in the middle of it and know exactly what's going on, so I can't really comment too much on what's going on today. I think Mark would be far more versed -- or not versed, but versed on what would, what's going on today than I am. But I think that the TOUR, the PGA TOUR is probably the healthiest it's ever been. I think it's doing well. The players are, I mean we got a great group of players, it's an international game. Tours on the other side of the Atlantic and tours in the Pacific and even in South America, those tours are all helping build and grow the PGA TOUR. I don't have a comment really on the LIV thing because I don't really know what's happening, it's none of my business. But I think the PGA TOUR's really healthy. I'm proud that we were back in 1968 we were able to start something that's gotten to this point.

Q. I wanted to go back to the 146 in a row. Was there ever a time where you came close to not being able to play, to missing one? You had a WD at one --

JACK NICKLAUS: I don't think I ever had any that I came close to missing. Because -- I can't remember what was the first one I skipped? British Open maybe? '98? I skipped that early?

Q. It ended with Birkdale. You started --

JACK NICKLAUS: Ended with Birkdale then.

Q. You started with '62 at the Masters and then played everything through -- well, I guess through '98 U.S. Open at Olympic.

JACK NICKLAUS: Oh, I did not play Birkdale?



Q. You did not play Birkdale in '98.

JACK NICKLAUS: Why did I not play Birkdale in '98?

Q. Because you chose not to play anymore. Your hip.

JACK NICKLAUS: You think that was why? Well, you worked for me then, didn't you.

Q. I wanted to know from '62 --

JACK NICKLAUS: That's right because I have -- well no, no. Was it? My hip was that bad then? But that was '99. No that was -- that was in -- that was '98. Well, that was the same year. Oh, how about that.

Q. I guess my question from --

JACK NICKLAUS: Okay, I don't know.

Q. From the '62 Masters until you did not play Birkdale, for reasons that we'll figure out later, was there ever a time where you nearly missed a major?

JACK NICKLAUS: I don't think so. No, I was -- I knock on wood, I said I'm sort of blessed that I stayed healthy. And I think a part of my ability to stay healthy was my ability to come home and do other things. I came home and practiced football with the kids or played basketball practice or pitched batting practice or water skied or, you know, even snow skied. I did all kinds of things that kept me active. I think that was great for my body. I didn't get one sided with my body, you might say. So it allowed me to play without ever getting really too injured. The injury that I had was caused, my hip was caused by injections that I had, I had 25 injections in 10 weeks in 1963.

Q. Why?

JACK NICKLAUS: In my hip. And 25 in 10 weeks. And I think that destroyed my hip. Which I'm sure it did. I'll never forget asking my doctor, I said, Ben, I said -- now he says, What do you think? Your right hip's fine. Why do you think your left hip is so bad? I said, Well, Ben I had 25 injections in 10 weeks. He said, You had what? I said, Yeah. He says, Oh, my gosh. I said well we can't -- and I said, Ben, I'm not litigious. I'm not going to sue the doctors. They're all dead. And then he said Well, in that case it probably caused it. Anyway, I was very blessed that I kept myself in condition to be able to play.

Q. Surprised that marlin didn't take more out of you.

JACK NICKLAUS: That marlin tore me up pretty good.

But anyway, it was all right.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Everybody have what they need? Mr. Nicklaus, we appreciate it. Thanks for the time and good luck for the tournament this week and thanks again for being a wonderful host.

JACK NICKLAUS: Thanks, appreciate it. Thank you all. I hope you have a nice week. We're certainly looking forward to it. We have, as I say, we have a great field, we have a golf course that's in great shape, I don't think there's anything that's -- the weather right now is cooperating. So it should be a great week. Thank you all very much.

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