

# Sentry Tournament of Champions

Wednesday, January 5, 2022

Kapalua, Maui, Hawaii, USA

Plantation Course at Kapalua

## Collin Morikawa

### Press Conference

RACHEL NOBLE: We would like to welcome Collin Morikawa to the interview room here at the Sentry Tournament of Champions. Collin, third start at Kapalua, two top-10 finishes, just some comments on what it's like to be back here.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: It's a great place to be back. When you're spending the new year and you're starting your first tournament of the season or of the new year at Kapalua it means you're doing something right and hopefully we can just continue that.

You had to have won to get here and it's just a great feeling, it's a great kind of ease into the year here having such a small field and no-cut event, not the easiest walk to start your year off, especially after taking some time off, but it's a great place to be, the views are beautiful and I love Hawaii.

RACHEL NOBLE: With that, two-time winner last season, eight top-10s, just recap that for us.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, it wasn't everything that I wanted, I think the consistency factor wasn't quite there to what I've kind of harped on since turning pro, but any time you have a two-win season that's going to be good and obviously the two wins were pretty big.

And I think looking back there's a lot of positives which I'm definitely going to make sure I continue to kind of feed off of. I think you that's a big thing is not just look at the negatives and not look at the down sides but is to look at the positives of what I've done well and I've definitely been able to do that and how do improve from that.

But there's also a lot of aspects that I want to keep working on and that's what's great about what we do.

RACHEL NOBLE: We'll open it up to questions.

**Q. I think I missed something, you just said that you**



**look at positive and not negative?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: No, I look at both. I think when I first turned pro I looked at a lot of like, if I didn't play well, you have like a mediocre finish, right, you kind of harp on what you did bad and then sometimes you have to do that.

But I think when you do play well you have to remember what you've done really well as well. You play well and then you want to keep playing well, you want to keep winning and sometimes you go on another tangent and you search for something different, when you forget about what you actually were doing really well that week.

It's me just talking with my coach, with Rick, figuring out what were the mindsets, what were we thinking when we did play well because those are the times you want to draw back on.

I still go back to when I won my first big junior event the Western Junior and there's still things that -- like there's one thing that we still talk about like that still helps with my swing sometimes when you're in a little rut, right?

So you have to remember the good things, just as much as you remember the bad things and learn from both of those.

**Q. For those of us who weren't at that Western Junior I'm kind of actually fascinated by it, what are your strongest memories from that?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: It was --

**Q. Where was it?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: It was somewhere in Indiana. I don't even remember and that's probably bad on me. But I had tried something out in my swing that one week and, granted, I don't really do it, but it taught me something about just hitting a golf ball that's still good to remember. It's kind of almost a drill now. Yeah, it's pretty simple.

**Q. Can you share what it is or is that just something for you?**



COLLIN MORIKAWA: No, I think that's something that I'm going to keep. It's fairly simple though, it's nothing out of the ordinary.

**Q. I want to ask you about your new equipment. We're hearing about this carbon face driver. Can you tell me about it and what changes you've seen in your game from it?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, TaylorMade's been able to put 60 pieces of carbon together on the face and it's unbelievable, like the feel is there, which is great, obviously the first thing, first two things that we look at is feel and sight and obviously the red face took me five hits, hit it, don't even think about it anymore, I think it looks so clean.

But the carbon, it creates a feel that normally you would feel off a titanium face, titanium driver. TaylorMade has already, in the past few years, has already put carbon in part of their heads, on the top, on the bottom, but to really put it in the face and to change that technology it's been fantastic.

And I've actual sleep some increases in ball speed. Like this is the first time where I've actually seen that jump, which has been great. Any time you can get a little more ball speed, get a little more distance, it's going to be helpful. To actually see that, not work any harder, like it's -- like I haven't gotten that much stronger, I haven't gotten that much bigger -- but to get that just little extra out of it, it's going to be beneficial sometimes on certain holes.

**Q. I guess, how important is that club for you, I guess, given that we know that you're the best iron player in the universe. Like that's not something you don't ever have to worry about, but the driver is the one thing that maybe you can get some improvement, right?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, absolutely. I've got to put it in the fairway, so it obviously starts from the tee and that's a huge aspect of my game because it's not just from the fairway, like I still put it in the fairway, I still need to put it in the fairway, so it's huge. Knowing that I can trust a driver that's not for me, it's not going to go left, I can hit my left-to-right cut shot and just be able to hit that everywhere we go, it's really crucial for me just trusting the product. So far what I've seen in this short, short time it's already beaten what I've had in the past and that's what's great because I'm sure there's going to be tweaks here and there, like it's still very early on in the season of figuring out and making sure my swing is exactly where I want it to be, but the club has produced some really good shots and that's what's great is that so early on into the testing it's been really easy to transition into it and that's what you can tell is that, like we're not thinking about the face, it's just

thinking about, okay, how do we match the spin to what we want, the launch to what we want and it's been really easy to mess around with that.

**Q. What does or what did the chase for No. 1 mean to you?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, look, it's been a dream my entire life to get to No. 1 in the world, but it's not just about getting to No. 1 it's about sustaining that.

Having the opportunity to, obviously having an opportunity here, it's all in my control, all I can do is try and win the tournament and that's all I'm going to focus on.

But it's a huge goal, it always has been and it means something that when you do get there it means you're doing something right or at least a good amount of things right. It's just about continuing that process and it's not like that's a peak just, I get to No. 1 and I can go retire and relax on the beach, like there are still so much things that I'm going to keep pushing myself when that, if or when that does happen.

So for me it's just every week go out and try and win and we'll see what happens from there.

**Q. Have you seen or felt or will you expect to feel a change with the green reading book situation? Is it something that you focused on or not?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: You know, yeah, I mean it's huge. Obviously with our yardage books we can't use any of our old yardage books, so -- and it was at this point now where I've seen every course, but now I like to take notes, I like to put big arrows, just so I can see it a little easier in my eyes.

But, yeah, I mean, for me the green reading books, like I used them a lot for my approach shots, like to know where pins are at, to know what kind of slopes are five yards versus 10 yards away, like can I use this.

So it's going to be an adjustment, because pretty much throughout college even like we were using them. Like our college teams had them, we were using them and I probably used it more for approach shots than I did for putting, but it's still going to be an adjustment to kind of remember. So maybe that's on my caddie to remember all the slopes before we go.

**Q. Will there be a player or two that will see an extreme benefit out of the change?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Possibly. I think that's, it's an unknown right now, right? I mean we all say we use it, or a

lot of guys use it, but to what extent, we don't know. Are guys maybe going to realize they're better green readers than they were before because we were relying on something that was given to us rather than sometimes really feeling it out. Some guys might have great feel that they didn't know they had. So it can go both ways. I really don't know how it's going to go.

I mean, I think so far obviously this is the first tournament without 'em, I think I'm going to be fine, just knowing how I use 'em in the past, I trust my caddie with everything we do anyway, so I'm not too worried but I'm sure a lot of other guys that really rely on it, they, you've got to find another way, right?

**Q. Guys have talked for years about trying to peak for the majors, for the biggest events of the year even I'm curious your philosophy on trying to peak in a game that's very awkward to begin with in terms of funny bounces and you just can't predict so much of this game. How do you go about that?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I think and I've heard it since I've turned pro, right? How do guys prep differently for majors, how do you go into these weeks differently than normal events because they do want to peak, meaning they do want to just win these four events, or at least play their best in these four.

For me I think peaking is more just, it's more about like can you get your rest, can you get your prep in, can you do everything before the week actually starts and then when you show up to the week for me at least it's been the same as every other week is how I prep.

So I'm not going to show up to a major playing four, five events before being drained by the time I show up at a major. I think that's how I kind of look at peaking is making sure everything away from the golf course is where I want it to be and then I can just go and do what I normally do week-in and week-out is show up on Monday, do my prep Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and by Thursday I feel really ready.

That's how I've kind of gone about it, but absolutely, like for me I want to win every event, I'm showing up to every event the same way and but some weeks they might fall in a three-week stretch, some might fall at the beginning of a first week and you don't know. But majors you kind of plan them out to make sure that you're well rested, I think that's really setting you up for success for you to peak.

**Q. Can you think of moments in your relatively still short career where you went into a major feeling like you were in a good spot and didn't deliver or times**

**where you weren't quite sure and then played lights out, St. George's, for example?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: St. George's was, The Open Championship was weird because I felt like I was actually playing really well. And forget about the Scottish, because the Scottish, it was a, I was searching for answers, right? I felt like I was swinging well.

The U.S. Open was maybe two, three weeks before that and I was hitting the ball well, I felt great with my clubs and everything felt the same with that prep going up to the Scottish, but I knew something was off. Like I knew -- and we always talk about don't blame it on your equipment, don't blame it on this, but like I felt that good about my golf game that I knew something with my irons, something was just off. So I had to go find that answer.

Thankfully I did, right? So I didn't feel that off, once I was able to switch irons, once I was able to switch the weight in my putter. So I wouldn't say like I felt off before the week, I just needed to find that answer. Once I did on Monday, it was smooth sailing or not smooth sailing but it was like -- I was really confident with how the week at least stepping into Thursday how it was going to go.

**Q. Considering the start to your career of winning quickly after graduation and the next year and the next year, has this felt like one big season since you turned pro or have you been able to find yourself stopping points and starting points again?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, knock on wood, I mean this 2021-2022 season could possibly be my first normal season. Obviously we had COVID and we had a Super Season last year, so yeah, it has felt like just a continuation of a lot of golf. I mean, it's been a lot and ever since college I've always taken about a week off during the winter and then I get that itch back, I get that kind of want to just go and grind and be out there and that kind of lasts he me through the entire year.

This kind of break it took me a little longer to get over that hurdle of like getting the itch back. And it's not, I don't think that's a telling sign of, like do I not love it, do I love this game. Like I still love it, I love it even more, but I just needed a couple extra weeks, just a little more time to really realize that, okay, now I'm ready to just go out here and just love it and grind and be ready to play some great golf.

**Q. What did you do post-Bahamas, golf club wise?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Not a lot. We had some sponsor days and that was my so called practice. I had some

friends come over that wanted to play golf, so I would play with them. It was really light. It was kind of just keep it as light as possible.

**Q. So when you would get ready to ramp up for the new year did you push the date back a little bit?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, I mean I kind of just felt it out. Like when my friends came over it was still early on into my break, so that got me going and I was like, oh, maybe I am ready to get back. And then you take a couple more days off and you're like, oh, maybe not.

And it really, for me like it really hits me on a certain day, you wake up and you're just like, I miss it. You miss golf. And it's just, it's a great feeling, because you wake up and you're just like, I'm ready to go. Like, I don't know, it's like an a-ha moment, light bulb turns on and you just are like you want the new year to start.

Because we're so used to traveling, we're so used to being on the road, playing golf, playing tournaments every week, is that when you're separated from that, it's nice, but then it's not the norm. To go back to it, you know, it feels good to be back.

**Q. There was a story from where Tiger's schedule was such that he would actually walk away when he was at peak golf and come back when he was just itching to go. Have you found yourself at any of those situations where it was time to take a break, even though you were really on a roll or felt like your game was in a perfect spot and you needed to tell yourself, no, this is the plan, stick with it and avoid the temptation of keep going?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: No, I don't think I found that yet. The winter break has proven that and I think it's exactly at your point there. But there's so many events in the season, there's so many great events that I want to keep playing, that I've played well at or I like the course or I like the tournament, and then you add on the majors, you still got to play a minimum number of events, you still got to go play these events and thankfully since I've turned pro I've been very fortunate, right, to be able to pick my schedule and kind of spread it out and make sure I'm not playing four weeks in a row or five or six. I've been able to take a couple weeks off, three weeks off here and there and kind of build it off that.

So I feel like I've done a good job with that and I haven't had to just really take a break because I needed it, but the wintertime is, I need this break. Like I needed that.

**Q. Do you watch golf on TV, do you watch a lot?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Not a ton. I've watched more actually since I've turned pro, but not a ton.

**Q. Why do you watch?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Why? I don't know, I mean I grew up with a TV in my room and like I always had Sportscenter on, that was kind of always the thing and, I don't know, I mean like we're on the golf course so much, I'm with all these guys every single week, like I would rather watch Food Channel, like 99 out of a hundred times rather than seeing what someone is going to do. Sometimes on Sundays like I'll turn it on more often than not, just because it's coming down, but like a Thursday round, if I wake up, like I'm not really interested.

**Q. On the Food Channel who controls the remote in the house?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I kind of control the remote, she, Kat's got her iPad and she watches that.

**Q. Reason I brought that up in the first place I was just curious if you turned into the PNC at all?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I did, I did a little bit, yeah. I mean it's hard not to but I was watching the final day when Charlie was hitting those iron shots and it was good.

I mean, I think he stuck it on the par-3 on 17, closer than anyone. And everyone is from the same tee. That was an unbelievable shot. I mean he's good. He's good.

**Q. Lastly, are you a good gift giver?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: No.

**Q. And are you --**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: No.

**Q. Do you think you're easy to shop for? This is kind of a Christmas question, obviously.**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: No, I'm not easy to shop for because I don't really want a lot, so it makes it harder. And, no, I'm not a great gift give either.

**Q. Are we going to get any details out of this? What did Kat get you for Christmas?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: No, you can leave it. Great try.

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