

Sony Open in Hawaii

Thursday, January 12, 2023

Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Waialae Country Club

Michael Castillo

Quick Quotes

Q. Just talk about the day in general. I don't know if a score matters. It's so cool that you're here.

MICHAEL CASTILLO: Yeah, it was a cool day. Brent and Scott are really nice to play golf with. The golf course is fantastic, as it always is.

I hit the ball nicely but didn't score very well. Doesn't really matter. I had a great time walking with my brother on the bag. My family is here. It was all good.

I couldn't draw it up better than maybe the score.

Q. Yeah, and I mean, there was a lot of things that you have been through to get here. I mean, do those things enter your mind when you're playing golf, or you just turn on sort of that machine that says, I'm just playing golf and not thinking about what it all means?

MICHAEL CASTILLO: Yeah, I mean, since the cancer journey I guess perspective to life is a little different for sure, but I've been playing this game for, you know, 50 years. It's hard to turn off your instinct of playing the game and what it means to you to play the game and how you play it.

So throughout the day I really didn't think too much about it. I spoke with Scott today and his wife is going through a journey like I am, which is something that was interesting today. I didn't know that.

So other than that, I was just trying to play the best golf I could and have the most fun I could.

Q. Your brother told me that you, all of you and your siblings have worked here when you were younger, the cart barn or...

MICHAEL CASTILLO: Yeah, my dad was an assistant here in the '70s. My brother Rick, Ron, myself, and brother Joey all worked here in high school, and my brother Joey was an assistant here for a year or so.



Waialae -- I mean, Russell Ono who was in the parking lot has been here for -- we worked with him and he's 67 years old and he's retiring this year.

He was in the parking lot, and there was a lot of people and members and friends. So it's a second home to all of us when it comes to Waialae.

Q. We can talk to you before the tournament and say, oh, this must be going to be a cool experience, not now you got to actually do it. Was that better than you expected having the chance to do this?

MICHAEL CASTILLO: It was. I guess the surprising thing I was very comfortable playing golf today. Didn't feel like I needed to settle nerves I guess. I think my life journey maybe is part of it. Maybe it's the fact that everyone is making me feel comfortable here. Maybe playing this game for such a long time you figure out how to make it work even though it is an important round of golf.

Q. Do you think the experience in Kapalua -- by the way, how long have you been at Kapalua?

MICHAEL CASTILLO: A little over three years.

Q. Do you think that experience and other experiences, you're not really out of your element? You're rubbing elbows with the PGA TOUR guys at the Sentry and it's not out of your element seems like.

MICHAEL CASTILLO: Yeah, for sure. I understand the mechanics of a tournament and I understand what some of the players' routines are and what they do to prepare and what is expected.

But, there is definitely many geek-out moments with some of the best in the world. Even though I'm not a young kid, I still admire the talent that's out here and want to see it and experience it and to talk to them about it.

So it is special in a lot of different ways.

Q. What was the coolest moment today? You can't mention the birdie at 18.



MICHAEL CASTILLO: That was a good birdie.

Q. I was wondering if there was something cool that happened during the round that almost didn't really have anything to do with the golf, per se.

MICHAEL CASTILLO: People that I haven't seen in a while showed up to watch, and that was pretty cool. Because I'm a fairly private person and in somewhat of a very public role, but I don't reach out or I don't seem to connect with as many people as I should.

For them to come out and watch me play was pretty special.

Q. What is the prognosis on your cancer treatment?

MICHAEL CASTILLO: Next month I will do a PET scan, and if everything looks good they say I will be in remission. That's a good thing. I will probably be doing some what they call maintenance or preventive treatments to keep it at -- keep the lid on it, but it looks pretty good.

I've got great doctors. There is great medicine out there. I listen to them, even though my wife thinks otherwise. I try to be a good patient and listen.

It's been pretty positive so far what we're seeing in the treatments that I've had and where my body is right now.

Q. Fun watching you today. What was it like just endurance-wise for you as the round got on? How do you feel like you were holding up.

MICHAEL CASTILLO: Remarkably well. Obviously this isn't Kapalua. Kapalua is a brutal walk for player, caddie, and anyone.

This was a nice walk and the body feels good. I've tried to -- I haven't put any poison in my body for almost 45 days so the body feels pretty good. I try to do the right things to keep myself feeling good.

But the preparation Monday, Tuesday, walking, that really helped me see how my body was shaping up. Yes, the knee is sore, but I was sore before I got here. Yeah, the right elbow kind of -- you get to my age everything seems to the not be like it was before, so I am not really worried so much about that.

Q. Did you have any give and take with some of the other local golfers on the field like Parker or Brent today or just what was that like?

MICHAEL CASTILLO: Yeah, you know, I didn't know Brent before playing with him today. My brother, Ronny, does. He's a great young player. Very talented player. It was nice to have the local ties and the people in the crowd.

It was very cool. The fans and the staff, volunteers, they were extremely generous with what they do and the way they treated me. I couldn't be more happy with that.

Q. Will you talk to your dad tonight or tomorrow and tell him about it? I know he wanted to be here and he wasn't.

MICHAEL CASTILLO: Yeah, we'll talk to dad and he'll want to hear most of all the shots. Most of the good ones. Not so much the bad ones.

It'll be fun. My mom walked all the holes today and she's, what, 84. Got around walking this golf course and she feels good. She might even do that tomorrow as well.

Q. What is your mom's name?

MICHAEL CASTILLO: Dorothy.

Q. And having Joey on the bag too, that had to be kind of cool, younger brother there?

MICHAEL CASTILLO: Yeah, no, it is very cool. All my siblings are just fun to be around with because we are not around often enough, so to be around with him is great.

Joey always makes it fun, and my sister, Laurie (phonetic) when she gets on the bag she's fun, but intense sometimes because of her competitiveness that comes out in her caddieing.

Joey is -- we have fun yet we try to make good decisions out there.

Q. Last thing from me. Appreciate your time and patience. There are fairytales that have been told throughout time. Does this feel a little like a fairytale or your fairytale to you to have the chance to do this?

MICHAEL CASTILLO: It probably sinks in more of being a fairytale as a unique situation that it's in, and because I'm in front of the camera, in front of you, it becomes, wow, this is more special than when I hold out to win the championship to say I got into the Sony, it was cool. Great, playing in the Sony. But it snowballed into a more important thing.

My sister who posted some things on social media, she said, you know, you realize that you are influencing people

with what you have accomplished through the journey of cancer. I said, yeah, you know, I got a call from a person, I haven't called them back, from the east coast telling me about his story about his wife and she's cancer free. He's willing to reach out to me to share the experience and the treatments they took to maybe help me.

Someone I've never known called me on my phone at work and I retrieved the call but and haven't called them back. It's pretty darn cool, so...

Q. It is. Congratulations. Thank you so much for your time.

MICHAEL CASTILLO: Thanks, guys, appreciate it.

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