

THE PLAYERS Championship

Friday, March 11, 2022

Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, USA

TPC Sawgrass

Gary Young

Press Conference

AMANDA HERRINGTON: For the second time this afternoon we'd like to welcome back to the interview room here at THE PLAYERS Championship Gary Young, our chief referee for THE PLAYERS Championship. Gary, what's the update?

GARY YOUNG: Well, I'm sure the news is kind of flowing throughout the facility. We are suspended for the remainder of today. The golf course has just reached a point of saturation, and unfortunately the weather conditions are not providing us any relief, so we have suspended play for the day.

Our plan is to resume play tomorrow, no earlier than 11:00 a.m. That would be the earliest. The rules committee will arrive early tomorrow morning. We will assess the weather situation with Wade Stettner, our meteorologist, and at that point we will have a better idea of what is happening with this severe weather system that we're expecting to come through the area sometime between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. tomorrow. That is the projected arrival.

Again, it has severe winds, lightning associated with it, and our desire is to not have anyone on the property prior to that.

We'll be coinciding our opening of our gates, so we'll be delaying the gate opening for spectators and fans to coincide with the revised tee times once they are set.

Right now we've messaged our players 11:00 a.m., no earlier, and that's the plan.

Q. How much water have you gotten so far?

GARY YOUNG: We've got to be approaching close to three inches at this point. That's within the last 48 hours, 36 to 48 hours.

Q. If you told the players that the play at the earliest will resume at 10:00 a.m., what time will players be at the earliest allowed to get back to the course and do their warmup? How much time will they have?



GARY YOUNG: Yeah, so just so there's no confusion, it was 11:00 a.m., and we're factoring that in. That's why we will be here making an assessment and messaging them by no later than 7:00 a.m. We've actually messaged to them that the next update they will receive from us is at 7:00 a.m. tomorrow morning.

Q. And if the 60 mile-an-hour winds do hit in this front, do you have a worst-case scenario in place?

GARY YOUNG: Worst-case scenario meaning --

Q. Tuesday or later?

GARY YOUNG: We are very confident at this point -- we're into a Monday finish. We know that. If our calculations on everything hold together and we're able to start tomorrow, we certainly expect to be finished with the championship on Monday.

Q. When you talk about the gates opening coinciding with that, are you saying that you're going to figure out when the first tee time is and then kind of open the gates right about that time for the fans?

GARY YOUNG: That is the plan. That's the plan. We just want to make sure we're keeping everyone safe. That's our number one priority, our fans, keeping everyone safe. There's no need to bring people in here earlier and then have to evacuate them knowing the system is coming.

We just want to message that to everyone. When we announce that tee time, that's when the gates will open.

Q. Is there any concern right now over the temporary structures that are just all over the course?

GARY YOUNG: I think we have good plans in place. There are certain structures that will be addressed, whether it's taking the skins off of them, but very confident that the type winds we're expecting, everything will hold together nicely.

Q. Obviously a bit of a moving target, but is there a projected finish time on Monday now?



GARY YOUNG: In an ideal world, if everything holds together as we expect, we would leave ourselves enough time to conduct our cumulative three-hole playoff. That would be finishing around 6:30-ish.

But again, there's a lot of factors involved prior to that that need to really come together.

Q. I know you guys are juggling a lot right now, but for those fans that have purchased tickets for today, what will they do with those tickets? And now that you've said that we are into a Monday finish, what will be the plan for patrons come Monday?

GARY YOUNG: The only information that I'm aware of at the moment is that we will honor tickets for tomorrow, both tomorrow and the following day, I believe. Actually Jared Rice is the best person to speak on that --

AMANDA HERRINGTON: Jared, we've got a mic in the back --

JARED RICE: Good afternoon. So yeah, the plan that we're going to have is for ticket holders from today, they will have the ability to come back and enjoy the tournament tomorrow or Sunday. Again, tomorrow we're really stressing no earlier than 11:00 a.m.

Q. Do you have an idea on Monday yet?

JARED RICE: We're still working on Monday, but we'll provide an update when we have that.

Q. Following off when the finish might happen on Monday, the way you guys are looking at things logistically, are you going to be try to get the players through and playing and playing and playing as much as they can Saturday and Sunday, or are you envisioning, if we got something stopped at a certain point rather than restarting in the middle of a round, we'd go ahead and do that? I'm curious when you're scheduling things what you're thinking in terms of are you going to keep them playing as much as possible just to get it done as early as possible?

GARY YOUNG: The answer to that is no, we're not trying to rush anyone and continue play just like a race to try to achieve it. We are still building in our normal three hours between the two waves, making sure that things turn right on time, spacing them appropriately. We have a pace-of-play policy.

Yeah, in our calculations, these are all based on the weather conditions that are forecasted, and we feel that we've got favorable conditions. Although it's going to be

windy, we feel we're going to have the next two days rain-free following this weather event in the morning.

Once that front goes through, we know we're going to have good weather conditions, and then we're just planning it like we would normally plan a round of golf.

Hopefully that's helpful.

Q. If we got to that point, is Tuesday automatic? Remember that thing at the Northern Trust and Jay ended up making a statement about the rules for the tournament and the stipulations for going beyond Monday? How does that apply to THE PLAYERS, and is there any stipulation, half the field has to finish on Monday, that sort of thing?

GARY YOUNG: Yeah, we're really getting into hypotheticals at that point. I just want to stick with we feel very confident that we're going to be able to accomplish the conclusion of this championship on Monday evening, and at this point that's not really in our thought process.

Q. Is 11:00 a.m. tomorrow an expected start time or a best-case start time?

GARY YOUNG: I would say based on the forecast right now, that would be a best-case, but certainly if we come in here in the morning and things have moved through quicker than expected -- but we will not start any earlier than 11:00. That has been messaged to our players, and so at this point moving that forward at all is not a possibility. We would stick with that as the earliest.

Q. Where do you stand with regrouping between rounds 3 and 4?

GARY YOUNG: We will do our normal re-pairing.

Q. Are you going to cut to 60 or --

GARY YOUNG: 65, our normal, 65 and ties will be our cut.

Q. Also, because of when they did the change to this golf course a couple years ago when they did SubAir and they did the sand capping of the fairways, how much does that help you be able to finish on Monday?

GARY YOUNG: We've built -- we've worked very hard at building a lot of natural drainage into the property through aggressive aerifying and top dressing of fairways and greens. That's where the primary focus has been. That has allowed us to play much longer today than we expected.

As far as the air system goes, that particular system, its primary function was for cooling and heating for Bermudagrass greens. We have the best agronomy staff in the world, I feel, that lead the PGA TOUR agronomy department, and they've assessed when the system should be put on, and quite frankly I think they're comfortable with the way we're running things right now. I don't think they have a desire to run any sort of system, artificial system. We're fine.

Q. When can we get in tomorrow?

GARY YOUNG: That's a good question. Again, we're trying hard to keep everyone safe, so I'm sure that announcement will follow. I'll leave that up to -- that is not my decision. We'll leave that up to the folks that oversee the media center.

Q. Will parking passes for today be honored for Saturday and Sunday?

GARY YOUNG: They won't -- because we've already sold the lot for Saturday and Sunday and those ticket holders, we won't be in a position to honor Friday parking.

Q. Understanding the unpredictability of weather, is there a possibility that by Sunday evening you could be done with round 3 and then be able to schedule a, quote-unquote, normal round 4 for Monday?

GARY YOUNG: No. That is not a possibility, given that we'll start no earlier than 11:00 a.m. tomorrow. That's just not a possibility.

AMANDA HERRINGTON: Gary, thank you so much for your time.

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