

Arnold Palmer Invitational

Saturday, March 8, 2025

Bay Hill, Florida, USA

Bay Hill Club and Lodge

Collin Morikawa

Quick Quotes



Q. 5-under, tough conditions. Got to be happy with the round.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, I'm very pleased. I could easily go back and say I left a couple birdie putts out there on a couple holes, but for the most part it was fairly stress-free. I thought I did a really good job on the greens today, just kind of not lagging it, but just hitting good pace on the putts. You get on these greens and they're slippery. Where these pins are cut, they're just, it's really, really dicey, and you just have to commit to hitting very, very drip-in speeds, and I did that starting on hole 1.

Q. Would the greens be the toughest of the year to this point in terms of whatever speed or firmness?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, I think just because there's like no friction on the greens, right. So when you have these holes that are cut, and just say you're just off the straight line, it moves a lot more just because it doesn't actually hold the line. They're so fast that you're hitting it even softer than you normally would, so it's just a very different way of playing. And I definitely, you know, from yesterday to today you definitely had to adjust. With all the sun out there, it's just going to get worse.

Q. Given your iron play, your solid iron play, ball striking, what have you, this would seem like a good course for you. Has that how it's been over the years or do you feel that way?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I think I've missed the cut the past two years. I've kind of come to this event not playing great previously, and it's a course that if you're not playing great it's going to show. It's just one of those that you can't fake it. But this was one of my first professional starts as an amateur, I played in 2017, and I love the golf course. I thought it was great, played well, made the cut. I thought I would play well out here. Hasn't been the case. But it also hasn't been the case that I've come feeling ready and needing the game. On a course like this you just have to have complete control of your golf ball, so that's what it's going to take tomorrow.

Q. Has it ever been a challenge to try to stay patient, because I know you want to win.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, it's interesting. I look back at last year, obviously at the end of the year, and I never felt like my game was fully in control, right. And I showed up in Hawaii and I felt like the eight weeks I put in was like really, really good work. It's tough to say sometimes when you feel good, but you just -- there's a difference of like going into a week and finding something that week and just kind of playing with it, which you can win, I've done it in the past. But if you want to go on a long run or you want to go on a nice stretch, you really have to be in control. Like even on the missed shots. Like today I missed a few. You wouldn't know, but they ended up well. So it's just, there's a slight difference, right, of where I have been to where I am now to even a few weeks ago, right. Small little things.

Q. Does that make it easier?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: It does. And I fully know that it doesn't mean that you're going to play well, right. Like, it doesn't mean that I'm just going to finish top 5 or top 10 or you're going to be in contention. But it's a sense of freedom when you go out and play golf and you just go play golf, try and get the ball in the hole, versus trying to think about the swing or about the stroke or whatever it may be.

Q. You used the term stress-free a few minutes ago, which I don't think many people say around here. What is required to kind of make a round at Bay Hill stress-free?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Hit a lot of greens, hit a lot of fairways, 2-putt a lot. Yeah, it's very simple, honestly. It's just very hard to do. Fairways are narrow, rough's thick, lies aren't easy, and you just got to get lucky here and there with a couple.

Q. Was this as much in control of the ball as you've been this year and how would you classify it?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: For sure. Compared to Hawaii, a



lot better. Look, I was sick in February, so I just never felt like I had complete control of the golf game, didn't quite know where the ball was going, couldn't get the feels right. But the past two weeks I felt like I've put in a lot of good work and it's nice to see it, so just got to continue on that for tomorrow.

Q. Any adjustment at all that you have made to get to that?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Not really. Small little things, but you know, all within the norm.

Q. Last win late 2023, had some opportunities last year, what's that kind of period felt like, has it felt like awhile?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I mean, I've gone longer, but, honestly, like I said, I look back at last year and it never felt like I had my game to just go out and just play golf. I felt like I was always kind of, you show up on Sunday, and not that I was guessing, but you still were fighting something and trying to just make it work. It's hard to win like that. I would say the guys that are winning on a constant basis, they're playing free, and that's how I'm going to go out tomorrow.

Q. The way that you're playing right now or feeling right now, how far back would you have to go to say this is similar to that week?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: It's been awhile since I've hit my irons like this, it honestly has. Just start lines, amount of cut, we're looking all the way back to 2021, essentially.

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