

# Aberdeen Standard Investments Scottish Open

Tuesday, 6 July, 2021

North Berwick, Scotland

The Renaissance Club

## Collin Morikawa

### Press Conference

NEIL AHERN: Collin, if I'm not mistaken, this is your first time playing on European soil as a professional. Is that correct, first of all, and second of all, how does it feel to be in Scotland there this week.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, first time in Europe. Obviously I've played a few events on The European Tour, but to finally be here knowing that I was going to kind of put this in my schedule for quite a while now, I'm excited. It's a little rainy. It's been rainy the past couple days but it's exciting to see the field and guys I've grown up with that I've talked about in the past, guys out here I've known for quite a while, growing up in the U.S., playing amateur golf with them.

I enjoy it. European Tour puts on a great tournament for us and hopefully we can play some good golf, as well.

NEIL AHERN: You've been knocking on the door every week with every tournament you play, are you feel confident or is it a case of acclimatising yourself with the weather and conditions of the golf course?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I'd say over the past month has been solid golf and it's been really good golf. Hopefully I'm able to bring that game out here and play it and figure out how to play out here. Obviously it's not true linksy-type golf course, but it's still different than what we see out in the US. It's not the normal greens you see, the run-offs. Normally out there in the U.S., you can just fly everything kind of close to the hole and see it stop and bounce.

So it's a learning curve but it's a learning curve that I enjoy and I love being creative. I love kind of coming out here and it kind of fits my game. How do I figure out how do I hit my iron shots, play certain pins, play aggressive to certain hole locations out here. It's really enjoyable to see a new course and figure out in these next kind of two days how to play the golf course.

**Q. I believe you're up early this morning by the looks of things.**



A Rolex Series Event

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, a little jet-lagged. I tried staying awake last night but I couldn't, fell asleep like 8.15, 8.30, slept in until at 4.30 and got a little rest off that. It stays bright out here for quite some time and then it gets bright early, so I wanted to take a peak outside my window. I have got a great view this week looking over 18, looking over 6. Yeah, beautiful, beautiful view out there.

**Q. Is that one of the best things about coming to Renaissance, you've got that facility on-site that you can stay at?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, it makes it a little easier. I think part of being a professional golfer, before COVID was travelling the world and enjoying it and seeing other things out cited golf course. Obviously with COVID, you can't really do that. Us being in a bubble makes things a lot harder.

But it is very nice when you're able to just walk downstairs and put on your shoes and head out to the range or the putting green and then start your day. Everything for me is just kind of right here at the golf course, and it just makes things a little easier as time goes on.

**Q. Lastly from me, you were talking about guys you played amateur golf with in Ireland on The European Tour. Who are some of those guys?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I've seen Sam Horsfield, probably since I've been ten. Sean Crocker, I saw him earlier today. We grew up 30 minutes from each other. I've known Sean Crocker since literally 10, 12 years old. So seeing a couple guys like those two, seeing Min Woo Lee that I played with quite a few times in amateur golf; I saw I got paired with Bobby MacIntyre for the first couple days, so that will be fun. Obviously good Walker Cup memories on my end, probably his, as well.

You know, it's just cool to see a lot of young guys. Those are the guys that we resonate with the best because we've gone through the process all together. We've seen each other's golf game for a while. It just makes things kind of a little more fun when you're paired with these guys or you see them because I've grown up with them. It just makes things a little more comfortable when you travel quite some ways to get over here.



**Q. Just to pick up on when you were mentioning, and he will with Bob MacIntyre, I imagine you'll have a lot of Scottish fans travelling around the course with you the first couple of rounds. How exciting is that for you and to be here in Scotland?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: It's awesome. When you're in the US, you don't really get a home crowd advantage and I haven't played any Presidents Cups or Ryder Cups where they are just rooting for you, rooting for the country. And I'm sure Bob is going to have a million fans out here, I'm sure, rooting him on because he is one of the best Scottish players out here. That's going to be a huge thing to see them. Obviously they don't care what I shoot. They only care how he's going to play.

But it's exciting because it shows the love for the game. It shows the love for the sport. You see what's going on with the Euros right now and obviously soccer is way bigger than golf kind of around the world, and hopefully we can keep growing the game and keep making it a bigger game, more opportunities for everyone.

But you just see the love in people that they put in Euros, that's the love that some players get with their country out here on the golf course and it's cool to see.

**Q. Do you think you can use that as an advantage, if there's a lot of noise following around with Bob and there is that momentum building, is that something that you can feed on?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Learning to play without the fans for the past year was tough because you don't have the energy and you don't have the life. Slowly what we've been seeing over the past few months, fans coming back, people on the 18th green following us even early Thursdays. It's just a little more exciting. They bring that energy and they bring that life, and I know they are going to bring it out here, for sure. Even in the rain; it's a normal day for them out here. I've been in Vegas; it's 110 degrees, so it's quite the opposite weather of what I've seen.

It's exciting. We miss it. So good to see fans. I'm sure guys on The European Tour are ecstatic to see fans because it makes things a little bit easier. It keeps the pace going as the week goes on.

**Q. Do you feel this week and next week going to The Open you'll be more comfortable in the bubble? Obviously Rickie came out at the weekend and he had some concerns about playing in front of 32,000 fans when he's in a bubble for The Open. Do you feel a little**

**bit more prepared than maybe some of your fellow Americans?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I think the entire year since COVID has started and since we've returned to golf, I really haven't felt any safer anywhere compared to when you're inside the bubble. I think once you're in the bubble, you feel very safe. You feel comfortable and we're able to just go out and play golf.

It's tough because when we are stuck inside a bubble, you can just lose your mind sometimes. You have so much time away from the golf course that sometimes you're just sitting in the room trying to figure out what to do and that's kind of the hardest part sometimes, especially when you see other people and you see fans wanting to do other things or going out there, and you see 32,000 people out there when you have to strictly eat your food and go back to your room.

So do I feel safe out there? Absolutely. The European Tour, all the tours around the world have done an amazing job. They have made it easy on us to get tested, show up, feel comfortable inside the bubble. I understand they are watching our safety outside.

But you know, from where we are in the US, things are getting back, pretty normal these days. So when you do make a trip out here and you have to stay in a bubble, it's an adjustment. It's an adjustment everyone has to make, especially all the U.S. guys. It's something we haven't been used to over the past few months.

**Q. I don't know what the numbers have been like at events in America, but 32,000 is certainly quite a big number for over here at the moment. Were you surprised at that number?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I mean, slightly, but you see how many fans are going to the Euros, you see I think Wimbledon let in a bunch of fans or full capacity for the quarters. They moved that up early, compared to, I think they had it at finals at first.

So is it surprising? Not quite. It seems like around Europe, around the U.K., more fans that are being able to come; obviously I wish we had a little more freedom and we could kind of golf out and explore. It's my first time. It's my first time out here, so it's a big thing for us, for me to go eat, travel, sightsee. It's all part of the week you put in, but I'll enjoy the four walls of my room.

NEIL AHERN: Thank you, we hope you enjoy your week there in Scotland. Thanks for your time.

