

U.S. Senior Open Championship

Sunday, June 26, 2022

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, USA
Saucon Valley C.C. (Old Course)

Jerry Kelly

Quick Quotes

THE MODERATOR: Jerry Kelly, 4-under 67. Nice round of golf. You've gotten yourself into the top ten. What do you take out of this week?

JERRY KELLY: Starting out, I didn't even know if I was going to be able to start on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday. My back was so bad. I found the right mix of medication to get me through. Then our PTs really helped me out and got me to the tee each day.

I'd warmed up for 35 minutes with just a wedge and still couldn't get a full swing out. I really wasn't expecting anything, especially coming into the bad wave like I did in the rain. That even-par that I shot, that was the best round of golf I think I've ever -- under all the circumstances that I had, that was the best round of golf I ever played.

I had to make some adjustments with my swing, and those adjustments just might have showed me a better way for me to swing and to play than what I've been doing. What I do is always so taxing on the body. I really got out of the way, and I couldn't twist opposing my lower at all, so I just kind of went with it.

Boy, I started hitting some really good shots when I didn't feel good. I hope I learned something, but I hope it carries over when I feel good.

Q. Next year we'll be heading to Wisconsin. Talk about what it will mean to have the Senior Open there.

JERRY KELLY: Wisconsin has been big time in the golf. It's been fantastic. Thanks to Herb Kohler for making it happen. I played Century World as a junior. The flower hole was always really cool. I keep on saying that to guys out here, and they're like, flower hole, huh? Okay. I'm like yeah, come on.

It's beautiful. I hope they play it as a hazard and we have to hit out of there because it kind of reminds me of TPC a little bit, Sawgrass, if you play that as a hazard. It's really



neat and it's novel. I think it's going to be great for TV.

Q. You had six birdies today, and to have six birdies on this type of course, tell us about a couple of those.

JERRY KELLY: I hit it close. I probably missed four, maybe five putts, inside of six feet. Maybe it was six- to ten-foot range, but they felt so close because on these greens they're so sectioned off, when you get in that same bowl, you're like, all right, it's a birdie chance.

But I made a couple of great saves out there too, so it evened out. But you still look at the ones that you could have got. Most of the birdies that I made were putting it close. I think that was the longest putt I made on 18, and that was only about 15, 18 feet.

Q. Obviously Padraig has a comfortable lead right now. What will the last couple of groups face as they come down the stretch?

JERRY KELLY: I think there's birdies out there, no question. I mean, I don't know if he'll get to 12 again, but you never know. You can't count those guys out. They can get it over that tree and over that bunker, and then maybe if they get more right to left than in.

Then the next two holes are just find the fairway and you've got a short to mid-iron in, and then the birdie chances start coming. I mean, the bowls that you have on -- it's a tough shot on 15. If you get it too far down there, you can't spin it enough, as I found out.

Then 16 is right there waiting for you.

17, right in that corner. It could just fall in the hole.

Then 18, as long as you get it right side of the green and the right distance, it's going to funnel towards it too.

So I think you're going to see birdies coming in. Could be birdies to challenge, or it could be birdies to extend.

Q. Just curious, on Thursday you really had to grit it out, you said. How important was it, or how much difference did it make that it was the Senior Open this week and you've obviously had some really good performances here? Was that part of your effort to



make sure you got out there and played?

JERRY KELLY: I mean, this is our senior National Championship. This is just about the most important tournament that we play. So, yes, it makes a huge difference that it's a USGA event.

I played here in '83 in the U.S. Junior. I saw my scribble signature at that age on the wall. There's no way I was going to try to pull out. I was going to grit out everything I possibly could. This tournament means an awful lot to me. I'd certainly like to have it someday.

Q. On Thursday you also, talking about it being maybe your best round in a long, long time. Obviously that means that much more probably on a U.S. Open setup course. You must have had to do a lot of --

JERRY KELLY: Oh, yeah. When I'm slapping the ball down the fairway about 220, I had utility irons into almost every single green.

I just hitting fantastic second shots. All I was trying to do was stay out of the rough because I couldn't gouge out of the rough. I hit the fairways really well and just kept pushing the ball towards the hole, pushing the ball towards the hole, and I made some good putts too.

It was a really fun round. I used to be a really good mudder, and I kind of lost a little bit of that. That felt really good to mud it out.

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