

U.S. Open Championship 2022

Thursday, June 16, 2022

Brookline, Massachusetts, USA

The Country Club

Collin Morikawa

Flash Interview



THE MODERATOR: Collin Morikawa, 1-under 69. How did the course play in terms of championship conditions today?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: For a U.S. Open comparing to my other few that I've played, I would say pretty gettable.

We got lucky earlier this morning. No wind. It was probably a little warmer. Nicer weather.

Yeah, greens were receptive. You can kind of go at some flags, use some slopes, and overall, I think in our group, as you can play out through the entire round, there was a lot of birdie opportunities from hole 1 all the way through 18.

THE MODERATOR: 3-under on the front. Did you see that side as being that much more attackable?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: No. I think this entire course kind of offers, depending on the wind. If the wind changes a little bit from south to southwest to a west, it completely changes the golf course and completely changes all these holes.

Out here knowing the wind is going to be changing throughout the week, you can't really focus on taking advantage of just the front nine. I think the holes are going to play so different come tomorrow and come the weekend.

Q. You talked yesterday or Tuesday or maybe Monday. I'm not sure what day it was, but you talked about not being so concerned with hitting one shot and just kind of playing what you got. How would you grade yourself on doing that today?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Poorly, because I pretty much only played a draw. That was kind of the game plan. I think when the shot calls for it, I think that's what I meant back then.

Didn't really have to hit too many cuts. When I did, I didn't really pull them off. For the most part just being committed to the shot and knowing what my shot shape was today, and it's been really straight. It's been like that two-yard

little draw.

Just knowing and thinking about how to play a shot like that versus normally aiming out left and bringing it back to the hole.

Q. Is it hard to trust because you've had so much success going the other way?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: It's really hard. I played a lot of golf last week and a lot of holes to try to be able to trust it. I haven't played a draw since maybe freshman year of college. Definitely in high school.

It's different. It's not the same trust, but this week I have to trust it. That's the only way I'm going to hit shots.

Q. How did you attack the fifth hole, the drivable par-4?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Wind was straight down, so just ripped driver. Hit it good. Just didn't really cut enough to get to that front spot. Put in the front left bunker.

Yeah, the way the wind is going, the way that pin and how soft the greens are, it's gettable. That hole -- especially the hole before on four, everything kind of feeds to that hole.

5, guys are going to be hit 3-wood. Jon hit 3-wood, I hit driver, and you are going to be right up there next to the green. There are a couple of holes like that where you do have to take advantage.

Q. Do you expect the course to get harder for the next three days, and if so, can you explain why?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, I never expect it to get easier. We're at a U.S. Open. We're at a major championship. I think they're going to kind of base how today went. Even with how receptive everything was, the scores -- no one is 7-under par right now.

It's still playing tough with all the winds and everything out here probably sustaining for the rest of the day, I think it will only get tougher. Some pins are only going to get a



little bit more tricky, but there's that balance, I think, out here with how fast and firm the greens can get or else it will kind of get away from us. I don't think we want to see that.

Q. Given your practice rounds and today, was 3-under the best of the morning what you would have expected out of a course like this? So far I think it's 3.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Through nine I thought I was going to go a lot deeper than three; I'll tell you that. Yeah, I would have expected someone to shoot four or five. Maybe we'll see it in the afternoon, someone playing really well.

Yeah, it's weird. I think I played really smart. I played to my strengths today. 1-under was a pretty mediocre round. I'm happy with it based on how I've been playing, so to use that for the next few days is going to be key.

I definitely would have thought by now someone would have been a little bit lower.

Q. It sounds like a pretty good grind last week. Can you just give us a sense of what that looked like, how many holes you were playing, what you were trying to find?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah. Played multiple days of 27 holes, which I never do. Hit more balls than I ever have in the hot Vegas heat.

I just wanted figure it out. I wanted to come out here and have fun and have a good time. With that comes a lot of practice and a lot of things to figure out. Sometimes you just have to be by yourself, get in your own zone, and figure it out. That's what I hoped to be on the right path for.

Q. Collin, I know you haven't played a lot of U.S. Opens, but of the ones you have played, and it's early, how do you rank this course in terms of your affection for it or not liking it?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I love it. It's a course that I think fits my eye. I feel like when I show up to a course and I feel like I can birdie every hole -- not saying that every hole is going to be birdieable for the day, but depending on the weather, depending on the conditions, I think every hole out here I have a chance to at least make a birdie.

It just suits my game a little bit more rather than I have to hit a perfect drive and I have to hit a perfect 4-iron to stick it in the middle of the green. I get it. There's going to be a lot of courses like that, which doesn't mean I can't play well at, but when I have a few more mid-irons kind of in my wheelhouse, they're nice to see sometimes as well.

Q. Is there a point where you flip the switch from trying to figure it out and going back through old swings versus trusting what you have and going forward with that?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, that was last Thursday. I was still trying to figure out the cut. I mean, it was there for, like, three holes, and then it would disappear for three.

I hit a point Thursday afternoon where I said, this is stupid. Why try and fight it? I can still hit the golf ball. It's not like I'm not hitting it to where I want.

Everything matched up, and it's just because I haven't played a draw in such a long time or a two-yard draw that you do have to think about the shot a little bit more. You have to be a little bit more clear.

That's why I have J.J. That's why I have Rick here. When we're on the course, just to really talk through things and make sure I'm making the right decision on how I'm going to play the shot.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks so much for your time, Collin.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Thank you.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports