

U.S. Open Championship 2026

Friday, June 19, 2026

Southampton, New York, USA

Shinnecock Hills Golf Club

Collin Morikawa

Flash Interview



THE MODERATOR: Collin Morikawa, 5-under 65. Collin, obviously a good round. What are maybe the one or two things that you are most proud of?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I chipped it a lot better than I did yesterday. I mean, I went through my round yesterday, and I had at least four, probably five, maybe six up-and-downs, pretty basic up-and-downs, that I just flubbed.

Then that's the difference of kicking yourself out of a tournament, keeping yourself in it. Thankfully today, you know, got off to a good start, hit a couple of good iron shots, but at the same time, made the up-and-downs. Then that was kind of the big change, I think, for today.

THE MODERATOR: We've already seen this place in quite a few conditions. How do you kind of get your mindset and your game plan for the weekend?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I think you just have to kind of take it hole by hole and shot by shot and see where the wind is at.

Today was a very different wind than we had yesterday, so the holes are going to play differently. So some birdieable holes turn into par holes. Par-3s turn into longer par-3s. But I think with the weekend, I think tomorrow is supposed to pick up with the wind. Same thing, you know, you just take it hole by hole, and just plow your way around this golf course.

Q. Short game-wise, what do you think the difference was?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I changed wedges this week. Same grind. I usually kind of take a little bit of the bounce off. Stupid of me to do it. I based it off Monday. Rained Sunday night. Monday was wet. Back of 10 I was chipping, and I just kept digging into the turf.

I knew it was going to dry out, and it felt like, you know, you get some grainy lies, but I felt like it was going to be okay. So I didn't grind it off.

Got a new wedge and just yesterday average chip shot -- partially bad technique, but partially felt like everything was just going to bounce. Out here you have to just have a great low point. You have to know what spin is going to be.

So I went back to my old wedge just after I finished up this morning, and whether it worked or not, it just gave me enough confidence to say I can kind of drive them in. Felt like I hit a lot better chip shots out there today.

Back to the wedge, I've been using it all year, I think I started earlier this year, so...

Q. How does the weather change over the course of the day? What are the afternoon guys going to have to deal with that the morning guys may not have?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: You know, I think the fairways are running out a little bit more. Greens are tough. The shorter holes with wedges are usually easy when it's into the wind because you know it's just going to kind of stop, you know, a hard, firm bounce.

They're soft enough to right now where you can't land it short of the hole because it's going to spin off the green. Then you can't really land it too far past because you don't have any room on the green because the greens play so small.

I think the short holes, like, you really have to be on with your numbers. I don't know how the wind is going to play. I don't think it's going to be picking up too much, but I think lines off tees are completely different than what we had yesterday. So it's just being able to adjust to that and seeing what holes you can take advantage of.

Q. Is there a type of shot out there this week that's maybe extra important or you've had to hit more of this week just because of the uniqueness of the challenge?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: No (laughing). You know, I think the adjustment to the green -- like the firmness of the



greens is kind of the biggest thing. I wouldn't say there's one shot in particular because, you know, you look at a lot of the greens, depending on if it's into the wind, that can completely change the shot.

So you might miss it into the uphill spot. You might miss it into the into the wind spot. Sometimes those are the same spot. I think it's just being able to control your approach shots.

Like, these greens, you know, to me play similar to Pinehurst in a way to where you see a big green but you really only have a third of it to work with. Then at that point it's, okay, what kind of spin are you going to control, where are you going to hit it, where is the best leave?

Every shot we're talking about, okay, if you do miss it, where do you want to miss it? If you do miss it in there, is it going to be into the wind or is it going to be uphill? You have to have one of those, and if not, you're probably making bogey from there.

Q. Can you give a general update on your back, how you're feeling health-wise?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, it's still a little uncomfortable. I'm hitting it a lot better. Last week was huge for me. I felt like I made progress after that. I mean, took a little bit of time off with the baby.

You know, I can't hit every shot that I want to hit. Usually my go-to shot with right-to-left wind with an iron would be to cut something up, know how it's going to spin, and just play that shot. I can't quite cut it as much as I want.

Thankfully the greens are soft enough right now where I don't have to hit the high spinner, but I'm able to hit enough shots. I think I proved it to myself today that I have enough tools to go out and play well.

Thankfully I'm moving a little bit better. So the driver, I'm getting a little bit more distance out of it. I don't feel like I have to play it too low. But I can't hit the high bomb that I wish on some holes I could unleash.

Q. You played quite a few of these U.S. Opens. How would you compare Shinnecock Hills to others that you have played?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: In what sense?

Q. Difficulty, everything that goes along with scoring on this golf course.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, I mean, obviously a big part

of the talk this week has been softer greens. Scores are still tough. I think any time you get greens like this where you really only have 30 percent, 40 percent of the green to put pins, it's going to play difficult.

You know, I hit a couple on these short holes, you call it 10, 13. I'm still standing over these wedge shots making sure I'm dialed in on my number because it can turn from a birdie hole, which there really aren't any birdie holes out here, into a bogey and into saving par, into making up-and-down.

So there's a fine margin. I think that's what a great golf course is when there's a really, really fine margin, when you get rewarded for good shots, and bad shots, you know, just -- you're going to have to save par.

I love this golf course. I think it's grown on me throughout the week. I think when I showed up, you know, it was nice, and everyone had high remarks for it. I just looked at it as this is the next test for me, but I think it's grown on me.

Especially with this wind that we've had. I think with the north wind, it plays very, very weird, but with the south we had yesterday and the west we're having right now, I think it plays as a great golf course.

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