

U.S Senior Women's Open Championship

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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Fox Chapel Golf Club

Susie Keane

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right, my pleasure to welcome Susie Keane here into the interview room. Susie, thanks for joining us. You qualified on July 9th down in Ft. Myers. How has your experience been here for your first U.S. Senior Women's Open?

SUSIE KEANE: It's my second Open. I played in Ohio two years ago. It's great. I knew a little bit more what to expect this time. I would say the first time I was like a deer in headlights. I was just kind of overwhelmed by the experience.

I knew a little what I was getting into this time. Trying to be a little more focused on my own game and what I'm trying to do this time around.

Q. Terrific. You have a great history in tennis and platform tennis. How has that helped you throughout the years with your golf game, with your hand-eye coordination and to play the highest level of golf?

SUSIE KEANE: I think if anything, my strength was probably in my kind of discipline and my work ethic. I am a practicer. I enjoy practicing. I work really, really hard on my game.

But I have to. I mean, I didn't start playing golf until I was in my 40s. It does not come easy or naturally.

I know it's a tough game for everyone, but I just feel like it's way out of my comfort zone. I try really hard so I think my strength is more I just know it takes a lot of work to prepare to play competitive golf, especially at this level.

And especially in my case, I feel like I'm a little behind the eight ball because I such a great start. I think you get confidence from the work you put into it, and I put a lot of work into it.

You know, that and I don't know, there are a lot of similarities. Just kind of being in the heat of the moment and knowing that that's a good thing and that's why we're



here and trying to have that help you instead of kind of paralyze you.

Q. You mentioned you didn't start playing golf until you were in your 40s. What spurred to you take up the game?

SUSIE KEANE: You know, it was just kind of what was going on in my life at the time. I had young kids. My ex-husband was a golfer and we joined a club. My kids had just started school so I had some extra time on my hands.

He gave me golf clubs for my 40th birthday that I kind of didn't take too right away just because I'm enjoying the club and all that. It was just kind of what was going on. We were living in Michigan at the time.

And then once I took them out and started playing I got hooked. Then again, I put a lot of work into it right away once I got hooked; so here we are.

Q. And what's the scouting report on your tennis game what kind of player were you?

SUSIE KEANE: I turned pro in 1980. I was 16. It was kind of the Chris Evert, Martina Navratilova era. I actually played against both of them Centre Court at Wimbledon; played Billie Jean King at the U.S. Open.

I was a baseline. I probably more followed Chris Evert's style of play. You know, just kind of patient and consistent and, again, stay out there as long as it takes and, yeah, just -- I definitely my matches were on the longer side.

Q. Then you transition to platform tennis; and now in the platform tennis the Hall of Fame. There are some courts right up here.

SUSIE KEANE: I know, you saw them. (Laughter.)

Q. Enticing to you play a little bit?

SUSIE KEANE: Since I live in Florida I don't really do platform because it's a cold weather sport. I miss it a lot. I tried the pickleball thing but I like platform better.

Just haven't played in a long time. Like I said, Florida is



not conducive to it. When I've been back in Michigan visiting family I've got out there and played a few times, but not lately.

Yeah, platform is super fun and something I really didn't start doing until I retired from tennis and was living in Chicago and started playing then.

Q. Now that you're in Florida is golf taking up most of your...

SUSIE KEANE: Yeah, it does. I really -- takes a lot of time actually.

Q. And you had a chance to see the course I assume the last day or two.

SUSIE KEANE: Yeah, played 18 yesterday with. It's beautiful. Again, these tournaments are long for me. Surprisingly, I don't know, someone with my history might think I hit a long ball, but I don't.

I think there is a lot -- there is a lot that goes into the golf swing that comes from a natural place of having played it for a long time. I feel like I should be longer but I'm not. I'm accepting, so that's why I work on my short game.

Q. You mentioned words like "patient" and "consistency" with your tennis game. What kind of strategy do you have more playing this week here?

SUSIE KEANE: You know, again, like I said, it's long for me and I'm kind of accepting of that. I'm just trying to do the best I can with what I am bringing to the table, which is, you know, a fight and determination and hard work and a lot of work on my short game.

For me it's all about getting up and down which yesterday I realized is difficult on these greens. The greens are really -- a lot going on and they're quick, and it makes it a little harder to get the chip closer. It's going to be challenging for me.

Q. Were there any holes specifically that you thought might be the biggest test for the field?

SUSIE KEANE: Again, because you're talking to me, it's the longer ones. We have a 412 yard par-4. I mean, that's way out of my comfort zone.

And there is -- I know they have some shorter tees out there they might use and with this weather maybe we'll see some shorter ones. For me it's length that's challenging.

So any of the longer ones.

Q. Have you played golf a lot in this region?

SUSIE KEANE: No. I started playing in Michigan. I was living in Michigan when I started playing. The grass is a little bit similar to that.

But I've been in Florida for 13 and a half years so I've been really playing on very different grass and conditions down there.

But I have played in this, so it's different chipping out of this rough for sure. But I love the greens. I love the fast, true greens. You don't have to deal with the Florida grain. Especially right now in Florida everybody is doing maintenance so all the greens are bumpy.

I love the greens.

Q. How was your experience two years ago in Ohio at this event?

SUSIE KEANE: I was very overwhelmed and very -- I thought that course played really, really long. The greens were really protected. You couldn't run anything up.

I remember leaving thinking, wow, that's probably the last time I'll ever be playing in something like that and here I am again somehow.

So, yeah. Careful what you wish for.

Q. As someone who does a lot with preparation, what does losing a day playing this course do to you?

SUSIE KEANE: You know what? I'm really happy I got here Sunday morning even so I was out here practicing Sunday, played 18 yesterday. I feel pretty good. I actually have a friend in Nevada he will wood. Going to go hit balls this afternoon.

So I'm okay. I'm okay missing this day because I've been playing a ton. My body could probably use a day off.

Q. What did you think you gleaned from playing yesterday and playing that 18 that's really began help you moving forward?

SUSIE KEANE: Couple things. I thought the bunkers, sand in the bunkers seemed very heavy to me and different. I kind of got used to that yesterday.

And just the speed of the greens. And I actually was a little pleasantly surprised that it didn't play as long as it looked like it would on paper. There was a little run and then the

elevation, some were downhill and stuff. So I was surprised on that.

Q. Did you deal with a lot of the undulations in Michigan.

SUSIE KEANE: Not really. I'm from Grosse Pointe in Detroit, right by the river. It's flat as a pancake. And now I in Orlando, flat again. The undulations are definitely different, but it's beautiful. It's fun.

The course is beautiful and it's all I heard from the girls yesterday, everybody saying the same thing. Just love the golf course.

Q. Can I take you back to Wimbledon. Can you explain to somebody what it's like to step on Centre Court or even at Flushing Meadows at the U.S. Open and play against a Hall of Famer? What that experience like?

SUSIE KEANE: Man, you know, at the time it's just what I did. It wasn't even -- you also have to remember this is way before social media, way before Tennis Channel, all of that. We kind of did it in a very small bubble.

It's not as massive an undertaking as it almost would seem to someone today. It was just what I did. I don't know that I would like to actually be playing in this kind of stage in this day and age. I think it's really tough on the kids.

I was 16, too, and I think it's tough. It's tough on you. I think I was fortunate to kind of do it in our own little tiny world.

So, yeah, like I said it was just something I did. It wasn't that -- looking at it now it's a bigger deal.

Q. I was going to say, taking that experience and then how can you use that experience stepping onto a golf course with Hall of Famers now?

SUSIE KEANE: You know, it's funny. It was so long ago that I feel like I was a different person, different life. I don't want to say I don't remember it but it was a really long time ago.

I almost get more of a little bit of a confidence boost when people remind me of it. Like, you know, remember what you did? That actually helps me to remember that I did actually, you know, do something pretty special for a while.

Q. Are there one or two things from playing tennis and platform tennis that maybe help you now or something you can use playing golf?

SUSIE KEANE: I think like I mentioned, any time that you kind of feel that the situation is big or you're nervous or challenging, I just know that's a good thing. To be able to put ourselves in that position, especially at my age and my stage of life, I mean, it's kind of cool to still be able to do that. It's a good thing. It's not a bad thing.

And I think I'm also a little bit of the personality that you sink or swim a little bit. I'm a swimmer. (Laughter.) I like the big stage. I like to play with really good people. I like to try to compete, try to -- I mean, I enjoy the process I guess more. I just enjoy being here. I enjoy playing the practice rounds with these women.

I enjoy all of that. It's not all about the result. I mean, I hope it's not. I'll probably be disappointed if it is. I'm pretty realistic and hard on myself as far as that goes.

So I enjoy the process.

Q. Was there one or two people that influenced you with that and instilled that competitiveness in you when you were younger?

SUSIE KEANE: You know, I think it's my whole family. My dad played hockey at Michigan; they won NAAs. He was a big athlete.

My sister played at Michigan State.

My brother was a national champion hockey player. I just kind of grew up in that environment. I started playing tennis at a very young age because I wanted to do what my sisters were doing.

Again, different world, before all the social media and all the money in professional sports. I did it because I wanted to do it.

By the time I was of age to turn pro, you know, there was actually money in professional tennis, so I was a little bit lucky ask the timing of all that I think.

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