

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW: COLIN MONTGOMERIE
Wednesday, November 4, 2015



PHIL STAMBAUGH: We're joined by Colin Montgomerie, World Golf Hall of Fame member, in the media center this afternoon. Colin, thanks for joining us. Obviously it all comes down to this week.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: It does.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: You come in as our Charles Schwab Cup leader by only a narrow margin.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: A shot, a shot.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: It's going to be quite a battle this week. Sort of sum up the year and the Schwab Cup race and having a chance to win.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Well, that's kind of you to say. Having finished second last year gave me an opportunity to see okay, what can we do to try and go one better. It's been a frustrating year in many ways. I've got in position to win a number of times and haven't really taken that on, and I feel very fortunate in many ways to be leading having only won once. I suppose that proves a little bit of consistency, but at the same time having only won once coming in here leading shows consistency but lack of wins. This is the one that I really need to get to win. It's in my own hands as it is to Jeff and to Bernhard; if they win, they win, and I'm in that frame. So it's nice to be one of the three. At the same time it's been quite frustrating that a number of tournaments that I've come into the last round or leading into the last round I haven't taken the opportunity to actually winning.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: You finished tied for fourth here last year and you got in almost 17 holes today before the rain. Some thoughts about Desert Mountain and what you saw out there.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: I must admit, all credit to them. I think the course is in superb condition. I think there's not a blade of grass out of place out there so they've done a great job in preparing the course the way they have. It's playing much longer than it did last year and this rain won't help that. It's still quite soft out there. I think the scoring will be good because the greens are softer so we'll be able to get closer to the pins. And you look at the top 30 here, it's a very, very strong top 30 you have from number 30 straight through to the first place. I think that it's a very strong field and any one of those 30 are capable of winning this. I think it's a super event you have here and a great finale to your tour. I'm honored to be here. If I don't die overnight through blood loss, I'll be fine but I shouldn't.

Q. Do I ask Monty the question or pick up Butch Harmon where he's left Phil Mickelson?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Oh, right. I would ignore Butch Harmon, I've done that for years, yeah, yeah, ignore Butch. (Laughs.)

Q. If you compare this to an Order of Merit if you win, could you compare the two, the seven you've won on the European Tour? Would this be a point of pride?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Actually eight, but I'll let you off at seven. It was actually eight.

Q. I wasn't trying to cut you short.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Yes, I can compare it very much, very much. It's a year-long race, although it's strange in many ways that I start this week third on the Money List and yet leading the Charles Schwab Cup. It's a peculiar situation to find oneself in. But of course the one that does the best here of the three of us will win the Money List as well because of the prize fund available. So it comes down to this and it's come down to a lot of times in my career where I came to Valderrama, which was our East Lake, our FedExCup if you like, and I needed to do something or counteract someone else's play and that's what I'll be aiming to do over the next four days is to counteract Jeff and Bernhard's play whereby if they start going low, well, I've got to follow suit and vice versa. So it will be quite interesting to see how this pans out. It will be very close because I know how steady Jeff Maggert is and this course is one for patience and I think he's very good at that. And also Bernhard never gives anything away, never gives anything away, so Bernhard always minimizes his score.

So I've got two tough competitors to play against. The thing is, so have they. It's going to be an interesting battle and I think it will come down to, I really do, I think it will come down to Sunday afternoon on the back nine where one of us or three of us are in there and then battling around to try and finish ahead of one another. The only thing I have in my favor is I've got the tie, I've got the tie because I'm leading. That's the only thing I have. So if we all finish equal, I win. Yeah, I've done this before many moons ago. We're talking '93 we started this, so 22 years ago and it's funny how it plays out in another generation. Amazing. But I've fought against Bernhard Langer many times in Europe and sometimes on top and sometimes not. He's a great competitor and you tend to forget he's 58 now, against a couple -- I think Jeff is the same as me, is he 52? You tend to forget Bernhard is pushing the boundaries of age here as well and how well he's doing considering that.

Q. Are you getting tired of him not giving anything up? How long do you think he can go at this rate especially with the putter change next year?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: The putter change will be interesting for Bernhard. He's been practicing with a shorter one, I saw it come out at the SAS Championship there with a shorter putter and immediately went back to his way of doing -- you know, his sort of shorter Matt Kuchar type of effect and I'm sure he'll go back to that. Will it affect him? I think it will, but at the same time he'll find a way, he'll find a way. It's amazing how he'll be there at the end of this event. You talk about patience, you talk about someone who gets the most out of

everything and, as I say, never gives anything to anybody. When you're playing Bernhard Langer, you've got to earn your victory. He will not give you anything. Therefore, a very tough man to compete against as is Jeff, as is Jeff Maggert. Jeff Maggert's one of the straightest hitters of a golf ball in the world and therefore will be in contention here, I'm sure. So it will be a tough four days but I am looking forward to the challenge of it and seeing how it pans out.

Q. So we've written and talked about you taking drives around the country, touring the United States, this is like Colin Montgomerie on steroids behind the wheel. What do you think about? Were you thinking about Schwab Cup, were you thinking about family?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: It's amazing what you do. I have a play list on my iPad that I play, they've all got auxiliary things in the cars, I do that. I stop off sometimes and see different sites and different places. West Texas isn't great though, that's not good. That's up there with outer Siberia I think. That's not really one for sightseeing.

The rest of the trip, it's very interesting. I think about who I'm going to play with the next week and thought about playing with Jeff Maggert here the first round because we're one and two on the Charles Schwab, so you think about playing that. Think about the holes that are out here from last year and think about the shots you need to play, and yeah, you do, you think about all sorts of things. You think about family back home. Generally when I'm driving they're asleep eight hours away, so time difference. It's bizarre really what goes through one's mind. But it's a time where I can be myself, I can turn off my mobile phone if I have to, I can turn it on if I have to and it's a time for reminiscing, a time for tranquility in many, many ways. You can switch off on the drive and sometimes I've done 40, 50 miles and you go wow, where was I there, I was almost in a trance. Amazing. Other drivers probably thought I was, you know?

But yeah, it's amazing. It's the best over five and a bit thousand miles this last trip and it's been interesting, very interesting. See some sights and you see some interesting things en route, you know. Yuma, I never thought Yuma existed. I thought that was a face place, the 310 to Yuma. I was actually there, I saw the train, I could have jumped on it, amazing. And then the sand dunes just into California and the rock formations, it's amazing. You've got an amazing country here and I've driven from coast to coast now and I look forward to doing it again, yeah.

Q. You turned the car in and the guy brings it out and goes 5,200 miles. What was that like and what was the bill, if you don't mind?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: The bill was high, it was just short of \$10,000, the bill, but at the same time it was cheap at the price. It was an event and I thought, okay, I'll pick it up in Newark and I'll hand it in in Phoenix. So I went to an Avis desk just next to the hotel, it was near the airport and I handed it in. She never looked, she never really blinked. It was lucky, I got the car and it had only done 600 miles, it was a 2016 edition.

Q. What was it?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: It was a Ford Expedition, a great big truck, perfect cruising thing, perfect car for the job. I handed it in and yes, it had done 600 miles and when I handed it in it was 5,900 or something and the oil was getting a bit low. I was worried about the oil change because it was a new car but she never blinked. I said it's done 5,900. She wanted mileage and she wanted the gas so I gave her both. I gave her the gas because it was full because it's cheaper if you fill it up, if you don't hand it in empty, and I gave her the mileage, she never blinked and I walked off. Actually, I got my Jeep Cherokee here which was lovely, and I'm, oh, I miss my big truck, you know? But it wouldn't fit in the car park here, it wouldn't fit in the parking lot so it was good. I had a good time, I had a good time. You can switch off and you can do all sorts of things and it's interesting, it's interesting. It's an interesting sort of -- if you look at it psychologically, it's an interesting trip, how you can switch off and switch on. It's good, it's good, I enjoyed it, I did enjoy it.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: Monty, thanks. Good luck this week.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Thank you very much, I look forward to it, thank you.