



Colin Montgomerie

Q. When you saw that last week and you heard, I mean, they hit clubs now insane distances, don't they?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: It's insane, isn't it? The last drive, Brooks Koepka, 360, 80, or something with a 3-wood. Wow. We still play the game the way the courses were designed, you know, as opposed to other places.

Sometimes you wonder, is this the right way to go? I don't want to get controversial early on with you, but 8,000 yards, is that the right way to go or do we stick to the TPC Sawgrass, which is I think one day was less than 7,000 yards, which is very short now for tournament play and yet not many broke par. It's amazing, the risk-reward thing and the way the course is set up. There's two ways of looking at it. But good luck to the guy. You know, he won his first European Tour event on my course in Turkey, Montgomerie Maxx Royal. Brooks Koepka came down and played there. I was playing in that event and he was potentially a star of the future and a star of the present, yeah, yeah. And right in the mold of -- right in the mold of Dustin Johnson, to be honest. They share in the same gym, they seem to have the same set of personality. Nothing seems to bother them or phase them in any way, and that's probably the best thing to do in this game, don't worry about it.

Q. Did you work the Open for BBC?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: I didn't, I didn't this particular year, no. No, I was over actually at Rhode Island. I was doing a CVS Pharmacy Charity Classic over there. Billy Andrade and Brad Faxon got me involved over there, which was super and really, really thoroughly enjoyed it. And we raised I think a million on the day for charity, so it's fantastic what they do, yeah. I just come over from Rhode Island yesterday.

Q. What do you think of this place?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Well, this is my first time here. I had to defend a title at home so I couldn't play last year, but this is super. I wish I had come to University of Wisconsin golf program. I'll tell you, if this is their own course and what they do, it's superb. Even to walk into the golf shop to see all the red and white. My, this is a great program. I'm excited to play the course tomorrow, yeah, yeah.

Q. This tour in general for you, the vibe on this tour versus the PGA Tour, once you kind of acclimate yourself to it?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: It's very different. It's extremely different. They say it's the best

tour in the world and I agree with them. I'm not saying things against other tours, but there's definitely no envy out here. There's no big egos out here. We've all done okay to be here.

I think for the first time in my life I feel there's a genuine, a genuine delight for anyone that does well. Genuine. You can say "well done" and "well played," but here there's a genuine delight for anybody that happens to win.

And it's a great atmosphere. You see the guys are talking during a round. Yes, it's competitive, don't get me wrong. When the gun goes off on Friday morning, it's competitive, but before and after the tables fill up with eight people before the next one starts. You know, this stuff, it's a family and I really feel part of that now. First time I joined the PGA Tour as a full member. In my time I used to play 10 or 12, which wasn't enough to keep my card, so I was always a member of the European Tour, but I'm really, really enjoying it, yeah. Fantastic.

Q. How do you guys get to that point in your career, is it just experience, having gone through things, seeing what other people have gone through?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: I think so, I think so. I think, you know, you mature and you understand the game. You understand the sponsors. The two pro-ams here work very well. You understand without them, without having a tournament, there's no point in coming here, so we do adhere to that. It's not always the case on the PGA or the European Tour or the other tours there are.

We get it. We've been there. We started -- a lot of these guys are slightly older than me, I'm 54 on Friday, but they started -- the 56-year-olds, 58-year-olds out here realize that when we started, we brought our own bag of balls and the caddie was sent out to pick them up. We knew where we came from in many ways. We understand the days of getting a brand new car to drive for the week. These days are very adverse to us.

So it's a changing world, but we understand what it took to get everyone else there. We've got to thank the likes of Arnold Palmer and Nicklaus and Player and Trevino and Floyd and Irwin and all these guys who set up this tour to what it is today.

Q. You're playing with Woosie and Faldo, I think?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: I believe so, yes.

Q. Was there ever a day where that was a quiet grouping and has that changed?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: No, that's always been quite a good group. We had Bernhard Langer in -- unfortunately he can't make it this week, he's got a wedding at home. But we used to play a lot of practice rounds in the Ryder Cup together.

I'll never forget at the 17th hole at Valderrama when Seve was our captain and the four of us

were playing together, so Woosie, Faldo, Langer and myself. In 1997 we knew what we were doing, you know? And we played his hole, because he redesigned the 17th hole at Valderrama, and he wasn't happy with us the way we played it at all. He sent us back to the tee to do it again, and I think to send us four back to the tee to play this hole again, Woosie's shaking his head and Faldo's going, "What's going on?" We'll probably have a chat about that again on Friday. But it's a super grouping and I look forward to reminiscing with them. We have had a lot of good battles over the years, yeah, yeah.

Q. You bring up the Ryder Cup. Miguel in the press conference, there doesn't seem to be that edge between the Americans and the Europeans on this tour?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Not at all.

Q. It's checked at the door, isn't it?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: I think so. A lot of us here from Miguel and Woosie and Faldo, I've played Lee Janzen in the singles, I played Mark Calcavecchia, Scott Hoch. We played them in the singles here. And David Toms now, I've played him twice. Jay Haas. And so we've played each other in the singles, never mind four-ball or foursomes.

But it goes back and, as you say, that's been checked out. And we look forward to the next offering next year of the Ryder Cup, but yeah, it goes back. And yes, we can reminisce, but these days we look back on it with great pride and honor that we were part of history, whatever it might have been, yeah, yeah.

Q. And competitively you're doing quite well on this tour. Do you feel good about where your game's at?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Yeah, I've been second to my German compatriot the last three years out here, you know. And as he said in his speech in Hawaii to start the year when he was rewarded with the Charles Schwab Cup, he told me to keep trying, in front of everybody, which was a bit harsh, to be honest. But at the same time there's some great competition out here, great competition. Steve Stricker, of course, who hosts here this week, has joined us. David Toms and Jerry Kelly. There's some great new guys coming out here and every year it gets tougher and tougher. So there's great competition and I just love it, yeah.

Q. You were happy to see Bernie stay home this week, right?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Oh, yes, yes. He can go to as many weddings as he wants, yeah, yeah, as far as we're all concerned, yeah.

Q. Talking about enjoying golf, Miguel seems like he's one of those guys that's right at the top of the list, we can see how much he loves it.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: He does. There's a number of them. Tom Kite, you know. In his mid 60s now, Tom Kite. I've never seen anyone practice as much as Tom Kite and the love of the game, to try and get better. I think anyone who doesn't play a round of golf and doesn't learn from it has really missed out. You know, we all learn from every game that we play.

I've got some new shafts here. There's some guy looking at my new irons there. Look at all the head covers on the ground. My God, I'm still trying to find something or trying to find something better than I had before, because obviously if you don't win by 10 shots every week, well, there's something not quite right so you try it. And the support we have out here is fantastic, so it's just a great place to play, yeah.

Q. Do you find the fans in this chapter of your life have embraced you?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Oh, very much, very much so. And I've embraced them. I think it's been 50/50, to be honest. I think I've given and they've given and we're actually, hate to say friends but there's certainly a relationship now there never was before, which is super and I'm really enjoying it, yeah, yeah. And that's why I think I'm playing better as well. I look forward to it, I enjoy it. If you guys come to work and you look forward to what you're doing in the day, you'll do a better job than someone who's going to work for a means to an end, you know? It's not going to happen. So I think I'm a great believer if you enjoy what you do you're usually quite good at it, and I'm enjoying it, yeah.