

ROUND 2 INTERVIEW
October 11, 2019



PETER MALNATI (-10)

Q. The average for the field is like 74 and you shoot 65, pretty remarkable stuff.

PETER MALNATI: Yeah. I mean, I was just out there and I went into today with a mindset I'm going to do my very best on every shot and I'm not -- trying not to worry about score and trying not to worry about the conditions and just do my very best. Obviously got to play the first five holes in perfect conditions and really took advantage. Then came back out afterwards and was able to keep the momentum going and really played -- playing no bogeys in the conditions we played on my last, what, 13 holes, is really more than I could have ever hoped for.

Q. Tell us about 18. You hit a great drive, swiped up that tee very quickly, and then the second shot, that might have been your best second shot you've ever had?

PETER MALNATI: Yeah. I mean, I told Chad, caddie Chad, when the shot was in the air, obviously I knew it was good, but I would have been perfectly content to hit it in the right bunker there. I took a lot of club and was just going to try to get it started left of the pin and just make sure I got it cutting a little bit. It really held its line nicely, and to have it come down right on the flag there was a real bonus, because like I said, I would have taken right bunker, no questions asked.

Q. You continue to putt very well. That's a strength of your game. You putted very well today.

PETER MALNATI: Yeah, definitely. I was really pleased. One thing that I know, putting's one of my straights and it's something that I work really hard on and I take a lot of pride in, but one thing I would say has kind of been a weakness of mine is I'm not a great putter on windy days. The wind really messes with me. I know it makes it difficult for everyone, but it really tends to mess with what is one of my strengths. I don't even know how you practice that, but I've just tried to have that be almost a mindset, I'm going to be better at it.

Today I looked like a little bit of an idiot on 17, but luckily I hit a good enough shot in there that I was able to sneak out of there with two putts. But I was really pleased with the way I hit a lot of the putts in the wind and it felt good.

Q. And you and your wife are close to having a baby, right?

PETER MALNATI: Right. I'm fully on call. I didn't know if I was going to come play here or not. She's always encouraging me to play and she has all the media officials' phone numbers, so if someone has to come get me off the course this week, they will. But yeah,

she's due two weeks from tomorrow, but she is beyond ready.

Q. Peter, bogey-free 65 in the midst of a two-hour delay. What did you find out there?

PETER MALNATI: Yeah, I mean, I don't know. I've been playing really lousy the last couple weeks, but felt like it was close. For the first time in about three or four weeks was able to have a really good practice session on Wednesday and just felt good. I don't know if necessarily anything clicked, but I really did feel good. I felt like what had been close the last couple weeks, it felt like it was starting to feel good.

So today I just went out and tried to give my very best to every shot, like the old clichè we all say. You know, even when the conditions got tough, I was able to hit a lot of good shots and just played really solidly.

Q. Tough conditions. I mean, the sun's peeking out now, but how hard is it to go bogey free for those last 13 holes?

PETER MALNATI: Yeah. Just, you know, it's challenging dealing with just like the hands being cold after summertime golf. This morning it was 80 and muggy and then played the last 13 holes with wishing I had hand warmers. Even just the different feel in the hands is challenging. The wind was really blowing out there and some of the areas where it's exposed, where you don't have the trees, the wind was certainly a two- or three-club wind and that makes a big difference on every shot. I was just able to hit a lot of really solid ones and stay under control and that felt really good.

Q. You mentioned not being in the greatest form coming into this week and finding something in practice. What part of your game gives you the most confidence as you look forward to the weekend?

PETER MALNATI: Yeah, it was awesome, I drove the ball beautifully today. I can't wait -- I'm not a huge guy into stats. At the end of the day, there's only one that matters and that's score and I had a good one of those today, but I do like to look at my driving stats and they've been really, really a weakness for me for a year. I mean, I feel like I'm driving it better in practice and I feel like it's close, and then today I drove the ball beautifully out there. So I'm actually excited to wait until the second round's over and see my -- I had to have gained strokes driving today like more -- like at least a full stroke or more, so that was exciting.

Q. Can you talk about impending fatherhood and how much that's weighing on your mind? Not weighing on your mind, but obviously --

PETER MALNATI: Yeah, it is. You know, I actually, that was something that I thought about going into this week because the last couple weeks I've let it be a distraction in that I haven't really prepared the way I normally would because my head's back home, I want to be home. This week I was like, dude, this is your last tournament before you become a dad,

like do something with it. The best thing you can do for your wife and your kid is to go out and play good.

So I practiced with a lot more focus this week and it's nice to see that that does result in some better golf for me. Yeah, I feel like, you know, yes, my head is definitely a little bit elsewhere, but again, the best thing even after the kid comes, when I do decide -- me and my wife decide it's time for me to go play again, the best thing I can do when I'm at a tournament is focus on the tournament. That's what they need me to do, so that's what I'm trying to do this week.

It's definitely -- it's beyond words to say the excitement and I'm 98 percent excited, two percent terrified, all of that is definitely at play right now. My wife's the best and she's going to be the best mother, so we're going to handle things all right back home, it will be all good.

Q. Because this is going to be your first?

PETER MALNATI: Yeah.

Q. Seems like from what I've read, you've been busy preparing a house and all this stuff, so it's understandable if your mind's not really focused on golf.

PETER MALNATI: Yeah, definitely. But yeah, so like I said, I'll kind of reiterate that if my head's going to be there and I'm not going to be able to flip it into mode, then I should just go home. She wants me to be here this week, I want to be here, I want to play. So when I'm here, I'll focus on golf. It's not like I need to focus for five hours straight. I can have them in the back of my mind and still do my job out here. So that's what I'm trying to do is always keep them in my thoughts and my heart and still stay focused when it's time to work.

Q. How long have you thought about being a father? Has it been something you thought about for a long time?

PETER MALNATI: Yeah. I actually wrote this in my -- I keep a little blog and I wrote this the last time I posted that most kids, when they kick it around at their home course growing up, they're dreaming about that putt to win the Masters or that putt to win the U.S. Open or that putt to win THE PLAYERS Championship or something like that.

I always took that dream one step farther. My dream, I used to as a little kid, I would watch and you would see these guys hole out to win the big tournaments and their wife and their little kids would just come running out on the green. That to me, that's where the dream really is. That was the dream stuff.

So I already -- I won a Korn Ferry Tour event with my wife caddying for me, I won a big amateur event with my mom caddying for me, so I've gotten to have some of those kind of family moments at the end of a tournament. But the idea of actually being a father and then one day, you know, hopefully having my kids get to see me do what I love to do, which is

this, and hopefully do it well is something that I kind of get emotional even just thinking about that. That's going to be so awesome for me.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about the eagle? What club did you use on your second shot?

PETER MALNATI: I could never be able to get to that green in two before, I'm a little longer this year, but it was all I had, driver and a 3-wood. Yeah, that was awesome because I start birdie-birdie and then three, made a good par, and then four is a par 5, which you might expect sometimes seems like with us PGA TOUR players, these par 5s, you make a 5, you feel like you're taking a step backwards. If you make a 4, you feel like you're doing what you're supposed to. But if you make a 3, it feels like a real boost.

So I hit a beautiful drive out there, just absolutely perfectly hugged the left bunker, and then a 3-wood into the green. I was really proud of it because it was still early in the round and there was water off the left side there and I was just really committed to getting it started in the middle of the green and then curving it toward the right pin. So I had to start it out toward the water and I just hit the exact 3-wood I wanted to and it just trickled into the back fringe probably 20 feet from the hole and I got that putt to fall. Yeah, like I said, if you make a 4 sometimes on a par 5, you just feel like, oh, I just did what I was supposed to do. If you make a 3, it's a real boost.

Q. Did you go out today with kind of a good feel for how the weather was going to change, thought you better make hay while the sun was shining?

PETER MALNATI: Yeah, I knew there was possibilities of anything, so that's -- I went out just purely with the plan of, hey, I'm going to give my best effort all the time no matter what. If it gets really difficult out there, I'm just not going to worry about the score, I'm just going to try my best on every shot.

So yeah, when the weather was good, trying my best on every shot resulted in 5 under through five, and then when the weather turned after our long delay, that trying my best on every shot turned into 2 under through my last 13 and that was still pretty darn good.

Q. Did you feel like you got cautious at all because of the conditions?

PETER MALNATI: I was actually -- I told Chad this. I was a little upset with a couple of my wedge shots on the back nine. There were a couple of back pins and I had good opportunities with wedges in my hands and I left them 20 and 30 feet short of the back pins. It's smart when the weather gets like this to play with a bit of caution and a bit of respect for the conditions, but wedges are my strength and I would like to turn those opportunities into birdies. But I didn't make any mistakes, either, and that's a big thing.

Q. Have you ever been 5 under through five holes before?

PETER MALNATI: Oh, yeah. Come on.

Q. That's normal for you guys?

PETER MALNATI: Come on. I always say I can't remember it, I can't remember, but have to have been.