

ROUND 4 INTERVIEW

April 2, 2023

COREY CONNERS (-15)



DOUG MILNE: First 2019, now 2023, Corey Connors, two-time champion now of the Valero Texas Open.

Corey, congratulations. Great day today, 4-under 68, got the job done. With the win of course you get 500 FedExCup points, moves you into the top-20 at No. 18.

With all that said, just a few comments about today and capturing your second win here at the Valero Texas Open.

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, you know, been feeling really good about my game and have been really excited to get back here to San Antonio with all the good memories from 2019, even playing well over the last few years.

It was definitely a battle out there today, but I trusted my ability and thought about a lot of good shots I had hit previously in the week with certain conditions. It was definitely tough out there, but I'm really happy and proud of the way I battled. Kept things pretty simple, that was kind of my focus starting the day, get it in play off the tee, get it on the greens and was able to do that. Made a couple nice putts when I needed to and overall just a special day. Yeah, glad it's over with, but really thrilled to have come out on top.

Having my family here is really, really special. They are so important to me and such a big part of the team and what I do. It's great to have them here to share that experience.

DOUG MILNE: You answered my second question, so with that, we'll open it up and take a few questions.

Q. You seemed to keep everybody just far enough that they weren't a real threat. Some guys were doing some scoring, but what does it take to manage that distance just enough?

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, just keeping it really simple. I was trying to be fairly aggressive throughout the round. The conditions were tough, it was tough to be attacking every pin location, but I think the fact I just didn't really make many mistakes today was a real key. I knew some birdies were going to happen, I was going to give myself enough chances.

Yeah, just keeping it simple and keeping it out of trouble and not making -- playing bogey-free today, I certainly would have taken that this morning before teeing off. It's not easy to do out here.



Yeah, got to give credit to, I think, Sam and Sam, both put up some good numbers. I saw Sam Stevens missed the putt on 18, so I knew I had a bit of a cushion there. Yeah, it was still a little stressful all the way to the end, but it was just enough.

Q. You mentioned yesterday that you like this golf course. Can you be more specific about what you like about it?

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, I feel like my shot shape, I can just see like turning the ball from right to left. There are so many holes out here that maybe it might not be the ideal shape, I just see my shot shape fitting into these holes. There's a number of holes that are right to left that I really like and took advantage of throughout the week, No. 6 and 15 particularly. Was able to hit aggressive tee shots on both of those holes just trusting my shot shape.

Yeah, like the par 5s, they're all challenging, there's no gimmes on those. You've got to hit smart shots and leave yourself in the right places to make birdies there. Wasn't able to do that as well today, but still gave myself some chances.

Yeah, I think it's really demanding off the tee and into the greens, so you really have to be in control of your iron play and your tee balls or the ball will roll off the greens, and short game around the greens is quite tricky.

Q. How do you compare the experience and the emotions you went through today to what it was like in 2019?

COREY CONNERS: In '19 it was a bit of a rollercoaster round but really dug deep on the back nine then. Was trying to channel that a little bit today. I had a bit of a lead making the turn, but knew just keep my foot down, try and be aggressive. I certainly remembered a lot of the shots that I hit in '19 on the back nine today as I was playing the round. There was a lot of good ones and I had a lot of good feelings then, tried to channel that today.

Q. How about the post-tournament part, the celebration of it, being able to enjoy the win, is that different a second time around?

COREY CONNERS: It's awesome having -- you know, my wife was there in 2019, I hope she was a little more relaxed today out there watching. It's so special having them here.

Yeah, my caddie, Danny, got to give him a lot of credit. We stayed in the moment, just stuck to our normal routine. He's been really helpful over the past few years. It feels really good to finally get it done and definitely be, yeah, fun celebrating and fun heading into next week.

Q. As you mentioned, you had a pretty clean round today, not a lot of predicaments that you were in. I wonder, what was the most meaningful or important shot in retrospect?

COREY CONNERS: I think a shot that sticks out immediately is the putt I made on No. 9



just from the back fringe was kind of a nice bonus birdie. Patrick I think had, I think he had a bogey there, so I was playing against the field but in our group it kind of gave me a cushion.

I'd say the tee shot on 18 was great. The second shot on No. 10, I pulled my drive a little bit, but it kind of opens up the green from the left side. I'm not afraid to hit it over there and caught a fortunate lie that wasn't too bad, and hitting that on the green was nice and getting away with a par kind of settling in for that second nine was important as well.

Q. When you made that birdie on 9, I believe your lead was three. Did that change your approach to the back nine whatsoever?

COREY CONNERS: Not really. You know, I knew what I did in 2019 and there's a bunch of birdies available on the back nine if you hit really good shots. The wind was a completely different direction this year so I knew certain holes were going to be playing tough, but there were still going to be opportunities to make some birdies for guys chasing. So I certainly didn't want to let up at all, was trying to pad the lead as much as possible. Had a pretty good look on 11 that I didn't capitalize on, same thing on 12. Again, just kept it simple and I was just enough ahead.

Q. You were kind of talking about what I'm asking about on 15, it was three shots when you made the birdie there. I mean, it was a nice little cushion for a good long while, but were you kind of thinking what's going on out there? And when Sam did jump up, was that a little bit of a surprise?

COREY CONNERS: To be honest, I didn't know exactly where he was at. Playing the 18th, I saw him make a putt on 17, so I knew it was creeping close. But yeah, again, the last few holes there, they're not easy but they are gettable. They had the tee up on 17 today so knew guys were going to have some eagle chances or birdies there. Then with 18 playing downwind, I never went for 18 in two in my career here and went for it in three of the four rounds this year. Playing downwind again, it was going to be another good opportunity, but as good of an opportunity as it was for other players, I felt like I was going to give myself chances as well.

Q. Corey, everybody wants to be peaking going into a major. How much does this give you confidence that your game is where it's at going into the Masters?

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, I think regardless of the outcome today, I was going to go into next week with a lot of confidence. I've been working hard and feel like things are -- everything's rounding to where I want it to be.

But getting the win here today definitely boosts that confidence a little bit. It's a place that I love to play and I'm really, yeah, looking forward to next week. It's going to be great. Obviously got lots of confidence in the game.

Q. You're 31 years old, way too early to take inventory of your career, but at the age



of 31 now, you have won twice. From a small town in Canada, like how do you view what you've accomplished at this stage? Is it what you pictured?

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, I mean, just getting to the PGA TOUR was beyond my wildest dreams and getting that first win here four years ago was really, really special.

Yeah, it's amazing to have my second. I had hoped it wouldn't take this long after getting the first win, but I've still been working really hard. I've got a great team behind me, manager and coach, great family, my wife, they're so supportive and it's definitely pretty special. Beyond my wildest dreams really to be a two-time winner on the PGA TOUR. Small town in Ontario and I know there's going to be some happy people back in Listowel tonight.

DOUG MILNE: All right. Well, thank you guys.

