

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
18 October 2023



COLLIN MORIKAWA

LAURA VESCOVI: We would like to welcome Collin Morikawa to the media center for the 2023 ZOZO Championship.

Collin, you're making your fifth start here. Can you just open up with some thoughts about returning to Accordia Narashino?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah. Look, I love coming back to Japan. Whether it's for golf or a fun vacation time, it's one of my favorite places in the world to be. I will never forget the first time in 2019 stepping on the first tee when people were lining the first hole five people deep just ready to watch some golf.

So it's exciting to come back here every year and to see the fans just get more pumped up and enthusiastic for us to come out here and play some great golf.

LAURA VESCOVI: This is your first start back to the PGA TOUR since the Ryder Cup and the PGA TOUR Championship before that. Can you just reflect on how you spent your time off and maybe a little bit about the season?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I definitely enjoyed some time off. We've not necessarily gone on vacation, but just being home for more than a week has been really, really nice to spend time in my own bed.

Yeah, traveling around the world, obviously we were in Rome a few weeks ago, Japan now. We're going to do a trip in Asia, my wife and I, for a couple weeks after this. A lot of traveling, but a lot of enjoyment time with the people I love.

And if I look back at this season, obviously we're still in this season, but at the end of the day I want to win and I just haven't been able to close that out yet and finish that off. Here's one last chance for the season to kind of come off and finish off on a high note. I know what my goal is and I know what I want to do and accomplish this week is really just stand up and find a way to win.

LAURA VESCOVI: As you return here to Accordia, you've had a chance to play the golf course, can you just share some impressions so far?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, the fairways are definitely firmer. We had a little bit of rain this past weekend on Sunday, but other than that, the fairways are much (technical difficulty) than we've ever seen, so we're going to see a lot of different maybe tee shots, different clubs off tees for a few holes.

But the greens are very soft right now, the greens are very receptive. You've got a lot of spin, so I think guys are going to be playing fairly aggressive. There's going to be a lot of birdies being made out here with even a 6-iron in hand because they're able to stop the ball. Make sure start off, get in the fairway and then from there you can kind of attack some pins.

LAURA VESCOVI: You touched on this a little bit already, but when you talk about the fairways being lined with the fans here, can you talk about the Japanese fans and how supportive they are and playing in front of them, what that's like?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I love playing in front of the Japanese fans. They're very respectful, but they enjoy the game. Sometimes they clap maybe on some bad shots that I might be pissed, but at the end of the day they're enjoying it.

By them doing that, it shows their love and their passion for the game and it truly is shown. You can see that as a player when you're walking down the fairways. So it's exciting because when you are playing well, they do enjoy it even more. They really cheer you on and that's what you want to hear, you want to hear the fans kind of reacting to the shots we're hitting.

LAURA VESCOVI: I'm sure being here gives you some memories about being here for Tokyo for the Olympic Games. Do you have any mindset going into 2024 thinking about Paris?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I've got a lot of work to do. I'm kind of behind the eight-ball right now. Obviously there's a little bit of time to make that team and obviously we have a lot of golf tournaments left, but yeah, there's a lot of motivation. That's going to be definitely one of my goals starting essentially now up until roughly June when the teams are made because I know how much -- how special that moment is.

I'll always be an Olympian, but to make it again and to make it every four years, that's absolutely a goal. It just shows your kind of testament to how good of golf you can continue to play over a long period of time. I think you ask any professional golfer, that's what they want to do.

So being able to represent your country amongst one of the biggest stages in the world and one of the biggest sporting events in the world, it's an absolute honor. And losing out on that playoff, I'm also never going to forget that either.

LAURA VESCOVI: Last question, it was announced that Netflix is going to have its first ever live sporting event, the Netflix Cup, with athletes featured from F1, PGA TOUR and Full Swing in a match play tournament in Las Vegas and you'll be a participant. Can you talk about your excitement for that?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I'm thrilled. I was watching Drive to Survive I think when everyone

else was kind of COVID era and then everyone started getting involved in that. I love waking up on Sundays to watch the races now.

Just to be a part of this live Netflix event and be a part with four other golfers, three other professional golfers -- Max, Justin and Rickie -- and four other drivers, just to make this an event. I think we've seen these matches kind of co-exist amongst all of our schedules over the past handful of years and I think this is going to be a great event to kind of tie in the actual F1 race for that week in Vegas.

Yeah, I don't know what to expect, but I know it's going to be a lot of fun. You're going to see a lot of people out there and hopefully put on a good show.

Q. Collin, just kind of reflecting on the season, I remember talking to you in Detroit saying you found something specific, same in Atlanta. Now that you've kind of had some chance to look back on it as a whole and maybe not be in it week to week, what are your thoughts on how this season has gone?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, that's part of professional golf is you think you have it for one week or you think you have it for a day and you hope that extends over the longest period of time.

Unfortunately, you know, it's been week to week, it's kind of been on a week-to-week basis. So when I look back, it's did I really find the answer? Not quite, because if I did, you would see maybe a month period of good golf or a little longer period. I think when you look at when I have been winning, my good little stints, it's been longer than a week.

Look, at the end of the day any one of us out here on the PGA TOUR, if you're good enough to make it out here, you can have a good week.

But that's not what I'm looking for. I'm looking for a lot of consistency and then peeking at the right times to kind of come out with a win. So we're still in search. We're working on a few things to hopefully be that right recipe for success, but it all comes with an understanding of just kind of what has worked and how do you kind of build those foundation blocks again.

Q. And then I saw on social that you and the missus had a chance to have a pretty special dinner the other night. Just wanted to get your thoughts on that experience.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah. Man, I almost don't want to have sushi again because it was that special. Chef Jiro was actually making the sushi for us, which made it even that much more special. Just being able to get that reservation, going there, sitting down.

It is a short period of time, you have about 30 minutes to eat the food. Man, I don't know how to explain it other than it just being an incredible experience and an honor to be there sitting in front of him and witnessing just talent, right? It's artwork. I think you can look at that, anyone that has a true passion for something that they really love to do, you can see that

artwork they produce and that's what it was.

We were very, very lucky. I was amazed how full I was actually. Normally I don't get full in 30 minutes, but it was very, very special.

Q. Is there any frustration from the Ryder Cup carried over coming into this tournament?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Nothing's carried over. I mean, look, the Ryder Cup was what it was and that's the final result. You know, for me, being my first one over there on European soil and playing against them and obviously having a pretty big loss, I think there's things to learn. I think there's things to take into whether it's future Ryder Cups or even just regular tournaments. I think you learn a lot in those team events on just who you are as a person, how you play golf.

Look, two years ago when we played really well at Whistling Straits, you could use that momentum. I can't use momentum, I'm not going to use momentum from a loss, but I can learn from a loss and take that into whether it's this week or next week or whatever it may be and just kind of learn from it.

There's no lingering anger from losing at a Ryder Cup coming into a week like this. They're two different things, one's a team event and this is normal individual golf.

LAURA VESCOVI: We'll let you go. Thanks for joining us. Good luck this week.