

U.S. Senior Open

Press Conference

Friday June 29, 2018

Jerry Kelly



THE MODERATOR: I'd like to welcome Jerry Kelly, who is our leader at --

JERRY KELLY: 5-under.

THE MODERATOR: -- 5-under par. Sorry. 1-under par, 69 today. We were hoping that the morning play would give you a smoother greens to putt. What was the difference today when you were playing in the morning?

JERRY KELLY: The greens were nice, no question. I just hit a few through the break, couple 3-putts, couple tough 2-putts, but turned out to be 3-putts. But missing those two par-5s on the front side, my backside, that bothered me more than anything, but solid play again. I hit the fairways. I hit the greens. I hit a lot of good putts. So good chip in on 18. It was solid day.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Being college teammates with Tim Petrovic, did you follow his career afterwards? And were you surprised to see him emerge later in life after struggling in his 20s?

JERRY KELLY: No, not really. He's always been an extremely good player. And so it's tough to make it out there. It's easier to make it once you get out there than it is to get out there. So it took me until I was 28. So just took him a hair longer. And then once he got there, he knew he could do it. Especially after watching me.

Q. What's it say about Hartford that two of you in the top-3 are alums?

JERRY KELLY: It's very cool. Patrick Sheehan turns -- when he turns 50, he can come out here and come close too.

Q. What adjustments did you have to make to accommodate the difference in altitude from where you guys normally play?

JERRY KELLY: 10 percent.

Q. But is that pretty standard, because some of the holes are playing downhill, some sidehill, some are uphill?

JERRY KELLY: Well, those are adjustments that you would make normally. So we just take 10 percent and

then do the normal golfer's adjustments. That's all we do. So it's actually pretty easy. What do you do, Miguel?

(Laughter.)

Q. Can you take us through the situation at 18? You were tied for the lead, just bogeyed 17, and what you faced at 18, with the third shot and how you approached it.

JERRY KELLY: Yeah, it was pretty -- I made a tough bogey on 17. You put it in the rough on that hole, don't have a chance to get to the green.

So then I'm in the middle of the fairway on 18, have an easy 8-iron in and push it to the right. So that kind of bothered me going back-to-back.

So I knew I had to pull something out. And the chip came out just perfect and rolled right down and went in and that got things going again.

Q. I'll ask Miguel the same question, but there's 140 players that aren't killing it. And you're playing with one of the other guys who is. Is that helpful especially in the first two days of a tournament to be in playing with somebody who is playing as good as you?

JERRY KELLY: Absolutely. When you see guys hit the fairway consistently, you feed off of that. And that's really the key out here is just hitting the fairways. We're good enough iron players, and they're tough pins and tough greens, yes. And it's just accentuated if you don't hit the fairway. So we're doing a great job of that and then letting golf happen after that.

Q. There was virtually no wind this morning. If you can talk about any of the adjustments that you had to make yesterday versus how you were playing today.

JERRY KELLY: No, you're lying. You're lying. No, there was still wind out there. It was still gusty and it still switched 180 degrees a couple times. It's enough to change a club. So it's not gusts of 35. That only happened about three or four times yesterday. And then it would die down. So I don't think it was that much of an adjustment. It's still just golf. We're used to making, whether it's the lies or wind or how it's bouncing on the greens, those adjustments. So the

altitude and heat are the big ones.

Q. Talk a little bit about hole number 4 there. Tim was talking about the pin placement. When he first saw it, he was like almost looks like it was on the fringe there. Was that a challenge today as well?

JERRY KELLY: Yeah, that was a challenging pin. That was, you know, they like to do that. They like to challenge you. I almost -- I wanted to play a pitch out on my putt, but I think I would have rolled it off the green to the right if I would have pitched out. So I mean we were both similar lines. You really had to hit your lines and your speed. It's tough to hit that one hard, knowing that you could roll it off and then start playing ping pong back and forth. So that's going to be an interesting one this afternoon if the wind blows.

Q. I know when you were on the regular men's TOUR. You had a chance to play with Tiger. Is there a chance that you could kind of speak to where you think he might be and where you think he might be going with his game? I know it's not related to today, but I know all you guys have some feelings on that.

JERRY KELLY: I know he's not here, but, yeah, I mean, Tiger's a great champion. He's a great athlete, after the injury, getting the speeds that he's got, that's just unbelievable. That's almost like a miracle to me.

Once he stops trying to hit it with the young guys and just kind of plays his game again, he's going to be fine. But it's tough. It's an ego thing. These guys are long out there. And, yes, he's got the speed, but not necessarily effective speed, I don't think.

THE MODERATOR: Jerry, thanks so much. Appreciate it.

JERRY KELLY: Thank you.