

U.S. Senior Open

Press Conference

Saturday June 30, 2018

Jerry Kelly



THE MODERATOR: Like to welcome Jerry Kelly. 4-under for the championship. Plus 1, 71 today. We kidded a little bit about your putting, but you had the lead at the 7-under at a certain point and then things kind of went a little bit the other way. But you still recovered and you still have the lead, so give us a little assessment of the day.

JERRY KELLY: Yeah, I mean, I told you guys yesterday, I'm a jumpy putter. I'm a very good putter, but those types of things happen to me. I understood what I did, I know what I do in those situations, pick the putter up, bang it down on the ball and it squirts a different direction. So I know it and then I could just move on after that.

Now did it unnerve me a little bit? Yeah, absolutely. So hanging in there after that, that next up-and-down was fantastic. That ball was not sitting pretty and I took a pretty large swing from a short distance. So I was very happy to get that within about, within a foot, after the hole before. So, but then I was a little tentative coming in. I struck the ball well all week and I know I can get the putter going at any moment and I'll just keep striking it well.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q. You just said you know you can get the putter to work. I think the stat was like you haven't made anything outside of 12 feet today and yet you're winning the tournament. Does that even sound possible on most regular golf weeks?

JERRY KELLY: No. I mean, that's what happens on courses like this. These greens are very difficult, they're very deceiving. I really like them a lot. I hit a lot of great second putts on my 3-putts. But I'm hitting my lines. I'm doing really well with my putting. But it's just very difficult to judge, so I know it's difficult for other people to judge. My putting is, my stroke is not the best of the people out here, but my eye, my feel is right up there at the top. So that's, as long as I can get the stroke to connect with my feel, that's when I putt great.

Q. Talking about not making anything outside 12 feet, in some ways doesn't that maybe play into a confidence for tomorrow because you maybe are due a couple, I guess, more than anything.

JERRY KELLY: Yeah, I feel like it. I really do. To hang in there and then still know that I'm striking it the way

I'm striking it, I'm ready. I think there's a low one out there. I mean, I think the front and the back can play, even though there's no par-5s on the back, you can get the back. You just have to hit fairways and then you have to hit very good iron shots. But I think it's there, it's just a matter of someone's going to do it.

Q. When you walk off, we talked about the little episode with the putting, but overall you finished strong. When you walk off after a round like this, it's over par, but it seems like it's actually okay in the end. Is that how it seems to you or are you a little disappointed or?

JERRY KELLY: No, I'm very disappointed. I could have put some distance, there's no question. Those were two shots right there that just shouldn't have happened and then it became more tentative after that. So I'm ready to flip it back around -- and I was aggressive, I was past the hole constantly. And I wouldn't let myself go too far past after that episode. So I'm over it.

Q. Would you say you got past it with that last putt, because that was not an easy putt either.

JERRY KELLY: Yeah, I mean, in my head all I was saying is, this is what you show what's coming. This is how you show people that you're strong enough to do this. You make this putt and you go. So that's kind of where I was at with that one. I enjoyed that one.

Q. Two things, about how long do you think the last putt was?

JERRY KELLY: 27 feet or so.

Q. That's what I thought. (Laughter.)

Five, six feet maybe?

JERRY KELLY: About six, yeah.

Q. And how, you talked about being a little unnerved. Like what do you say to yourself when you all of a sudden are not winning?

JERRY KELLY: I just knew that I was doing everything fine. You just have to trust that. Like I said, I told my caddie, I knew, don't worry, I know exactly what I did, it's something that I do. I've gone entire rounds and entire tournaments doing that. Now it only takes me

one quick 3-putt.

So, but, yeah, I get racing and I don't correct it right away. On these greens, slopy poa annua, that's when it can bite you. I'm sure it's bit just about everybody in the field this week, so it's not a huge thing. It's just golf. Four-letter word.

Q. Your approach on 6 there, I don't think you can see it, from that low a level, where exactly it was, right? It just trickled above the hole. Did you hit that, I'm guessing, kind of pretty much where you were looking?

JERRY KELLY: I hit it exactly where I wanted and I just let the crowd noise kind of tell me how close it was getting. So I knew it ended up very close. But, yeah, we wanted to play it just to the right and spin it back in and bounce it past the hole and spin it back, which I think that's exactly what it did.

Q. About that much (Indicating)?

JERRY KELLY: Yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, sir. Appreciate it.

JERRY KELLY: Thank you.