

# U.S. Senior Open

Press Conference

Saturday July 1, 2017

## Kenny Perry



THE MODERATOR: It's my pleasure to welcome Kenny Perry into the Media Center. Kenny with rounds of 65, 64, and a 67 today for a three-day total of 14 under par, 196.

Kenny, good playing today. Made a lot of birdies, but also made some great par saves on the back nine that kind of kept that round going. Can you talk about some of those.

KENNY PERRY: Very much so. I came out hitting the ball nice today, the first four or five holes, but my putter was a little off. I felt a little shaky on the speed of the greens.

Once I kind of calmed down, settled down, I rolled it nicely on the back nine. Made some key par putts. Like I made a nice par putt on 15, the par 3. I made a killer par putt on 17, when I ripped it by about 12 feet. Then I made a killer birdie on 16, probably made a 30-footer there, when he's in there stony.

So, all in all, it was a good day. I've hit it better. I just fought it out there, and it just felt like match play. We kind of separated ourselves a little bit from the field, and he kept putting the pressure on.

That man can chip. He's unreal. He doesn't make many mistakes. I'm going to have to really play good tomorrow to get ahead of him. He's a very controlled player, and he chipped in twice today. He holed it out of a bunker for eagle on 5, and he chipped in on 9 right of the green, which was unreal.

So I need to hit a little bit better and make a few more birdies.

THE MODERATOR: You mentioned match play situation. You're 5 and 6 clear, respectively, of third place. Are you going into that mindset tomorrow when you play that you're really just focusing on Kirk?

KENNY PERRY: Well, you need to focus in on this golf course because there's a lot of problems out there. We played in a pretty -- you know, 20 mile an hour, 15 to 20, south wind today. Golf course plays hard with the south wind.

You know, it would be nice if I could go out there and shoot 4 or 5 under again like I've been doing, and he'll

have to do the same to match us. You look at Brandt Jobe shooting 62. We don't need him to shoot another 62. He'll get right back in it.

I don't know. If we get rain tonight and the golf course stays soft, it's going to be scorable again, but I see a little fire getting in this golf course. I see it drying out. I see it getting firmer. I'm sure they're going to put the pins in some pretty incredible places tomorrow. So you've got to play smart.

It's going to be quite a challenge. I mean, to win a Senior U.S. Open, you've got to really be on your game. It's amazing to me, I'm 14 under, and I'm still behind after three rounds. So looking forward to it. It's going to be a tough day.

THE MODERATOR: You've won a lot around the world. But going back to 2013 in Omaha, you were behind, second place going into that final day. What can you build off from that when you shot an unbelievable 63 in that final round.

KENNY PERRY: It just tells you, you can do it. When your game's on and your mindset's correct, good things can happen.

It's never that easy, though. I mean, that weekend, for whatever reason, it was easy. I mean, I shot 63, 64, I think, on the weekend to win the tournament, to catch Michael Allen and win that tournament.

Most of the time, this job is work. It's a very tough job. It's full of a lot of ebb and flows out there. It's a mental game, and this golf course is probably one of the most mental courses you'll play. So I'm going to have to be tough mentally tomorrow, and don't give up. Just keep grinding.

THE MODERATOR: Before we open it up to questions, just want to run through your scorecard a little bit, some of the lengths of the shots you had in and the putts. Your birdie on 5, the par 3, what club you had in there.

KENNY PERRY: I hit a 5 iron. Had 207. Hit a 5 iron to, what, about 15 feet or 10 feet right there. Was able to knock that in and get me going. And then the next hole, I hit a 3 wood and a 3 wood into the right

greenside bunker and blasted it out to about a foot to make birdie there. And that was about it.

THE MODERATOR: Bogeyed 7 but then made a nice long putt on 12.

KENNY PERRY: Yes. Yeah, I made a good -- an incredible save on 11, the par putt. I hit my first putt, I was 20 feet left, and it broke a way lot more than I thought. I had about an 8-footer or 6-footer for par, and I was able to get that in.

Then the birdie putt on 12, Kirk and I were on the same line. He had to putt first. I saw the exact line. He left it just a little short, and I just gave it a little more, and it went right in from about 25 feet. I was right in the middle of the green there. So that was a nice, long putt. That really freed up my stroke. That really got me going to where I was thinking I was going to make some putts.

THE MODERATOR: And you had 14, the par 5.

KENNY PERRY: I hit a good drive. The wind, that south wind is dead in your face on that hole. I pushed my 3 wood, trying to hit a low draw, and ended up right of the greenside bunker, which was okay. Gave me plenty of green to work with. I didn't hit too good a pitch. Probably hit it 10 feet below the hole, at least. I was able to curl that one in for birdie. That was a nice putt.

THE MODERATOR: And you mentioned with Kirk in there close, you hit that bomb on 16.

KENNY PERRY: That was about 25 feet. I hit a sand wedge up there by the hole. I think it spun back a lot, back to where I was, and made about a 30-footer to flip that hole. So that was a nice putt.

THE MODERATOR: Let's open it up to questions.

**Q. You just talked about 18. What happened on 18?**

KENNY PERRY: I was in between clubs. I had 181 yards, and the wind's blowing really hard right to left. I should have played short of that hole. You know, I should have taken a 7 iron if it didn't carry, the false front. It's really not too bad down there to putt up. I kind of lost my mental thought there for just a little bit. I out-thought myself. Tried to take a 6 iron and take a little off of it. When I take a little off of it, if my lower body outruns my upper body, I'll pull it, and I tugged it.

Then you're just dead over there. I had nothing. It was in the hay. That was a terrible lie. I knew I was going to struggle keeping it on the green, and I couldn't keep it on the green. I just hit it -- it came out too hard. But I

made a nice fourth shot to make bogey. So that kept me right in there. That was nice.

**Q. Kenny, of course, anything can happen tomorrow, but it looks like it might be a match play event. Just in general, how do you usually perform in match play, and how do you feel about that kind of format?**

KENNY PERRY: Well, I did well in the Ryder Cup and Presidents Cup so that's okay. That's about the only match play I've ever played. Then the World event on the Tour. Actually, I didn't do very good in that one.

You know, you just kind of forget about it. If I can just put it in the middle of the greens tomorrow and play my game. He's going to play well. I know how he plays. I play a lot of golf with Kirk. He's a great player.

So it may come down to like an 18 like it happened today. We may be battling, tied coming into the last hole, and one just hit. It's going to be close, I think. It's going to be a deal where I think we'll both make plenty of birdies, and we'll both have a good round tomorrow. There may be one shot here or there that's going to probably turn the tide.

**Q. Kenny, you talk about how taxing this golf course is mentally. The fact that you've won a Senior Open, does that give you a little bit of an edge?**

KENNY PERRY: I think it helps. I mean, I'm not feeling like I have to -- you know, this is a championship I always wanted to really win, this and the Senior PGA. So this is our championship. It's nice to have that trophy on my mantle at home that I look at a lot and see all those great names that are on that trophy. That's special.

But it would be nice to back it up, get a second one. Yeah, I kind of agree with you. I'm not going to feel like I'm pressured into having to win this thing. So, hopefully, I can just stay loose and go play some good golf.

**Q. Kenny, you've been 20, 25 yards ahead of Kirk each drive. Just where he's been so steady, how much pressure is that on you when his second is, if not on the green, it's close?**

KENNY PERRY: Well, it's a lot of pressure. I mean, I know he's not going to miss fairways or greens. You know, when you play a controlled player, I'd much rather, in match play, play a bomber because when a bomber's off, you know, they make mistakes. But when you have a controlled player like that that never misses fairways and greens, it puts a lot of pressure on you.

So I'm going to have to do something extraordinary

tomorrow to beat this guy because he's on. He's putting it well. He's driving it well. His irons are good. He's chipping unreal.

So I'm just going to go out there and try to do what K.P. does. I love hitting the driver. It's probably the best club in my bag. And if I can continue to hit it -- I've been hitting it well all week. If I drive it again good tomorrow, I'll have some chances to make some birdies.

THE MODERATOR: Kenny Perry in the final group again. Best of luck.