

# Walker Cup

Sunday, September 10, 2017

## Spider Miller

## Collin Morikawa

## Maverick McNealy

## Doug Ghim

### USA Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'll get started. Like to welcome the victorious United States of America team from the 46th Walker Cup. Captain Spider Miller, to his left Doug Ghim, to Doug's left Maverick McNealy, and to Maverick's left Collin Morikawa. Cap, four years in the making, give us your emotions and your feelings when you hoisted the couple.

SPIDER MILLER: Well, these guys did, the entire team did everything I asked of them and it went the way I hoped that it would go, but I did nothing, they did it all, they performed, they played poised, always ready, and what else can I say? They were great. Fantastic. These guys all three went 4-0 and tapped me for something special. Thanks to Doug. It was a good idea, Doug, but everything was great. They did everything I asked of them.

THE MODERATOR: Gents, your individual reactions to being a member of the victorious team.

DOUG GHIM: It's a dream come true. To be here just as a member of the squad is incredible, but to be fortunate enough to play as well as we have this week is something that I'll take on with me for the rest of my life. I'm sure I'll look back 10 years from now, 20 years from now, and be like, I'm still incredibly proud of that and there's no other captain I would play for and no other teammates I would play with. And I mean that, I love you guys and just very thankful for the opportunity.

MAVERICK MCNEALY: Yeah, our team thought a little bit about what it meant to represent our country, earlier this week and that carries a lot of weight and there was two things we wanted to do really well this week, we wanted to represent our country the right way by acting the right way, by comporting ourselves well, by up holding the values of the Walker Cup as cliché as that sounds but it's really important and we also wanted to win. And being on the other side of it two years ago, we wanted that cup back on U.S. soil so badly and at the end of the day we wanted to win and we wanted to win the right way and I think that I'm just so, so proud



of this whole team for the way we did that. And I think we won and I think we won the right way and that's all I could have asked for out of this week.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, I think we just fought. We didn't give up. You could see what happened in the afternoon, we all wanted to win, and not give them a point. It doesn't stop when that 13 and a half points came up and from the beginning of the week Captain wanted to win and we wanted to win for him and we wanted to win for our teammates, we wanted to win for the entire country. And I think like Mav said, that's what we did and we did it in a very good way. Overall, I'm speechless for what these two guys and myself did this week. We wanted to bring the cup back home and that's what we did and I'm glad we were able to do it.

#### **Q. Were there tears of joy this time Spider?**

SPIDER MILLER: Well, it's not easy to lose and Mav was there with me and I focused a lot on and the things that Maverick said are true, but we had a choice to be either the 2017 Walker Cup team or the winning 2017 Walker Cup team and it was up to them and how they played and their performance and they chose to be known as the winning team and they did that. And it's a memory for these guys. For me I know what it means, it's the end of the road for me. I mean, I'm not playing competitively anymore, but these guys, when they're my age, they will have the defining moments in golf in their careers, and it's going to be a number of things that will define them, that they will always remember the Walker Cup and they will always remember being a part of this winning team. And that's what it's all about. That's why it is so special.

#### **Q. Not to bring up two years ago too much because you guys want to enjoy this one, obviously, but do you remember anything about the flight home from England for Spider and Mav, the flight home or a difficult moment in the hours, days after?**

SPIDER MILLER: Well, when we left, we have all been beaten and we all took it with the proper grace that we should and we tried to show the same grace winning as we did when we lost. And as you noticed my guys, we weren't around and celebrating, we shook our opponents' hands first, the very first thing, after each match, we did the appropriate thing, and we'll celebrate after it's over. Yeah, if you compete, you're going to know what loss feels like, you don't win everything. So

we have all experienced it.

MAVERICK MCNEALY: And I don't mind you bringing up two years ago, because that was such a crucial part of our win this week. It was, for me personally, a huge fire in my belly, I woke up every morning and first thought alarm goes off, let's freaking do this. I was so fired up and ready to play and I wanted it so badly for these guys and, yeah, winning is way for fun than losing. And this week wasn't about us, it's about representing our country and we wanted to make a statement. There was plenty of criticism of a lot of things from two years ago, a lot of questions were asked about a lot of things, and I really, really hope we answered those questions this week, because that was what we went out to do, wanted to prove that Captain Miller is going to be one of the most -- Captain Miller is in the history books for his win this week. This team is in the history books for our win this week. And I think that was a huge statement for the United States of America amateur golf.

**Q. Spider, when the, what was the moment that when you realized that the 13 and a half points were assured, where were you, do you remember the first thought in your mind?**

SPIDER MILLER: Well, I thought the very first match was a critical match. You always want to contain the momentum and Stu Hagestad winning that first match was a big thing. And then Braden Thornberry actually was the first point on the board, he closed his opponent out I think 7 & 6 I think. 6 & 5. Okay. But, no, we talked about it and said we're going to play each of our matches we're going to be there for the other guys, we're going to play -- Mav was last -- we were out there and watched every shot, we were going to, we were going to play every shot throughout every match and play as hard as we could. And they did.

**Q. The course, each of you guys I think has mentioned the course during the year or during this weekend, how do you think this shapes up as a U.S. Open type course since by 2023 all three of you may be playing in it.**

DOUG GHIM: That's daunting. This golf course is very difficult, very fair. If you hit the shots that you're supposed to, you will be rewarded. If you're off, you'll be penalized. So I think that it's a great venue and, yeah, I hope I'm here in a couple of years time.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Great course. Definitely challenged us. We have seen a lot of differences from the first day we got here until the last putt dropped. They can put their conditions in great shape and they definitely showed us what LACC can do, so hopefully we'll be out here.

**Q. For each of the three players, just describe Captain Miller in one word and then after you guys are done doing that, if captain you could maybe talk about what the players just said about you.**

SPIDER MILLER: Be careful, Doug.

DOUG GHIM: Gracious.

MAVERICK MCNEALY: Another G. Genuine.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Happy.

SPIDER MILLER: Very happy.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Simple. Simple. Straightforward. Loving.

DOUG GHIM: That's four now.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Caring.

DOUG GHIM: Five.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: And the absolute best.

SPIDER MILLER: Yeah, I love all these guys. I don't know what else to say. We pulled together as a team like you can believe. We had great camaraderie and at the appropriate time we had a fabulous speech by Mav in the player room and it flipped our switch and when we did, that was it, we came ready to play. Would you guys agree with that? That flipped the switch. And they were ready to play. And they played. They did what they know how to do best and they did it in the right manner.

**Q. Two topics, first one, what point in these matches were you each the most nervous? Not you, the players, what was the first tee, Saturday morning, was there any point that stands out? Maverick?**

MAVERICK MCNEALY: First hole of the tournament. Doug hit a great drive, I semi bladed a 4-iron that by some miracle found the green. Doug lagged it up there to about two and a half feet and I was shaking. I was shaking. My legs were shaking, my forearms were shaking over that putt and thank God I made it. But Doug and I won the first hole every, both matches we played. But, yeah, I was nervous. Doug doesn't get nervous.

(Laughter.)

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Leave Doug out of this one. I would say my first tee shot for sure. First tee shot for the U.S. and I kind of knew that I was going to get it, but it wasn't really nerves, I think it was more

excitement. You see all the people out there and, granted, it was 7:15, they're not going to get that many people, like Stewart did in the afternoon yesterday. But seeing all those people come out, you know they're all rooting for you and Team USA, so that first tee shot was something I'll never forget, a little block right, middle of the fairway.

DOUG GHIM: My nervous, I guess mine is on the putting green. Just hearing the cheers from everyone as I'm trying to get ready. I mean, just other than the U.S. Amateur, I don't remember hearing so much noise on the first tee. It's usually a huge crowd of three, my parents and maybe a college coach, but that's about it. Not even worth raising your hand or anything. But to hear the warm welcome of the fans this week, I could have hardly made a putt on the putting green before my match.

**Q. And Doug, in the morning session, your conversations with Juan were picked up quite a bit on the broadcast and they were, everybody was noting that you had an interesting dynamic.**

**Similar to the one you have with your dad as a caddie, is that just, is that a nerve-related thing or is it just your personality and Juan's personality that kind of brought that out and how did that go?**

DOUG GHIM: I mean just the way I play, I like to try to take the thinking out of it as much as I can once I get over the ball. So I basically tell every caddie that I've ever had everything in my mind when I'm thinking about a shot, because when I'm over it I don't want to have any thoughts popping up. And so once I feel like any insecurity or any doubt or just looking for affirmation, maybe, from my caddie, telling me that I've got the right decision, the right club, and the right train of thought helps me stand behind the ball and get over it and commit to the shot. So, yeah, I guess it's just the way I play and it helps me.

**Q. And Spider, the caddies this week, you mentioned a little bit, it's an odd dynamic at the Walker Cup where the guys get paired up with a caddie and at the club, and you're kind of just your overall take on how they performed and how the guys bonded with them.**

SPIDER MILLER: Yeah, I think it's a great thing we do. It's the right way to do it. The caddie master here assigns the caddies that he feels are the best caddies and it's a reward, they know the tournament's coming and it's a proper reward and all of our caddies were great. The caddies we had over there were great. Mav will tell you. And I think that if you asked Captain Ingram he would tell you that he was, he, their team had good caddies. So that's the right way to do it. It's a nice tradition. It's a good way to reward the caddies for their hard work here at the club. And ours were

great.

MAVERICK MCNEALY: I'll interject and say that my caddie from Lytham, Kevin, sent me good luck e-mails over the course of the week. So we still keep in touch.

SPIDER MILLER: Isn't that great? That's great.

THE MODERATOR: Maverick, when was the speech that you made to the team. What day was that?

MAVERICK MCNEALY: That was, that was Tuesday morning.

**Q. Collin, obviously it's special for everyone on the team but can you talk about what it means to have this experience so close to home?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I was very fortunate to have the Walker Cup here, I kind of wanted to go to Europe and see what that's like, but being in L.A., I've grown up here, I was born here, and my family's from here, so L.A. means so much to me and everything that it kind of represents. And it's such a big city, you see everyone that comes out that comes out here and kind of supports you, I heard little kids saying they're from La Canada today and it's cool because you just don't see that many people out there and then to have little small connections with people you don't know, it's really, it's a blessing and I wouldn't want to be anywhere else, really than here to have this Walker Cup and the win with the team.

**Q. Spider, aside from the performance which was fantastic one of the things that impressed myself from the other side of the pond was the pace of play of your players. Especially in foursomes the fact that you walked ahead. I'm just wondering, I mean that tactic obviously worked and I'm wondering if that's something you could pass on to future Walker Cup captains to say, you know, play quicker, get out of each other's way in the foursomes especially.**

SPIDER MILLER: What I tried to do is put the guys that I called them race horses, I asked them, I said is there any, are there any race horses out here? Who wants to get out, who likes to run? And a few did. And Mav's the kind of guy who likes to, he likes to go last. So it really worked out good. It was kind of natural selection, wouldn't you guys say? Norman likes to go first and Braden, Norman and Braden are runners, they like to get out front and go and go and play quick. So I tried to accommodate the guys by their style of play and what they like to do and it worked out. I think I was able, I was really able to do it, Collin and Doug, they can play anywhere, they could play first, last, in the middle, but it really worked out. Norman, Norman likes to go early. He likes to get out and go and so does

Braden and Doc are runners, so I had a great mix of players that like to do and it really worked out too.

**Q. It was actually faster than the GB&I boys, unfortunately.**

SPIDER MILLER: Yeah, so.

**Q. They seemed to congregate on the tee and you guys seemed to walk ahead, which I thought was fantastic.**

SPIDER MILLER: Well, when we talked about that, we talked about, what is it, what's inherent in foursomes play that disadvantages us. And I talked to a number of the old pros, I talked to Arnold about it, and a few people I know and I said, you know, there's something, there's something we're missing, what are we doing different. And I talked to Mav a lot about it on the last team. The only thing that I can come up with is that these guys are used to being in their own thoughts, so they're medal play players, they all go to the tee, and they're always in their own thoughts. So if they have a partner that goes to the tee with them and caucuses and interjects anything that disrupts their thoughts, that's why you never see me on the tee, you never see me offering thoughts, I want them in their own thoughts and to play the way they play. And I asked the guys, what do you think? And we tried it and I left it up to them. I left it up to them and their partner, but it's one way, it's one method and I think if you go to the tee, for instance, and one guy says, leave me on the left side of the fairway. Well that's a thought they never have. They come to the tee and they see their shot and they're not thinking about it. So I tried to, I'm thinking that we should just be in our own thoughts and they're all great medal play players and there's no reason it shouldn't pass on to alternate shot. So I'm not sure, you guys would know, how, how you decided, they decided, I didn't.

**Q. Maverick, can you speak to that, too, because you obviously played Lytham where you probably stood with two guys on the tee and this year was different.**

MAVERICK MCNEALY: Yeah, I just remember being, I played one foursomes match in Lytham and I remember it being the most uncomfortable I felt in a round of golf. It was a different style of golf course, it was a different wind than we had played the entire week, it was the first match of the Walker Cup, and I played terrible. I mean, I played absolutely awful, and hit my partner Hunter Stewart in the gorse a few too many times and I feel bad because he played pretty well that day. But I think Doug and I had a few rules, the first rule was you never say sorry. Because I know he's trying his absolute hardest to hit a great shot and I'm trying my absolute hardest, so there's no reason to ever say sorry. Another thing I think our team did really

well this year is, it's really easy to over think matching games and strengths and weakness and odd holes and even holes and whatnot. And what we did really well this year was Captain Miller and our team manager, Robby Zalzneck, watched how the guys interacted, who was hanging out with who, who talks the most with who, who was the most comfortable, and I think that's, that was the difference maker because when you're standing on that first tee and your insides are turning inside out and you've got a two and a half footer to win the hole who is the guy that's going to calm you down the most or bring you up the most. I absolutely love playing with Doug because he's one of the most focused steady players you could play with and when I play my best, I'm focused and steady. Simple little layup shots, this guy is fully locked in and zoned in, and that brings me up a notch too. And I was so excited to pass him the ball and walk down to the left center of the fairway where I knew he was going to hit it, so.

**Q. Collin, obviously, now days it's very rare that you have guys play multiple Walker Cups, obviously Mav has done that, and then you just mentioned that you kind of were hoping to play across the pond, you'll be eligible to play in two years time. Does this experience of this week maybe help sway you a little bit?**

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I have no answer to that, to be honest. Yeah.

MAVERICK MCNEALY: Collin, you going to turn pro?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Did you get that question? I really don't know how it's going to go. I plan to graduate in two years and we'll see where my golf game's at then. But for now it's going back to college golf and enjoying that team experience. I think all of us have loved it and grown from it and learned so much and being with this team with just a bunch of great players and the history of that, you couldn't ask for more. So maybe I'll just go take a summer vacation and instead of Hawaii I'll go to Europe and I can say I got to play in Europe. There you go.

THE MODERATOR: All right, thank you.