

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT: COLIN MONTGOMERIE
Thursday, August 15, 2013



PHIL STAMBAUGH: Colin, thanks for joining us in the media center here at the Dick's Sporting Goods Open. Your first trip ever to Endicott and you never played on the PGA TOUR here.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: I didn't, no.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: You worked last week at the PGA Championship at Oak Hill for Sky Sports.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: I did.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: And you're coming off I guess a tie for 7th in Minnesota, which was your best finish to date.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: It was indeed, yeah, best finish to date on the Champions Tour. I played four events, this is my fifth event and I'm thoroughly enjoying myself in these events. I've been made very, very welcome by everybody on the Tour and I think everybody says that. Players and media and promoters and everything else from there, I can't ask for any more than I've had. So I look forward to this event as much as I have the other four, if not more because coming off tied for 7th, I played okay, I was 13-under par, so I look forward to continuing some recent form this week. This course I believe -- I haven't played yet, this will be my first go at this course, I believe it's quite tight and quite narrow, but it's in great condition, the best condition that they've seen this course in, PGA TOUR included, so all credit to the grounds staff here for doing such a great job and I look forward to playing this afternoon.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: You've had quite a year with your induction into the World Golf Hall of Fame and then joining the Champions Tour.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Yes.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: What have been your impressions of the courses on the Champions Tour since this is now your 5th event?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: I think I speak for anyone that comes out here that is a bit naive to the conditions and the Tour in general as I was, the courses are an awful lot longer, better prepared, very, very similar to a PGA TOUR event status and quality. I think more than that, I think I speak on behalf of the players here that say the standard of play here has shocked me as it does everyone that comes out here for the first time. I think the standard of play is exceptional out here and a hair's breath

away from the PGA TOUR. So a lot of these guys can still compete on the PGA TOUR and do so very well. The Langers, the Kenny Perrys, the Freddie Couples, it goes on and on. There's some great, great players out here. The standard of golf and competition is great and higher than I thought, which I'm all for, I'm glad it is. It means if sometime down the road you happen to win or you happen to do well, it's more meaningful. It means more to you than it would if the standard wasn't to this extent. So I'm thrilled that the standard is as high as it is and hope that remains.

Q. The state of your game as we speak, and also when you were in Rochester doing the TV thing, how much are you able to or do you choose to practice?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Okay, interesting. I had a couple of hours off occasionally and in the commentary, I was with Sky Sports most of the time, I did a bit of Golf Channel before and after, the morning and evening. During the event it's quite busy, I'm there for 10 hours, 11 hours on site, so there was no time to practice. But who I'm commentating with on Sky Sports on international TV is Butch Harmon, and you probably know who's a reasonable sort of well-known coach in this country and it's interesting to get his view on -- our view overlooked the practice green, the driving range, and it's interesting to go down the list of people when he's finished with Phil Mickelson who's his main guy right now, Dustin Johnson, we talked about people's swings and what he's doing. It's very interesting to get feedback from reputed to be the world's number one coach. So it's very interesting to get feedback and to see what's going to happen and to see his views about how he's hitting it and where he's hitting it and then to see how that materializes on the course and generally it does. It's invaluable to have him around to commentate together and we announce together for Sky Sports. I managed to practice one afternoon on the Wednesday afternoon at a local club, a local private club, it had a name that, sorry, I can't pronounce.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: Irondequoit?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: That will do. Next door, some of the members were taking a shuttle to get to the passage to the 16th hole, is that right, a buggy track or cart track?

PHIL STAMBAUGH: Right.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: I practiced there. The club was very, very -- because I was wanting to try what Butch was alluding to in his commentary and it's very interesting to get that feedback. To watch a whole event, to watch a whole major event from first shot to last shot as we do on air for 11 hours a day, you learn, you do learn, you pick up things and you learn from sometimes people's mistakes and sometimes what they do right but mostly what they do wrong mostly in a course management sense. You can learn an awful lot when you are announcing in a course management sense. I see someone in trouble, for instance, and what's he going to do, is he going to do the sensible thing and chip out sideways and start

again, or is he going to go for this? The people that usually go for it make a mess. It's the time that we always want to leave a golf course and say to ourselves -- we don't want to say to ourselves "what if" or "if only." We never want to say that when we leave a golf course because that means that you made a mistake, especially if only, if only I chipped out sideways and not gone for it.

So you can learn from announcing at an event for that length of time. So I did, I managed to learn a lot. And we went down, my family came into New York on Monday, I drove down from Rochester to meet them and we had two days, a great two days in New York, they haven't been to New York before, and back up here to Endicott and now I look forward to playing.

Q. I'm interested to get your thoughts on the current status of the PGA, the younger guys, you know, how you view them as opposed to when you were one of those younger guys and maybe a guy or two that really stands out to you?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Yeah, there's a number of guys I noticed last week coming through. There's a Japanese player that's coming through that's 21 that will win in the future on the PGA TOUR, the young guys coming through. But isn't it fascinating that majors are still mostly the guys that have experience, the Phil Mickelsons. Jason Dufner really, I mean, that's twice in the U.S. PGA that he's been right there, once he lost in a playoff, another one he won. Jim Furyk right there again. You know, the experienced guys, the guys that don't come off the course and say if only, they're the guys that get it right. Bernhard Langer out here, apart from, of course, the one classic case of at the Senior Open this year where you would put your house on Bernhard Langer making a 5 and not a double, but 99.9 percent Bernhard Langer does not give any shots away and neither does Jim Furyk, he doesn't waste any shots. That's the experience that counts still in majors and still will for many years to come, yeah.

Q. Talk about how difficult it is to play on this Tour and how it's a lot harder than you expected, and you have a crop of guys who are in their late 40s on the PGA TOUR who are going to be entering, what does that say about the quality of golf on the Champions Tour?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: It just says how good it is. I mean, we await the arrival of Davis Love, which will be great for this Tour and a few others at 49. Miguel Jimenez, we'd like him to come over, the most -- what are they calling him, the most interesting man in the world? You know, I mean, he is interesting. It would be great to see him over here and Davis Love next year and Scott Verplank and a few other guys that I used to play Walker Cups with and college golf with still when I was at Houston. It's interesting to see them coming on board. It will only make this Tour even stronger than it is right now. I'm very proud to be a member. I never joined the PGA TOUR, I joined the Champions Tour full time and I'm very proud to be a member of it.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: Colin, good luck this week.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Thank you, much.