

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT: COLIN MONTGOMERIE
Thursday, August 14, 2014



PHIL STAMBAUGH: Okay, Colin, thanks for joining us this morning. Obviously two big wins on the Champions Tour this year, you're second in the Schwab Cup race, played Minnesota, then commentated last week at the PGA and came on up to New York.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Yes.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: A few thoughts as we sort of come down the home stretch on the Champions Tour season about your year thus far.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Oh, well, thank you. Yeah, it's been beyond expectations. I finished outside the top 30 last year but only played a number of events so I don't know really know what to expect but it's beyond expectation this year. I knew how the standard of golf was out here and how high it is, and I'm delighted to be in a position that if it goes well the next couple of months, well, we could do something.

Just got to beat my German friend, which I heard he was in the physio truck actually, which I was delighted -- all the people in the locker room are delighted about hoping he was injured but obviously he wasn't. The problem is he's just getting fitter, which is an issue for us all. So all we can say is that we're thrilled to have him on board and he's set new standards again, Bernhard, and all credit to his age of 56 years old. To do what he's doing, it's tremendous and it's great to see him. As a friend of mine, we've played many Ryder Cup matches together before and many a tournament coming down the stretch together, so it's been great to see him perform and it's nice that I can at least show some form behind him.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: Maybe just a little bit about your year, Colin, with the two big wins. You're playing with a lot of confidence now.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Yes, I am. Winning give you confidence obviously. The first one especially at the PGA Seniors was -- I played as well as I really have for a long, long time. That was almost back to the '90s where I was at the top of my game really and then just about five weeks later the U.S. Senior Open was hot, it was very hot. I couldn't believe the guy, when I finished and I was in a playoff and the USGA official came out and said, well, we're going to have a few more holes now, and I thought, oh, my God, because I really had enough by then. I finished. A toss of the coin would have been better for me actually, I was knackered in Oklahoma's weather. But at the same time it was well worth it to go the three holes and managed to just, you know, outlast really, because that's what it was, Gene Sauers by one shot to win that as well.

And then to go to Royal Porthcawl, which I haven't played before, and to finish second to Bernhard there was my win really because that was my job. I couldn't catch him, nobody could. But if you're not going to win, you finish second, so that was done.

So I look forward to coming here again. I played here last year, I enjoyed the tournament thoroughly. I think the whole community gets behind here and I think it's fantastic to have this feeling of support here and hospitality from everyone around the area. My family and I are up again. We spent a few days, as I said, in New York City beforehand and we're up again, so look forward to it.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: Questions, just raise your hand.

Q. How do you transition from playing in the PGA at Valhalla all four rounds to coming here to compete?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Hopefully it will be a little easier this way than it was the other way. That was a very tough golf course, set up in a very tough manner. Of course, 7,500 yards playing about 9,000 as it was because the ball was coming backwards to you, a real strain, you know, and a real push. But I'm so glad I made the cut and represented the Champions Tour the way that I was hoping to do by having won the U.S. PGA Seniors that you are representing the Champions Tour and that's what I felt. So I'm glad I did a good job, and Kenny Perry did a good job as well, so did Vijay Singh to make the cut of the over-50s. I think it will be easier coming here. When you hit a 3-wood down the first and have a wedge in, okay, this will be easier. I didn't have one of those holes at all last week. It's easier coming this way than the other way.

Q. How does this place suit you and how much more comfortable is it second time around?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: I think it's very much more comfortable. I just came in, I knew where the locker room was. I knew, most important, where the player dining is. That's the most important for me, so I knew where that was. Yeah, it is easier, and you feel part of the scene. You do, you feel part of the tour now that I was still a rookie last year. So I really feel part of it and really love it. Everyone asks me are you enjoying the Champions Tour? I say absolutely love it, it's a super place to work, it's a super place to play golf and it's a super tour to be on.

Q. You mentioned your German friend. Can you put in perspective what he did in Wales?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: As I said at the time, I think we talked about Tiger's dominance in 2000 when Tiger was winning the U.S. Open by 15 shots and then he

went to the British Open a month later and won by eight shots, I would have to put the performance at Porthcawl to win by 13 shots in that category and I don't think we've seen dominance in one tournament since the year 2000, since the Tiger Woods dominance of 2000. That's how good that was. And we all feel the same, all of us feel the same about that performance. To beat the field by over three shots a round was extraordinary, yeah, one of the great performances.

Q. You're one and two with Langer on the Charles Schwab points, both have two majors, Kenny has the fifth, he's not here, World Golf Hall of Fame members, Ryder Cup experience, Ryder Cup captains. How do you think this is going to play out for the remainder of the season and what strategies, if any, do you use? Is it like match play?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: I think it's going to play out very poorly for me for the rest of the year. Knowing how well he's playing, I think it's going to pan out very poorly. I think he's playing marvelously well. If I can get anything closer to him I'll be delighted. I'm playing with him tomorrow and that will be interesting. We're off last tomorrow with Mark O'Meara, a good friend of ours, and it will be interesting to see how he performs again. And if I'm anywhere close to him after the two days, well, we'll see coming into Sunday. But I have to start winning. Yeah, I'm playing sort of, what, I've got about six tournaments left I believe and I've got to be winning. Knowing the way he's playing, I've got to win half of them, yeah, which is tough. So it's not going well for me at all.

Q. Was the weekend as much fun last weekend playing as it would have been doing more commentary?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Oh, I much prefer playing. I think everyone will tell you, everyone who has retired from this game or is not playing through injuries or whatever, misses it, misses the competitiveness of it, misses the adrenaline of it. You just miss the whole scene. I had missed it. I hadn't played a major for three years there and I missed it. I'm looking forward to representing the Champions Tour in the U.S. Open next year and hopefully we'll do a good job there. But yeah, I enjoyed it. I enjoy the thrill of performing against the best players in the world.

Q. Any experiences to share about the triple cities, Binghamton, Endicott, Johnson City? How do you like the area?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: As I said, I was only here once last year but I really do feel, especially when your concert that comes on Saturday as well that the whole community really, really feels that this is something that Dick's Sporting Goods do a great job in supporting this community up here and I think it's only right that we do the same thing. It's great that Bernhard here and myself and a number of other great, great champions of the past and it's super that we can come out here and show the community our skills and then they support it by the way they do. So I think we both

win.

Q. Final question, what does it mean to you to be a World Golf Hall of Fame member?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Well, it's everything really. I think there's no greater accolade really. I thought the Ryder Cup captaincy was a big deal until our chief executive, George O'Grady, gave me a call and said you're about to be inducted into the Hall of Fame and I was staggered really. It means the world to me, so I think there's no greater accolade and I'm sure Bernhard Langer would say the same thing and whoever else has been inducted into that wonderful, wonderful honor that can be bestowed on any golfer.

Q. Aside from trying to get a better score than Langer, what do you like the most about competing in these pro-am tournaments?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Well, that's my only chance at beating him actually is the pro-am tournament. Hopefully I've got a good team today and hopefully I'll beat him today and it's all due to my team, so c'mon team, beat Bernhard. I enjoy the pro-am tournament, I do. I think that it's not just a practice round for yourself but also meeting different people, especially coming from a different country and culture as we do in the U.K. A lot of the golfers we play with in the pro-ams, they've been to courses that I've played on so we have a lot to talk about and I'm interested in what they do for a living. They know what I do for a living, but I'm interested in what they do so it's a very interesting day. You play four amateurs in a pro-am here, we play three in Europe so there's one extra guy to learn about and to help our score along. So let's hope we can do it today and I can get a good start to the weekend, a good feel to the weekend if I can beat Langer even in the pro-am. Just let me beat him in the pro-am, I'll be thrilled.

Q. Now that you have a little bit more familiarity with this course, do you have any expectations for what the course has in store for you, how you expect to fair this weekend?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: I would like to think I would do a lot better than I did last year. I didn't play well last year. I had one good round on Saturday. Friday and Sunday were poor really, they weren't under par enough and I think coming here with added incentive to try and, as I said, I've got six tournaments left and I've got to win half of them. I've got to really think about winning here along with a number of other guys who are thinking the same thing. So it's very competitive out there, it is, and it's great that it is and it's super that it is and long may it continue.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: Colin, thank you very much.