

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
June 22, 2017



JERRY KELLY

LAURA VESCOVI: Good afternoon. I would like to welcome Jerry Kelly to the American Family Insurance Championship.

Jerry, it's a hometown event for you. Can you talk to us a little bit about being in Madison this week?

JERRY KELLY: Hey, Rob. Hey, Gary. How are you guys?

Yeah, this is now a true hometown event. Very cool. Always so excited. Always called a Wisconsin event my hometown event. I still have some of these guys saying, "I thought you lived in Milwaukee," you know, because we always called the GMO the hometown event.

But yeah, you know how we think in Wisconsin, if you're in one city in Wisconsin, it might as well be any other. I mean, the whole state means a lot to Wisconsin. Guys don't hear, "Hey, from Florida," or "from Michigan," when we hear "Wisconsin" every single day multiple times. So that's the kind of support we get on the road. I'm really excited to be here and see what the people will do for this week. I think it will be awesome.

LAURA VESCOVI: You had a chance to play in the pro-am this morning. How's the course shaping up?

JERRY KELLY: Oh, it's wet, so it plays long for me. I am not long, even for this tour. I've gotten even shorter, if that's possible, but I think it is because I have. So I play the same way that I always have against a lot of the same players that I've always played against. Just try to get the most out of what I have and that's all I can do. You know, we come here to play well, we come here to try and win, but when it's all said and done, everybody will be able to see that I'm just going to leave it all out there and whatever happens, happens.

LAURA VESCOVI: We'll go ahead and open it up.

Q. Jerry, good to see you. To follow up on that point you made, do you know of anyone else on tour who gets sort of the home state or hometown support? Maybe Zach in Iowa if they have an event there. And why do you think that is, why do you think people love you guys so much here?

JERRY KELLY: I think they know we love them back. There's a big difference with the guy who will give a wave, give a nod, give a shake, you know, whatever. But we will give the love back and I think that's important. That's what Wisconsin's all about and I think that's why it resonates throughout the country, much less in this state. Everybody's so attached to

this state and the way the people make you feel, it's great.

Q. I think there was some concern in the room, Jerry, that maybe with this being Steve's event that the other state guys might feel a second-class status, but the second you walk into this place with that tribute to you in the entryway, it's more a celebration of the collection of you guys. Is that what you feel?

JERRY KELLY: I do. He's done a heck of a job with the American Family people and with his organization in building this tournament up. I mean, fantastic for the second year. I was there on Sunday last year, what they did. I mean, all the players are gushing. It's the third best-attended event besides two of the majors. It says a lot about our town. I'm just happy to be a part of it, to be able to play in it. I can't take any credit for what's been done. I mean, these guys have done an absolutely fantastic job and it's a first-class event. I will do everything they ask me to do, that's all I can do. I haven't seen that yet, by the way. I want to check it out. Did they embellish at all? (Laughs.)

Q. Jerry, will there be any inner battle between you and Skip and Steve and Jim? I think Steve's playing right behind you on Friday morning so they might be hitting into you, I don't know. But will there be a little smack talk this week from the Wisconsin guys?

JERRY KELLY: You know, there never needs to be any smack talk. We've been competing against each other like this for an extremely long time and every single one of us has come out on top any given tournament. Steve has had the dominant side the way he's played, there's no question, but there's definitely no feeling of dominance amongst us, it's just go out and play. We all play really hard. You know, we don't do it with malice. We do it for the love of the game and the love of competing. It's fun.

I'm playing with my wife's brother, who is also my coach, brother-in-law. I mean, he's a great friend. But when we're out there, we're competitors. But we're not competing head to head against each other, we're just competing in the same tournament. We're playing the same golf course, but I'm not playing against Jim. I'm playing to win a golf tournament and that's it.

Q. Do you have a good feel for what it's going to take this week to be up there the entire weekend given the way the course is playing?

JERRY KELLY: I don't. I feel like I would be surprised if there's another 17. You know, they had the tees back the last two pro-ams. It's playing pretty long. I couldn't get a lot of flight out of my ball, but it was heavy, wet air out there. It makes a difference for mine, I don't have enough swing speed to keep the spin up anyway. It definitely wasn't playing short. It's going to be tough to get the green speed back up with the moisture, but hopefully it dries out. But it's also going to be a little cool, so the ball's not going to fly as far either. So you've got plugging in the fairways and the ball not going as far, could be tougher. Yet you give these guys soft greens and they're always going to surprise you with the numbers they

shoot. It's pretty impressive.

Q. How did you feel on Sunday morning after the hockey game Saturday night? Did your body do okay after all that?

JERRY KELLY: I'm still stretching a few things. I'm still a little ginger here and there. But no, it was just great to work the same muscles again. I did not full stride at all. I tried one time and that was when somebody rushed up and I took the point, and all of a sudden the outlet pass came. I tried to escape backwards, and then I turned and started sprinting and he was already gone. So it was like two strides and I'm done.

What talent we have coming back for that every year. That's impressive. These guys are the best in the world, literally. I was honored to be on the ice with them, it was really cool. I played with Adam Burish again today. He's one of the -- I got the best compliment I got from that night was, "You're a better hockey player than I am a golfer," from a lot of the guys. So that's good perspective for me, I like that because I felt like a 20-handicapper out there, no question.

But Adam, Adam is a better golfer than I am a hockey player probably, the way I look at it. He's striking the ball really well. But Pavs is a good player, Gilbert's a good player, Schmaltz is a good player. I haven't seen Suter play, but I'm guessing he can play too, I don't know. But great athletes, great guys. It's fun.

Q. Jerry, have you had to play host at all? I know Steve is the official host, but have guys been asking you questions where to go to eat, that kind of thing?

JERRY KELLY: Oh, yeah. They know I'm the resident foodie. I don't go out a ton when I'm in Madison, but when I do, I go to the right places. I know where the good food is and I start with Sardine and go down the list from there. So it's the same position I've always been in. They're going to ask me where to eat because they know I like to eat.

We had a few guys over last night and that was really fun. No, no big parties. We were thinking about it for a Tuesday, that's the only day you can really do it. Then the pro-am parties out on this tour are so great as this one was, you can't ruin that and take guys away from that. So we thought it would be best just to keep it low key for the week.

Q. Did you watch some of the U.S. Open, and if so, what were your impressions of Erin Hills and what they did to the course?

JERRY KELLY: I think it showed up fantastic. I did watch a decent amount of it and I watched the entire Sunday. I would still like you guys to tell me how they hit 3-wood, iron, to a 680-yard par 5. Please tell me. I was watching those swings coming up the 18th hole. Wow. I mean, it is so impressive the way they hit the ball now. So different, but it's cool to watch. I mean, it's almost like watching Tiger in the day. Some of these guys, the speeds that they hit it are just so incredible and it's so different that it's cool to watch. You know, I've

studied it, I've tried to figure out how to do it. Trust me, I can't do it. I don't know what it is. Can't wrap my brain around it. But yeah, what was the question? (Laughs.)

Yeah, Erin Hills, that's right. I know I was going off tangent like normal, right?

I think it deserves another one because that's as easy as that course is going to play. If that fescue would have stayed firm -- the fescue, fairways and greens would have stayed firm. The fescue rough lines actually played tougher as it got more wet, but I think it would have been fantastic had it not rained. I think the scores -- they would have hit it farther, but I have a feeling the scores would have been tamed because those greens are tough. The wind only blew the last day, so I think the course held up very well and people who don't like to see 15 under are just out of their minds because that was fantastic golf.

Q. Jerry, do you have to draw on your Milwaukee days to how you interact with the galleries during the competition --

JERRY KELLY: Yep.

Q. -- or because it's PGA TOUR Champions, are you going to be more outgoing, more interactive with them?

JERRY KELLY: I don't know. This is probably an event that I really needed to kind of put me back in that mode. It's been tough the last bunch of years because watching what we just talked about, I've felt so inferior, it's kind of funny even though I had held my own, same way Steve did last week. But to come and have the support and just have the chance of some great play here, I think it's exactly what I'm looking for for my soul, basically, and my game. So I hope I can give it to myself like that.

LAURA VESCOVI: If there's no further questions, thank you, Jerry, for your time.

JERRY KELLY: Anything from the back? No? Okay.