FINAL ROUND INTERVIEW: JERRY KELLY (-19)

August 27, 2017



DAVE SENKO: Jerry, just a couple notes before we get started. You set a new tournament record today, 19-under par, which is the lowest 54-hole total. You become the first 50-year-old winner on tour this year, which is very unique. You're the fourth first-time winner of this event, joining Calc and John Riegger and Scott Dunlap. Lastly, you get a two-year exemption to Mitsubishi Hualalai.

JERRY KELLY: Love it.

DAVE SENKO: With that, maybe just share your thoughts on your first win on PGA TOUR Champions.

JERRY KELLY: Awesome. Well, it's definitely my first wire-to-wire win. Does it count, wire to wire, even though I lost the lead at one point today?

DAVE SENKO: You've got to be tied -- first-round tie.

Q. But he lost the lead today.

JERRY KELLY: I lost the lead today but at the end, that's wire to wire, so you can't say that. First-round leader finally won here. There's some good first times here today. No, the No. 13 kept on popping up, it was really cool. It's my lucky number and it just worked out.

Really, it's because my wife started traveling again. This is the first really full week that we're together after just dropping my son off at Boulder, Colorado, for college. Really that, I wanted to do a little something to hopefully ease her mind about what we just went through in dropping off one of the coolest kids I've ever met.

Yeah, it was a tough beginning of the week, but it was a great way to cap it off.

Q. What are you thinking when Jerry goes -- all of a sudden the lead flips there because you've been in the red all week and all of a sudden he's a shot ahead?

JERRY KELLY: Yeah, that really didn't bother me because I like to kind of paint a target on a guy that I'm chasing and go after him. Obviously I would have liked to stretch a three-shot lead to a seven-shot lead and never look back. I'm proud of myself for not making a bogey. I made three good par putts out there to not let them smell blood, but boy, they kept on coming back with putt after putt. I was inside of them a lot of the day, but they'd make those long putts and I just wasn't getting my putts in, so I started hitting it closer.

DAVE SENKO: Where did you have the saves, what holes, do you remember?

JERRY KELLY: I know 9 was a great save, and then 13 was a very good one.

Q. 5, too, right?

JERRY KELLY: Was it 5?

Q. I saw 9. Somebody said it was 5.

JERRY KELLY: I'll go with 5.

Q. I loved the putt on 17, though. The look on your face when you made the putt on 17 on the par 3.

JERRY KELLY: That was fun. To be able to do that to those guys after they had kind of done it to me, it felt very good.

I really wanted that last one. I didn't listen to my caddie. I thought it was outside the left. Now I understand why Jerry Smith left his putt short, because he was almost borderline going uphill, which you really couldn't see that. I thought my putt was going to snap. I was playing it an inch outside the hole and my caddie talked me into playing it edge and it broke to the left. So I certainly can understand how he left his short. John Cook afterwards said, hey, every one of us have had that putt and you won't miss it again, but the first time we all missed it. So I get it.

DAVE SENKO: How long was the putt on 17?

JERRY KELLY: 17 was probably about 15.

DAVE SENKO: And how about 16?

JERRY KELLY: 16 was about three feet.

Q. How big of a deal was No. 12. You lost the lead, you're down by a shot and it looked like on the TV that you didn't like the approach shot you hit?

JERRY KELLY: Yeah.

Q. How big a deal was that hole?

JERRY KELLY: That was a big deal. I knew after watching the two of them that I could not hit my sand wedge because it would spin back just like theirs did. So I was trying to really baby a wedge in there and have it land on the right and skip forward.

I definitely eased into it a little bit too much and left it out, but I still turned it over so it came just inside the bunker and kicked down to two feet. It was probably only about three or four

feet from where I was aiming, but the way that it started out a little bit right and came back...

Q. So you weren't thinking two feet when you hit it?

JERRY KELLY: I was trying to hit a hold shot and I ended up hitting a draw that started out to the right. So I was a little scared at first, but then when I saw where it was going to land, that was the correct spot to have it come over to the pin.

DAVE SENKO: What did you do on 14 today?

JERRY KELLY: That's a fun hole when you're in that position, and I'm lying when I say that. (Laughs.)

My caddie wanted 3-iron, wedge all day. I grabbed a 3-wood. I knew I could clear, I was worried about going long. I said, just let me see how it feels. It was one of those moments where you can see something where it can be the difference and that's what I was trying to make happen. Sometimes I get in trouble for trying to make things happen a little bit too much, but I felt pretty good.

When I teed it in the ground and took a few practices swings, I was like, all right, let's do this. I actually thought I hit it too far, but it landed about a yard short in that bunker but it was close.

DAVE SENKO: And how far was your putt, do you remember, out of the bunker?

JERRY KELLY: Yeah, there wasn't much sand in that bunker where I was, so it came out a little hot and I ended up probably a solid 10 feet.

Q. Is it true that the concierge sent you to Snoqualmie Muni on day one?

JERRY KELLY: Snoqualmie Falls, yeah. I knew when I was on the other -- you know, I was just weaving back and couldn't see anything. I mean, I was in the sticks. I think I got off at Exit 20 or something. It was on the other side -- now I realize on the other side of the valley. I called Eric, my caddie, and I'm like, would you just drop a pin where you were? He's like, sorry, I'm at caddie parking, can't do it.

So okay, what's the name of the golf course, and I got the name of the golf course wrong. So yeah, it was a good start. I got to see the valley, I got to see the other side of the hill and I got to see the valley. It was a beautiful drive.

Q. Well, you'll be back next year, you got to know it better.

JERRY KELLY: Yep, absolutely. I might go there for a little dinner. It looked like a cool little place at the bottom there.

Q. Where were you staying, Bellevue or Redmond?

JERRY KELLY: Hotel Bellevue. It was very nice.

Q. You have to come back twice. It wasn't like they were giving it up.

JERRY KELLY: I was very happy. I'm just, like I said before, just making those par putts and I had never taken a step back, that was fine watching them keep going forward. It set a new bar each time to go reach, which is great. Anytime we go forward or we stay stagnant, even as a group, it brings more people behind us in. So they definitely pushed us and pushed us, and then I was able to pass them in the end.

Q. Back to the concierge, what day was that you got the bad directions?

JERRY KELLY: That was for my pro-am on Wednesday, Wednesday early morning.

Q. What course did you end up at?

JERRY KELLY: I didn't end up there. I was almost there, I was within like a half a mile and I'm like, no way. Snoqualmie Falls, that's a good one.

Q. It's much funnier now. You would have had a good score.

JERRY KELLY: Really. It wouldn't have been in as good of shape as this one, I know that.

Q. Just final thoughts on the tournament?

JERRY KELLY: I just think it was so well run and so well maintained. You know, I don't miss the PGA TOUR because of tournaments like this. The golf course, the people, the whole setup around the golf course, the town that we're in. I love staying in Belleview, it was fantastic. We had great restaurants all week. I don't miss the PGA TOUR because of places like this.

Q. (No microphone.)

JERRY KELLY: On the tour, I took 71st or 72nd last year, I'm not sure, so I was fully exempt all this year. I could have played all I wanted to. I've still got a top-50 exemption sitting in my pocket and I can be fully exempt any year that I want to going forward. I don't know if I'll use it. As long as the Sony people let me in that tournament and possibly Harbour Town and I go back to Hartford where I went to college and I play a team event with Stricker, I think those four events will be just fine with me. I'm very happy to call this my home tour.

DAVE SENKO: Thanks, Jerry.