

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW
November 19, 2020



PETER MALNATI (-5)

PETER MALNATI: (in progress) which is going to happen, especially the wind was really picking up. Yeah, with the exception of two poor drives, I'm really, really thrilled with the way I played.

Q. I know that we're three long days and 54 holes away, but when you look at your projection in FedExCup standings, right now you're 15th, but projected if you win here you're No. 1 in FedExCup standings, just a little bit ahead of Dustin Johnson.

PETER MALNATI: Yeah, you're right, that means absolutely nothing at this moment in time, but it's cool to be in that conversation. I played so nicely this fall after a lot of hard work and just really struggled for the last three years, really no consistency, nothing that great, so to see it come together and have some good results this fall is just a thrill.

Q. I'm asking players, based on the weirdness of this year, is your offseason regimen and your schedule going to look any different than it did in previous years?

PETER MALNATI: It will be my first offseason with a kid, so -- no, I had a kid last year, too. I have a 1-year-old right now. It will be my first offseason with a 1-year-old. I have no idea what that's going to look like yet. There will definitely be -- with Mayakoba being moved later, that's an event that I really enjoy and like to play, so I'll be playing there. With that being moved later, it might extend the downtime a little bit. Typically I'm not much of a downtime guy; two weeks off is pretty much what I need, and I absolutely love my job, I love doing it. This year maybe we'll extend the downtime all the way through Christmas and pick it back up maybe before Hawaii or something just because there is a shorter break.

Q. When you had a great final round at Sanderson Farms, you kind of made it feel like this was a bit of a fluke and you just caught something. How do you explain that you're on this great run now?

PETER MALNATI: I never really thought -- I don't have the results to say that it wasn't a fluke, but I've been building and building and building and my practice has been feeling better and better. You know, every golfer says "I'm close," but I really did believe that, I felt like I was close.

For it to come together on that Sunday at Sanderson Farms, a place that's obviously special to me, and to play so well felt -- it definitely felt a little bit magical, but it also felt like, no, this is what I have worked for, this isn't a fluke to get in and obviously just to take a little load off my shoulders.

I mean, the category that I'm in this year is going to have some access issues because it's just so many people wanting to play, so that result took a little load off my shoulders. But then, yeah, to go to Vegas and not even be in the field until I top-10ed and to go there and just keep it going and play well and play a few great rounds in Bermuda, yeah, it's super nice to see that even though from the outside, it may look like a fluke, it's nice for me because I don't have the results to back up a consistent level, so it's good to see that here.

Q. Peter, what were you more proud of today, the six birdies or just having one bogey?

PETER MALNATI: Yeah, the thing I was most proud of was the comeback from the bogey. To make the bogey right as the wind was really starting to blow the hardest, and obviously the next hole on the course, 15 is probably the easiest hole on the course, but to respond and hit a few good shots on the hole, make the birdie and then birdie 16 and 18, that's what I'm proud of. As the wind started to blow harder, that bogey could have sort have been a derailing bogey and the fact that I just kind of cruised on through it and hit some great shots coming in, that's what was good.

Q. Is it a surprise to you at all that the lower scores came so far at least for the most part on Seaside today versus Plantation?

PETER MALNATI: It doesn't surprise me actually. The Plantation course, the greens on the Plantation course have added a lot of challenge since they just redid them. It's very tough to keep the ball close to the hole. You have to hit really, really concise shots. And the greens, Seaside is a course that's a classic and in the wind it is absolutely brutally difficult, but the landing areas in lieu of target areas of the greens I think are smaller over on Plantation now, so it's not by any means I wouldn't call Plantation an easier course anymore.

Q. Just describe your level of comfort just on these courses.

PETER MALNATI: I'm sorry, you mean specifically here at Sea Island?

Q. Yeah.

PETER MALNATI: I really, you know, I've never played well here and that always surprises me because I love it. I think it's beautiful. I think the golf courses are very, very well designed, very playable, very good. I'm happy and comfortable here, I've just never played well. So it's nice to get one good round under my belt this week and hopefully keep it going.