

GREG NORMAN

PRESTON SMITH: Greg, welcome back to Tiburon. If we can just open up with some comments on being back at a course you know very well.

GREG NORMAN: Very well. Yeah, 20 years been here. I think that's probably the most powerful thing about being here today. I never expected to be in one place for 20 years. It goes to show you how the community has embraced this golf tournament just as much as we've embraced the community and how much the hotel and the Tiburon Golf Club has loved the event as well.

Also, to me it tells you how much the players love it because they keep talking about it. They just keep talking about it. I'm talking about not just the professionals, I'm talking about the professionals and amateurs and we're constantly getting incredible feedback from everybody. That would be my takeaway from it. It's just 32 years deep and 20 years here and been pretty impressive.

Q. A couple Aussies paired together this week. How do you like their chances?

GREG NORMAN: I like their chances a lot obviously, but there are a lot of good pairings out there this week. It's a great collection of winners in the 2019-2020 season, so it's going to be a well thought-out battle, to tell you the truth.

We've always had a problem getting Australians to come play because this time of year the Australian tournaments are being played down there. Sadly, they're all being, you know, postponed or canceled because of this COVID situation. That's why Leish and Cam asked me if they can come play and I was all for it, of course.

Q. Did you have to deal with many obstacles concerning COVID-19 to make sure that this tournament was a go?

GREG NORMAN: We did, absolutely. I think this tournament is no different than all the other PGA TOUR events. All I can tell you is I think this is a -- golf is a testament to what you can do. I'm not just talking about golf tournaments, I'm talking about golf. We've seen the growth of the game of golf during the COVID time with the number of rounds up, the number of people wanting to play.

I talked to a couple of very important people in the game and they're trying to capture this right now, this moment in time that was a silver lining behind a dark cloud, which is the game of golf. I think there is an opportunity. It's a generational opportunity, I really truly believe that. I think if we do -- if all the powers to be from The PGA of America all the way across the

board, USGA, really take a hard look at this and see who's come into this game, whether it's young kids, who are the young kids, is it more women playing, why, why are they getting out there, understanding it. Probably using social media a little bit more and getting the message down to all these people so we can keep this momentum going. Golf has needed it for a long, long period of time. Like I said, it's a silver lining behind a dark cloud and golf has been the benefactor.

But at the tournament in general, the PGA TOUR has done a phenomenal job, they really have. They've got to work very, very closely, they've got bubbles, they've got protocols, they work closely with everybody to give them the right advice on how to proceed, and we've respected every one of those and we've actually implemented them.

I'll give you an example. Last night, pro-am draw party, I was told it's the first function the PGA TOUR has allowed to have, right, where we had like 150 people maybe in a gathering, but we had them all tested and not one person tested positive. I think that's again a testament to the PGA TOUR and the management of the process to make sure people are enjoying themselves at a PGA TOUR event, and this is a co-sanctioned PGA TOUR event.

So all those things that I look at, a lot of people working hard to get things going for these players to be able to get out there and play. You know, this small event here turns in to be a big deal across the board.

Q. What was today like for you? Usually you're at least playing in the pro-am. What did you do and what was it like?

GREG NORMAN: Actually, I had a fun day today because I drove around and tried to catch up with every one of the players. I enjoyed that more quite honestly than playing because you get to see the guys you don't really normally get to see. I go to a cocktail party or a function or a dinner with the sponsors, you don't get to see all the others. To me it was a lot of fun, I really did enjoy it.

I couldn't get them all in, I probably missed about four or five groups, but I had a lot of fun today. Then I just did my radio show, Charles Kelly was brilliant, absolutely brilliant on it. I've had a good day.

Q. When you had your first Shootout, did you ever think you would get to 32 and how proud are you of the fact that you've had 32?

GREG NORMAN: Yeah, never, never, never thought, never thought that. You think we're in the shoulder season or silly season or whatever you want to call it. I think it's just a testament to the management company, the guys we've got running it. I used to own it, now Wasserman runs it. I think it's a testament to all that. We've worked extremely well together. The end goal is to raise as much money as we can for CureSearch and basically to entertain the community wherever we're at.

Look, we're setting up for a show tomorrow night. LiveFest last year was a huge success. We had never done that before and we're so disappointed we couldn't do it this year, but we'll 100% have it next year because it was just a smash hit. And you saw the community come out, 10,000 plus strong I think the number was by the time we counted it all out. So it was very, very beneficial for everybody. That's just 32 years' long, so maybe another 32 years.

Q. You mentioned Cam Smith earlier. I'm sure you took note of his pretty historic run at the Masters. Can you just speak to watching him elevate his game?

GREG NORMAN: It's always great to see whether it's Cam Smith or somebody else coming through doing that. To shoot four rounds in the 60s around Augusta is one thing, right, and not to win is another quite honestly. You know, it was pretty impressive.

But yeah, of course, it's a testament to the depth and the pedigree of players we do get out of Australia. Cam is not one of the biggest, he's not a DJ, he's not a Brooks, he's not a Tiger, he's not a big guy, but it's a testament to the fact that if you have a quality game, you can compete anywhere in the world.

Q. I'm doing a year-end story on DJ and I remember a podcast you did where you said one of the players you would maybe pay to go see would be DJ, you liked how he played. Did you watch the Masters and can you -- your thoughts on what he did at Augusta and the emotional response he had after winning?

GREG NORMAN: Yeah, I watched the Masters because I like DJ, I'm a friend of DJ's, I would like to be able to say I've helped DJ. Yeah, I wanted to see him win even though he's going up against an Aussie, but when he started separating from the field, all I can say is when I sat there and watched it, I was saying to myself, you know, the perception of DJ out there in the public world is totally different than what the reality of the player truly is.

He's a committed killer, right? He wants to play hard, he wants to go beat you on the golf course, he wants to -- he's smart. He's a very, very smart golfer and he understands his game better than anybody else could even think he could understand his game.

So I knew he was always going to be -- I knew he was always that special player and now he's starting to realize it. I would think Wayne Gretzky has a lot to do with that, too. I think Wayne talks to him the right way and certain things in preparation and getting ready to play for a final round or ready to play for Augusta or the Masters at the beginning, I think Wayne's probably been a very, very positive influence on him.

Q. Were you surprised at how emotion he was at the end?

GREG NORMAN: That is a great indication of how intense the man is. He is who he is and at times, if you're that intense, you've got to let it go somehow. I think it was wonderful for everybody to see quite honestly and I think it was good for him.

Q. And the last, how important was you winning your second major, because I think it took you 26 majors to win your second major, and everybody was harping on DJ and it took him 15 to win his second. Does that second major make people look differently at DJ or how important do you think that?

GREG NORMAN: No, I don't think so. Everybody's out there trying to win major championships and the depth of golf in any tournament is deep and you've got to beat a quality field every time.

No, I don't put any stock in that quite honestly. He's going to win more. I thought I was going to win more, but I didn't and I hope he goes on and wins more.

Q. It was at least alluded to I think on the telecast that you had worked with him on putting or something like that?

GREG NORMAN: Um-hmm.

Q. How did that come about?

GREG NORMAN: He called me up. He had known that I, through my son, because my son played a lot of golf with him, I've just seen a few things in his short game, especially his putting, that I would relay on to my son to relay on to him.

I got a text from DJ around the middle of September. He said do you mind coming out and watching me putt a little bit? I said sure, no problem. So we went out to The Grove XXIII, which is Michael Jordan's course where he plays, and we just spent time on the putting green. I don't think how long it was, an hour, hour and a half, something like that.

I just talked to him about a few things that I had seen and the difference from him on a Thursday, Friday to a Saturday into a Sunday was a big difference. Some of it was physical improvement and some of it was mental as well, but mental comes from a bad physical or bad technique. So I just talked him through it and all of a sudden he started to feel it and he started to feel it, and from that moment on he went on a pretty good run and he still is.

Q. Do you remember the first time you ever saw him or when you got to know him, and how did you get to know him so well?

GREG NORMAN: Look, I would say I don't know DJ well. I know him. I wouldn't say -- we haven't had gone out and had dinners in the nighttime. I just like his demeanor, I just like his approach, I like his physicality to the game of golf. There's just something about him. Some guys you pay attention to and some you don't. It was just good to see him.

And it's obviously an honor when another player calls you up and asks you to come, hey, what do you see, especially top level to top level, right? When that happens, it's good. You

want to make sure you instill the values that you see to make sure that he actually gets positive feedback out of it and he definitely got positive feedback out of it.

PRESTON SMITH: Thanks, Greg.