

ROCCO MEDIATE (-2)

Q. Did you figure out something about this place last year, because you were 7 under or something?

ROCCO MEDIATE: Yeah, I played good last year. I've loved this course since I played it. I think my first NEC was '91 and I had a couple of 1-under rounds maybe and it was just so hard, and it still is. This year the rough's not up like it was and I hit it in most of the fairways. Missed a couple, which much easier to play from the short stuff.

Always tell people, you know what, fairway mowers are really, really expensive and make the fairways perfect. Rough mowers are cheap, they don't need good mowers to mow the rough. This is another one of those courses where it actually rewards you for hitting in the fairway. I think most of us love that, I know I do. And if you miss, too bad, deal with it.

I caught a horrible two lies on 16, but it's rough. You know, I'm like, God, I wish this was a foot more to the right. I had a hard pick. It was hard. That's the game. We have to deal with it. I love courses like this. And like I said, I wish we played twice a month like this. Not every day because then we would all go completely bonkers, but I love the hard -- and I've always loved Firestone, it's hard not to like it.

Q. You how have you been playing coming into this?

ROCCO MEDIATE: I'm getting a little better. I had some issues, I call them physical failures in the golf swing. I had a few things I messed with. But, you know, actually Jess, my wife's kind of like, you know, you've been doing this for now 37 years now on tour, maybe you want to trust your muscle memory? Do you always have to keep screwing around with stuff?

And it's true, coming from someone who doesn't play, she doesn't play, she just watches. She's like just go play. And I think that's what I'm trying to do more. My attitude was like this is terrible, how am I going to get around with this? I think all of us go through it and it's not really that bad. It's just a matter of trusting -- I call it trusting your shape. My shape does this. If I can't trust it, no matter what's over there, I've got issues. I've been trusting it more. I had a reasonable Open, the week before I played okay in Madison and this was a really clean -- just a couple loose ones, but we're human, unfortunately. I don't know where I got the idea that we never miss because I must have been thinking -- I must have had a dream that I was someone else because we always miss. It's a matter of fixing your -- you know, making up for that short game. Jerry Kelly, he never misses, he never misses.

Q. We were just talking about that.

ROCCO MEDIATE: I mean, that's a guy, he doesn't miss. See?

Q. When did Jess say this?

ROCCO MEDIATE: Oh, over the last -- oh, for a long time actually. For a long, long time Jess has said that to me. And a lot of my buddies are like, What is your problem? Why are you so hard on yourself?

Once again, not just me but I think most of us do this. I'm like, I don't know. I maybe expect more, but I think everybody expects more. You don't always get it, so you've got to deal with -- shoot a score whatever way you can.

So it made a lot of sense. Just working on -- I know what I'm doing with the golf swing, I know exactly what I'm doing and I'm trusting it more, just letting it rip.

And I don't care. I mean, I do care, but you know what I mean? I'm not up there -- when you think too much, it's like Pete said, like yeah -- Pete Bender's one of the best of all time. He goes, The only time you ever play crappy is when you think too much. No kidding. And he's right, he's right. It's like it cuts through the crap. It's like you're doing this because you're doing that.

So my swing key always used to be gather and go, gather and go and that's all I thought about today. Most of them came off where I was looking. You know, I didn't think of any physical thing, just get in behind it and go, that's it. So it worked most of the day. Hit a few bad ones. But Mr. Short game, that's why we do all that crap that makes up for it. It's just Golf 101, I guess.

But around here, it's a good one. It's just relentless. We were talking about it, it just doesn't stop. There's no like walk in the park if you miss a shot. It's a nightmare if you miss in certain spots, but it is a great place. It's cool that we're here.

Q. Is it essentially like the people that handle hard best will do best?

ROCCO MEDIATE: Oh, yeah, absolutely, because it's like you don't -- there's no like, like oh, the rough's so high, this is ridiculous. Well, don't hit it in the rough. That's what Pete always says: Well, you hit it there, play it.

Cuts through the crap again. Maybe some guys don't like to hear that, but I never -- sometimes I'll go. if that was a foot more to the right. It's not really complaining, but it's like dammit, my fault. If it was a yard more to the right, it's perfect; now I've got issues. It's just how close the game is sometimes. And when they go your way sometimes, it changes the whole -- but if you can survive when it doesn't, that's the key.

Q. I don't want to get into the technical too much, but when you called it physical whatever --

ROCCO MEDIATE: Physical failure.

Q. -- is that you're telling yourself in the middle of the swing --

ROCCO MEDIATE: Oh, no, no, no. I knew -- I know where the club is and it's just hard to get it out of that spot. I'll dump it underneath me a little too much. I've done it my whole career and I will continue to do that when I make mistakes for the rest of my career. We all have a cross to bear, right?

I'm like, what in the -- and kept doing it and eventually it's going to get you. I know that and that's really the only thing that I keep trying to keep it in -- we all try to keep it in front of us, get more on top, more on top. When it's not, it goes sideways, it curves more, it doesn't start online. But we all do it. We're all crazy. It's like Jessica, you're all certifiable, every single one of you. She's right, we're completely nuts.

Q. Does coming back here bring back a lot of good old memories from --

ROCCO MEDIATE: Yeah, a lot of my friends come over. Billy Perry's here, who's also been a big help over the last couple -- he's known me for 40 -- God, since high school, 40-some-odd years. He's like, What are you -- he showed me some video a couple weeks ago. He goes, What the hell is this? See? See? There's the physical failure. This is what you were doing, this is what you -- I said, yeah, I know, let's just go back to doing that and all of a sudden got everything more underneath me, very more structured.

Over the years -- my back's perfect now, but the reason I can still play is because of the way I -- and I got a little bent over, a little -- so all of a sudden the club has no support. It works for me. He really said, Look at this and look at that. I was like, oh, my God, I wonder why, they should just shoot me.

See, there you go again. It's just golf, but you look at it and go how the hell do we get into these habits? We all do.

Q. Is that blatantly bad that you're like oh, my God?

ROCCO MEDIATE: I'm like, what the hell am I doing? And I'm wondering why I can't do what I want to do. It's real simple, it's right in front of you. It's all set up for me. And then motion, the motion's easy, but if you're not set up right for me, anybody, then it's hard to move.

Q. (No microphone.)

ROCCO MEDIATE: Why don't you enjoy the rest of your career, however long it's going to be? You busted your ass all this time, we all have. And I hate to say me, but we all have busted our butt all these times, 27 on the regular Tour and this is my 10th, never stopped

and I can't enjoy it. It's pathetic if I can't enjoy it. So I'm trying to enjoy it. Trying. It's so far we'll see, but just have to keep it -- it's really not that hard. We're going to shoot 2 or 3 under every day? Hell no.

Q. You're not?

ROCCO MEDIATE: I don't think so. That's not even being negative, that's just being like if I could shoot 2 or 3 under a day here, you would have a big trophy at the end of the week. You never know, that could happen.

My point is, it's just the way it is. Like I always say, what are you thinking about tomorrow? Well, the only thing I'll think about tonight is how can I drive my ball in 10 fairways. That's about as far as I can go. Can't think of 12, 11, 6. 10 fairway, how do I put my ball and then go forward, that's it. And that's what I'm going to do