

RBC Canadian Open

Press Conference

Wednesday, July 26, 2017

Jim Furyk

MARK WILLIAMS: Jim, thanks for joining us at the RBC Canadian Open. We appreciate you making the time. You're a two-time champion and you have five Top-10s in 14 starts. Your thoughts on coming back to the RBC Canadian Open, and it was a little bit of a different route for you this year coming from Alabama rather than Great Britain.

JIM FURYK: Yeah, rather than the British Open. I ended up being second alternate last week. Was on vacation. Wanted to play that week, and did a little research on the golf course at Reno and Auburn, trying to figure out which event to play and chose Auburn. I thought it was a good golf course for me. Didn't make a bunch of birdies or enough birdies, but played solid for the week, and it was a different route.

It's nice to be back. I've had some success here the last few years, and early in my career, I didn't see a lot of success here at Glen Abbey. Actually back then, wasn't real fond of the golf course. But knowing that the tournament was going to be here for awhile and being an RBC partner, I knew I'd be playing it. Really, I've had some success, like I said, the last five years. Felt comfortable on the golf course.

It's in great shape this year. It's a little different than last year. Last year played very short, it was brown and the ball was moving. Although they have had a lot of rain during the summer, the golf course is in phenomenal shape. It's not wet and damp. It's plenty green but the ball is still chasing and it's still rolling out there.

The golf course looks great, and looking forward to another week here. You know, I've got a few more weeks here on my schedule to kind of turn things around. It really hasn't been a solid season and would love to jump start that here and have a good week and maybe play well at the PGA and at Wyndham.

MARK WILLIAMS: I was going to ask you that, and that's a nice segue into it. You're a past champion of the FedExCup, winning it in 2010, and you're No. 147 right now. With these next tournaments on the schedule leading into the Playoffs, what do you need to do to elevate yourself on that ranking?

JIM FURYK: Play well. Play better than I've been I guess. Since the U.S. Open, I've had a lot of finishes



around 25th, 25th, 35th. I did go on vacation. I've had a vacation planned for a couple of weeks for two years in Europe with my family, with my mom and dad, with Tabitha and the kids. That was a great experience for us. Then kind of got back home and back to work, getting ready for Auburn and here.

So I need to play better to be honest with you, and the Playoff system is set up, if you get in, even just a Top-125, you have to play very well that first event. But you get in the Playoffs and a second or third place finish, you're set. You're in THE TOUR Championship and you're in the major championships the next year.

I'll go along with the idea that every shot counts but they sure count a lot more in the Playoffs. The system's set up that lightning in a bottle for one week, you can really do a lot of damage and change the idea of your season. But first and foremost, I need to get in that Top-125 and make sure that I'm at The Northern Trust, the first Playoff event.

Q. Do you expect the course to play differently at all compared to what we saw last year? How do you expect it to play this week?

JIM FURYK: Oh, yeah. I won't be hitting wedge into 18, I promise you that. The breeze was from a little different direction today. 18 played more back, breeze in our face. Last year, downwind, right-to-left. And the last two years, really, the golf course has been super firm; the ball has chased out.

I think in 2015, I hit 8-iron into 18 one day. Last year I hit wedge into 18 one day for a second shot. Just clubs I've never even I imagined. Getting a long iron in there is really a long drive for me, and so the ball was chasing. Now that also has its difficulties, as well. It was very difficult to get the ball in the fairway. As firm and fast as it was, the ball wanted to roll and chase and ended up in the rough a lot. I like that; being a shorter hitter, but a guy that hits the ball relatively straight, that plays to my strength.

The golf course now is going to play a touch longer, but it's not like sopping wet. It's in really good condition. I think the guys, I had an outing yesterday for RBC over at Mississauga, and when I came over last night to register, the caddies I talked to, the players I talked to, everyone said they have had a lot of rain apparently but

the ball is rolling. It's in great shape. It's greener and has more grass on it than last year but it's in great shape.

Q. They have done a great job also adding a rink to the par 3, 7th. What did you think when you saw the hockey boards?

JIM FURYK: It's kind of a rink. There is a rink. But I would imagine, like all the way around the green, and I kind of had this giant picture, it's a nice touch. It's a nice touch. I think it will be fun for the fans. I think it will be fun for the players. It's so centrally located to the clubhouse. It's a congregation area.

I heard Jack Nicklaus talking yesterday about how he had envisioned this golf course kind of being the spokes of a wheel with the clubhouse in the middle and a lot of holes coming in and out of that general area. What we'll play now as No. 7 is pretty much right in the middle of it all. So you get a lot of people around that area; I realize hockey is not the national sport of Canada but it sure seems like it is. Nice addition.

I would expect the fans to be exuberant and loud, especially on that Friday afternoon, the weekend. I think the players will enjoy it and embrace it and have fun with it.

Q. You mentioned you weren't at The Open Championship this year, but you've made that trip many times. When you come this way, from playing there, what do you have to do to get ready for this tournament both physically and mentally?

JIM FURYK: I think the charter that Golf Canada and RBC provides for the players, I think there was about 25 guys that came over; the charter that is provided makes that trip a lot easier. Otherwise most folks would be staying over in Europe on Sunday night. They would be getting up Monday morning, flying over, getting here another half a day later, trying to adjust to the time zone.

I think it's a lot easier coming back going west. But really, it's trying to get some rest, get some sleep. It takes a few days for your body to feel right. And while you're over there, you're going to see usually a lot of wind, a lot of elements. You're hitting the ball on a lower flight pattern.

For me the first day I usually played golf was in that outing, either hitting balls Monday night or on Tuesday playing in the outing for RBC, and I usually would spend the first day trying to hit the ball as high as I could for one day. I mean, just hitting every shot and trying to moon-ball it and try to get my swing oriented to come back.

Glen Abbey is a place where I think you do actually want to have the ball coming into the greens from pretty high. A high ball hitter here I think has an advantage. I think there are places where they can hide and tuck pins. Especially when they are firm like they have been the last few years, it's been a big advantage.

So coming off of a course where you're hitting it flat and low for a week and coming to a place where you probably want to hit the ball a little higher, it's an adjustment in your swing. I kind of always kept those things in mind and tried to use Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, very wisely, getting some rest, getting enough sleep and kind of adjusting my game and altering it for back to normal kind of, what we'll call golf in North America versus links golf.

Q. You know the history of the Canadian Open, and especially with Glen Abbey, having played here so many years and winning this tournament twice. What was your reaction finding out that this course might be closing or is likely going to close in roughly five years?

JIM FURYK: Yeah, I guess surprised. I was playing with some of my amateurs in the Pro-Am last year, and they pointed out some houses left of No. 2, and gave me the approximate property value per home. And I kind of went, wow, that's quite expensive, and I can understand why someone may want to develop this area from a financial reason.

It's probably near and dear to a lot of folks here in Canada, with now former RCGA, now Golf Canada having their headquarters here and the Canadian Open being played here for so many years. For golf fans, it probably has a sentimental value.

I heard Jack talk about that yesterday and talked about time moving on and maybe getting an opportunity to, I know they are looking at future venues and maybe building a future golf course, as well, it seemed like. I don't know anything about the ins and outs of it, but you know, there's some history, but I guess time will march on and those memories will be there. I don't know if Golf Canada, if their headquarters are moving or where they are going, but I'm sure they are got a great archive and a library or history of golf in Canada. I'm sure that can be moved and those memories can be saved.

Q. You talked about the fact that you first didn't like this golf course. Obviously winning helps?

JIM FURYK: I didn't win here. Winning didn't help.

Q. How does the confidence come or how do you overcome a golf course that maybe doesn't suit

your eye or you don't play well in the very beginning?

JIM FURYK: I think early in my career, if you go back 24 years ago, this golf course played a lot longer than it does right now because our equipment changed, or the average drive is so much farther.

It was, as I said earlier, when it played longer, it was a little bit more of a high ball hitters golf course. And you think back to the guys that have played well here, the Greg Norman's, the Bruce Lietzke, always played well here and you go down the list and there's a bunch of guys that hit the ball up in the air. I'm going back to 70s, 80s, 90s -- when did they build this?

MARK WILLIAMS: '76.

JIM FURYK: I feel like the guys that played well here were a lot of high ball hitters. That just wasn't my game. I wasn't overly long. I didn't hit the ball up in the air. I hit the ball relatively low and flat when I first came to the TOUR.

In order to compete and in order to I guess contend on more golf courses, I learned to hit the ball higher. I learned to kind of change my style to fit PGA TOUR golf, and as that happened, I became a more consistent player and won more golf tournaments and became one of the higher-ranked players on TOUR.

In the midst, there was a years I probably wasn't playing the Canadian Open a lot. Came back, won at Hamilton and won at Angus Glen, and then got a chance to see this golf course again. And kind of as we're hitting the ball farther and we're hitting the ball higher, I felt like it suited my eye a little bit better.

I also kind of made up my mind that if we were going to be here every year, I needed to learn how to play it. I've had some success. I look at it now and I can't honestly tell you why I -- what about it that I didn't like, because I really feel like it suits my game fine. Probably didn't play -- honestly was probably a young player that didn't play well here the first few times and that made up my mind for me.