

RBC Heritage

Wednesday, April 12, 2017

Dr. Nelson Carswell

Press Conference



JOHN BUSH: It's a pleasure and an honor to invite Dr. Nelson Carswell into the interview room today at the RBC Heritage. He is making an astounding 49th start in the Pro Am here.

Dr. Carswell, first of all, thank you for coming by and spending a few minutes with us. If we can just get a few comments about what it is about this tournament and this place that's so special to you.

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: Certainly it's a pleasure to be here where all of this is going on. It's wonderful. I don't know what to say. I'm short of breath from asthma, not from nervousness. I do have a habit of talking in great length.

JOHN BUSH: Well, you obviously don't have trouble playing golf. What is it about this game that you love so much?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: Beating the fellows that are playing with me. I always want to win. I don't always do that, of course. It's a game played with great honesty. It can really depend on -- you can get cheated out of it, but I do love to win.

I played golf since I was probably eight or 10. Played with a wooden stick. I see a difference in clubs now. But you had to do the best you could do.

JOHN BUSH: Before we open it up for questions, give us a little bit of a background.

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: My dad was in the railroad industry. I was strictly planning on being a doctor as long as I knew. I always wanted to be a pediatrician, because I loved little kids. It's been great. I have a son who could do the same thing and worked in farming. I took time off to come down here.

JOHN BUSH: Just tell us a little bit where did you go to medical school and where did you practice.

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: Medical College of Georgia. I went out to St. Louis for a year or two. And in the Air Force for a couple of years. And then had my pediatric training in Augusta again. And went home and practiced.

Q. Do you remember the first one in 1969? Who

you played with?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: No, I don't remember who I played with.

Q. Do you remember who the pro was?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: No idea. That was a long time ago.

Q. Tell us one of the favorite pros you played with?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: That's pretty easy. The last one I played with, and I hope to get him again, was Charley Hoffman. He was the only one out of all of them that I played with who wrote me three weeks later a letter thanking me for being able to play with him. And he wrote a short note, instead of scribbling things. He went way out of his way. I can't wait to see him. I appreciated it.

Q. Are you a Charley Hoffman fan now? Did you watch him at the Masters last week?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: Yes, I did. He did well for a while.

Q. How about yourself, are you going to play all 18?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: Three days a week. I do pediatrics two days a week. And I have great fun. Got a great little group I played with. Can't lose a lot of money anymore (laughter.) Used to be big time. But now they won't let anybody lose more than five and you can't win more than nine. That's pretty cheap compared to what we did 30 years ago.

JOHN BUSH: Dr. Carswell, I can't help but see Mr. Arnold Palmer's name on your list there. Did you have a chance to play with him and do you have any memories of the King?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: A little late getting around to playing with Arnold. Well, he was still playing well, but it must have been ten years back.

It was back in a time when I had been water skiing -- no, snow skiing, I let the water go. I had some boots cleated so I could go back to the golf course and play. And he asked me if I played in those cleats. And I said, not when I'm playing tennis, because it hurts the courts (laughter.) He laughed. And we played together.

I remember on 17 I birdied the hole. I heard a little bit of (clapping) right behind me. And he birdied. And the crowd just went wild (laughter.) I thought, well, I got what I deserved.

Q. Was that down at Bay Hill? You played at Bay Hill?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: No, this is playing here. This was at one of the Pro Ams. He was probably one of the really older ones than the average fellow. I played with some who was just trying to make a living, that weren't always as happy about it as me.

JOHN BUSH: What do you remember about his game when you played with him that day?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: One thing I remember was the birdie business. His birdie and my birdie.

Q. The birdies?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: Yes.

Q. What was your best handicap and what is your handicap now?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: Handicap? I was a four. Today, at home, I'm a three. That's bad. I guess I can't hit it very far, but I try. Sometimes a break 100 now.

Q. You said you didn't remember who you played with in the first Pro Am. Were there a lot of fans?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: It was not a big crowd like we have now. The pro was not really as interested in playing with us as most now. In fact some of the older ones I felt were very unhappy with playing with us, to tell you the truth. But I tried to be polite. It worked out.

Q. What keeps you coming back to play in this tournament each year?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: I just enjoy playing, I guess. It's a good competitive time. I have all of my friends. Sometime one or two of them may play with us in the group, depending on how much money they want to spend. Everybody is nice. The weather is good. The course is beautiful. I get treated like I was important -- not the least important person.

Q. Where do you live?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: Where I live? Dublin, Georgia, not very far away. Good golf course. Good hospitals.

In my younger time I used to fly. I'd fly down here, circle the pro shop, they would with recognize the plane and they'd send someone to the air forth and pick me up. This was a long time ago. Ill really buzzed them. I had a Beechcraft Bonanza. Good flying time.

Q. Were you the pilot?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: Yes, ma'am.

Q. What is your age?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: I have to think, because if I don't, I tell a lie. It's hard to realize I'm actually, next month, 89 years old. And that sounds -- I want to tell folks I'm 70. I'm 89. My wife is assured me this morning.

Q. You have a large family who comes out here to watch you play each year. Can you talk about the family and what they call you and what do you call your crew?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: I have a large family. I had five kids. They have kids. It gets to be more than I can handle getting everybody here. But most of them show up.

JOHN BUSH: What do they call you?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: Golf Daddy.

Q. I have to ask you, next year will be your 50th, look forward to having you back here the next year for the 50th time.

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: Well, I hope I'll be here. I plan on being here.

JOHN BUSH: Dr. Carswell, it was an honor having you here today. And are you going to win today?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: No. (Laughter.)

Q. But you're going to try?

DR. NELSON CARSWELL: I'm going to give it my best effort.

JOHN BUSH: Thanks for joining us.