

RBC Heritage

Tuesday, April 16, 2019

Corey Connors

Press Conference



EMILY TILLO: I'd like to welcome Corey Connors into the interview room here at the RBC Heritage.

Corey, welcome back, making your third appearance here. Obviously congrats on an incredible past few weeks. Just provide some comments on the week ahead and what these past few weeks have been like for you.

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, I'm really excited to be here. This is an awesome place. Such a relaxing feel and such a fun tournament to play. The golf course is awesome and I'm really happy to be back here for a third time. I've struggled on the golf course a little bit, but I think I've learned a lot the last few years, and I'm excited for a good week.

Obviously my game has been pretty good lately, with everything. And so I'm very excited to be back here, and it's going to be a fun week.

As far as the last few weeks, things have really changed for me. And changed in a really good way. So good play paid off with the win in San Antonio. It was an unforgettable week, really, just pecked away the first few days, and was able to make a bunch of birdies over the weekend and ultimately got it done. Felt pretty sweet walking up 18 with a few shot lead knowing that I was going to win my first event. And, yeah, something that I'll never forget.

And obviously that got me a spot in the Masters last week. So it was a very quick turnaround. But got to play in my second Masters tournament, which was amazing. Played as an amateur in 2015. And to be back as a professional this year was awesome.

I wasn't able to prepare like a normal week. Things got pretty crazy the first few days. But took it easy, really enjoyed the experience. I played fairly well. Got off to a pretty good start. I had a few three-putts the first round but was still able to shoot 2-under. Followed it up with a couple more under par rounds and ultimately didn't score my best on Sunday, but was definitely feeling a little bit tired.

But, I don't know, all the golf had maybe caught up with me a little bit. And I was a bit sloppy on the second nine. But what an experience it was. And I really look forward to giving myself more chances to win and more

chances to play in the Masters. It's pretty awesome.

EMILY TILLO: You joined team RBC this past January, and RBC Heritage, there's a tie there. Talk about what that partnership has been like for you.

COREY CONNERS: It's a real honor and a dream come true to be an RBC Ambassador. RBC is a big sponsor of Golf Canada and the Golf Canada national team. So when I was an amateur golfer, a part of that program, I always wore the RBC shield and kind of dreamt of being a Tour player with the RBC shield. So now that it's happened it's been amazing. I'm really honored.

What a fantastic company, all they do for golf with the RBC Heritage here and the RBC Canadian Open, another event I'm excited about. There's so many great guys in the RBC stable. It's a real pleasure to be a part of that. And I'm really excited for a long partnership with RBC.

Q. Winning in Texas, how does that change your schedule? Going forward how is your schedule going to differ from what you thought you would play?

COREY CONNERS: There was a lot of uncertainty in my schedule for the year. So far this year it's been inconsistent, week on, week off. I haven't been able to get into a rhythm.

Now with the victory I'm going to be able to plan my schedule. Kind of in the short-term I'm going to be playing next week, which I had planned on with my good friend Mackenzie Hughes. And after that I'll get into the PGA Championship, which will be awesome. I've never played in the PGA before. Never played at Bethpage, really excited for that opportunity. And to get into some of the invitational events.

Definitely be able to pick my schedule. To be honest, I haven't looked that far ahead, just things have been happening so fast, I've had quite a bit going on. I haven't really been able to sit down and think about what I want to do, what do I want to play. But I think after next week I'll maybe take a break and be able to sit back and look at the schedule and figure out what I want to do.

It will be nice to be able to play a few events in a row, kind of get into a rhythm. That's something I've always had success with. But being able to have the flexibility to have off weeks is also really important. I'm not exactly sure which events. I know I have my eye on a few more events, the World Golf Championship in the summer. Hopefully keep playing well. And play my way into the U.S. Open or Open Championship, we'll have to see, see what happens.

Q. Congratulations on Team RBC. I'm actually a member of Team Arby's, but it's kind of unofficial based on how often I dine there.

You've had enough experience for know you're exempt, you've been around the block a few times. What did you learn when you have been out here that's going to get you up to the next level? You've got another two and a half years of employment.

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, over the last, my rookie season last year, I was in the final group a few times. I learned a lot in how that felt, how it feels to be in contention. And I didn't have a lot of success. But the things I learned I was able to sort of put into play this season, the Sanderson Farms Championship in the fall, I played really well on Sunday. Same with the Sony Open in Hawaii, kind of in the mix and putting a good number up. Just got to be relaxed.

I felt like I was really relaxed in Texas at the Valero Open and comfortable in that position. That gives me a lot of confidence knowing that I'm going to put myself in the mix more times. I'm going to be comfortable there.

Also the fact that I'm returning to tournaments is really helpful in the preparation. An example, the Valero, on Monday qualified. I played the course the year before and was -- didn't have to wear myself out on Tuesday, Wednesday. Just got a quick look at the golf course, and I knew what to expect, come tournament time I knew what the conditions were going to be like and stuff like that.

Similar here, I just played nine holes today, nine in the Pro Am tomorrow, and I feel -- have a comfort level that's growing at each of the golf courses. So I think that's something that I'll be able to use and continue to grow in the future.

Q. Also, give me your most memorable shot that you played at the Masters last week, the one that sticks out?

COREY CONNERS: Most memorable shot, I would say first round my second shot on 15. 202 to the pin, hit a 6-iron and just right at the flag. Really solid shot, ended up seven or eight feet away and was able to

convert that for eagle. The 6-iron from the fairway was a really sweet feeling, iron shot. That's something I'll remember and hopefully get some crystal to make that memory a little better. First eagle at Augusta.

Q. I'm curious as a Canadian, if you watched the hockey last night. There's a bunch of guys from the PGA, and they're also RBC guys, too, most of them, I guess. Do you guys talk about that in the locker room? How does that go?

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, definitely, Mac Hughes and I, and Hearn are huge Leaf's fans. I watched the game, I'm staying in a house with Mackenzie Hughes. We were watching the game. And also Luke Taylor, I think the Leafs are growing on him, even though he's a West Coast, Vancouver guy. Awesome to see them get the victory. And the first thing I got here, we were talking about that, some of the caddies. Nick Taylor's caddie is a big Boston fan, I was giving him a few jabs. A bunch of Leaf fans out here. It's exciting to see them doing well and for them to have a chance. Hopefully they can make it through the series and I'll be able to go to a game.

Q. When was the last time you played three consecutive weeks on Tour?

COREY CONNERS: I guess probably back in the fall. I played at the Sanderson in Vegas, Monday qualifying at Myakoba and then RSM, four. I don't think last year I did more than four. I kind of learned that first year as a pro I played ten events in a row, at the end of it my game was struggling and thinking, I'll try not to do that again. I've got this week and next week will be five in a row. I'll be a little worn out by the end but I'm trying to enjoy it. And the game is really good, so I'm excited to keep playing.

Q. Would you say that you're relearning the routine or maybe learning it for not the first time?

COREY CONNERS: Definitely, it's been nice in the past I think on the Web.com Tour I got in a good routine of playing multiple weeks in a row, and I really liked that. You can learn things from week to week that you take and implement the following week. I played the Dominican and missed the cut. And the following week was San Antonio. And the things I learned from playing in the Dominican I used the following week. I hit a lot of great shots in the Dominican but was playing really conservatively. And working with my coach, I said I'm hitting the ball great I'm just not attacking the golf course. So the plan in San Antonio was to attack the pins. I'm hitting the ball awesome, so just trying to hit it close to the pin not just on the safe side of the green. And implemented that and obviously it worked out well. Just little things you learn week to week, it's nice to string a few events together.

Q. Talk about up the putting tip that Mackenzie gave you back in January. Are you going to play in the Wells Fargo?

A. Not sure with the Wells Fargo. But, yeah, the Sony Open the first two days I struck the ball really well and didn't putt very well. And Mac knows my game really well. We have very is similar games and he gave me a putting tip. I was really looking for something in my setup that would allow the putter to open up a little bit easier and he was able to provide me a little tip that I couldn't find on my own. And it felt really good.

I told him right then and there you're going to see me rocket go up the leaderboard this year. I shot two 64s on the weekend.

Technically, basically, just tried to soften my right elbow, get it a little closer to my side and that allowed me to open up putter nicely. And just release it naturally. And that worked really well. For some reason I decided to get away from that for a few weeks and the last few weeks I've been trying to do that again. It's working well, rolling the ball nicely.

EMILY TILLO: Corey, good luck this week, we appreciate your time. Thank you.

COREY CONNERS: Yeah, thanks very much.