

DEAN & DELUCA

Invitational

Tuesday, May 24, 2016

Colt Knost

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome Colt Knost into the interview room. Colt, first of all, welcome back to the Dean and DeLuca Invitational. This is your sixth start at the event, I know you struggled a little bit with your first four starts, but you figured it out last year, tied for 10th with three rounds of 66.

COLT KNOT: Yeah, this is one of my favorite events of the year. Obviously, being from not too far from here. Like you said, I struggled a little starting out here. I'm not sure why. I feel like it's a golf course I should play pretty well at. I figured some stuff out last year, and I'm excited where my game is at right now, and excited to get this week started.

THE MODERATOR: Speak of the state of your game, with the two top four finishes coming in, at THE PLAYERS Championship and last week at the Byron Nelson.

COLT KNOT: Yeah, just like I said, I've been playing pretty well all year. Just kind of had slow rounds here and there. Kind of been slow Thursdays the last couple weeks, honestly. It kept me from being up there with a chance to win.

But just riding a lot of confidence right now. I feel great about what I'm doing. I mean, this has been the most consistent year I've ever had. I think I've missed one cut so far this year. You know, just excited to keep giving myself these chances. Keep putting myself in there with a chance to win, and I think I should have a great chance this week.

THE MODERATOR: Before we open it up to questions, what is it about Colonial that really suits you so well?

COLT KNOT: I just love the old-school golf courses like this. It's a place where you can't overpower it. Kind of like Sawgrass where most of the field is playing from the same spots. I'll hit a lot of drivers here where a lot of guys hit a lot of irons and lot of fairway woods, but it puts a premium on accuracy, and I like my chances when it's like that.

Q. Colt, is it too early to say that your recent move to elevate your game is paying off?



COLT KNOT: I don't know. You know, I did it in the winter for that reason to see if I could probably be a little sharper come The West Coast Swing. You know, I don't know. I don't know if that's part of the reason or not. If it's not just me becoming a better player or what. But I would say it definitely hasn't hurt anything being out there and being able to practice year round and play with a lot of other guys on TOUR day-in and day-out. I think that kind of stuff just pushes you.

I played with Graham DeLaet and Kevin Chappell and those guys a lot, and I think we all push each other. I think when you play with better players, your game becomes better.

Q. Colt, how do you explain to people that you haven't won yet?

COLT KNOT: I don't know. Winning's very tough out here. I'm not sure some of the guys, I guess -- I don't know. I honestly thought the way I'm playing now would happen a lot earlier in my career, but it didn't. I think at every level, whether it be junior golf, college golf or professional golf, I've been a little bit of a slow starter and gotten better as the years go on, and that's kind of how I'm just taking this.

It took me a little bit to get comfortable out here, and you know, you've got to put yourself in the moment to be able to win, and the last couple weeks I've been close to being in there. But it's tough. I mean, the guys are so good. It's really hard to win a golf tournament out here if you have one bad round, and it seems like that's what I've been doing all year.

I know I'm good enough to win. I've won at every level except for this one, and I just think it's going to come eventually.

Q. When you're coming out of college, what kind of expectations did you have for your own career? And did you feel like you were going to just keep going on the way you were doing without needing kind of a reset like you had with the move?

COLT KNOT: Yeah, coming out of college I was confident that I would have a pretty big career early. I spent my first year on the Web Tour and won twice early and got out here, and honestly took everything for granted. Kind of thought I could cruise and have a great career and I'd get out here and I'd win early and

all that. It just didn't work out that way. I didn't put in the work I felt like I needed to, and I had to sit down myself down a few years ago and kind of rethink things if this was what I really wanted to do.

Because I know I have the game to play at the highest level, it's just whether or not I wanted to take the time and the effort to do it. And I had to kind of rethink things and get back to work and put golf as a priority. I think the last couple years the results are starting to show a little more.

Q. Was there ever a time when you thought well, maybe I need to go in a different direction with what I'm doing in my life?

COLT KNOT: No, not really. I mean, I never, after I went back to the Web Tour for the second time, I told myself I don't think I can do this anymore. It's just being at this level and then having to go back down to there, I mean, it's a great Tour, but it's just not where any of us want to be.

It's a big wake-up call when you go from out here playing for millions of dollars, to going down there and playing for not nearly as much, obviously.

But, no, I always know that I have the game to be out here and make a long career out of it, but I don't think I took it as seriously as I should have starting out. But that's definitely changed in the last few years.

Q. Last week you mentioned that you're staying at Jordan's place. Are you still there or staying closer to Fort Worth?

COLT KNOT: No, I'm over here in Fort Worth this week. Sorry.

Q. Follow-up question --

COLT KNOT: No, I voluntarily left.

Q. Did you take the TV with you?

COLT KNOT: No, I let him keep it.

Q. Did you all (Indiscernible) at all last week? With what was going on with his game, it seemed he was struggling and your game was definitely?

COLT KNOT: Yeah, we were on opposite waves, so we actually didn't see each other that much. He was, yeah, so we were opposite the first couple days. I saw him Saturday, and he just said he was struggling really bad with his golf swing. He said how bad he hit it Saturday, and I said, "How the hell did you shoot 3-under par then?"

Yeah, he was obviously frustrated. As he told you all, with his golf swing. But I'm sure he'll figure it out pretty quickly.

Q. You mentioned you like the old-school golf courses; what in particular about this layout catches your eye?

COLT KNOT: Like I said, you've got to shape the ball around here, and that's just something that's kind of lost in the new power game we have. It's so fun to play places with tree-lined doglegs where you actually have to hit a cut or a draw off the tee to hold the fairway. And like I said, you can't just step up and blow it 50 yards off line and have a shot here at Colonial. You start hitting off line, you're going to struggle quite a bit.

Q. Besides just the mental difference in your outlook now, are there any things physically that are causing you to play so much better this year and obviously the last two weeks?

COLT KNOT: No, I've put in a lot of work with Randy Smith on my golf swing trying to become more consistent and it has. I mean, my golf swing's never really been a big issue for me, I feel like. I think more of anything, it's just confidence for me out here.

You know, I've brought on Gabriel Hjertstedt almost a year and a half ago, I guess, for short game, and my numbers have obviously improved quite a bit there. He's been a big help. But both of them together. I mean, they've helped me so much I don't know. Like I said, I think more of my success right now is probably my mental outlook on things.

I really believe right now that I'm one of the best players each week when we tee it up, and I feel like I said, like a venue like Sawgrass, I just feel I can win there every year we tee it up. Same with a venue like this. These kind of golf courses are just, they put a premium on what I do really well. If my game's sharp coming in, I feel there is no reason I shouldn't have a chance to win.

Q. Did you consult any kind of sports psychologist or anything like that or just your own thing?

COLT KNOT: No, I know what they all say. I mean, no, it's just like I said, I just really decided to rededicate myself a couple years ago and I still like to have a good time. It's not like I've given up all the fun off the golf course. But I do my work first. I put that first.

I enjoy celebrating good weeks and bad weeks. That's always going to be there. It's just I don't do it as much as I used to. I like to have a good time, but I realize this is what I want to do for a living, and you can obviously make a very good living at doing it here. I want to make a very long career out of this, so I decided to put in the work and get back to it.

Q. Have you made any major changes with your

golf swing like back when you had some trouble with your game? Did you make any major changes?

COLT KNOT: No, no major changes. I would say my swing's gotten a little shorter over the last year or two. But, no, nothing. Just Randy and I with the help of Dean from Callaway. When I first got out here I was so caught up in distance of everything. As most guys that play my kind of game are. I mean, you go tee it up with Dustin Johnson, and he hits it 40, 50 by you, it's like how are you supposed to compete with this? It's tough.

I was constantly chasing distance. I got some very good advice from Dean and Randy that we're going to stick to what I'm good at and make those parts better and not worry about chasing the distance. And ever since I stopped worrying about that, and don't really care if I get it out there by them 50 yards, it's been a huge help. It's been a big relief. Because when I was first out here it was like I can't compete with these guys. They hit it 40, 50 by me, but now I know I can drive them crazy when I hit a hybrid inside their 8-iron.

Q. So did you change the amount of time you were practicing or have you just changed the routine in terms of your practice session?

COLT KNOT: No, I would say when I was in college there probably weren't many that worked as hard as I did. I was constantly at the golf course, doing stuff, trying to get better. Like I said, I took it for granted when I got out here. I wouldn't say I've put in more time. I've put in more quality time.

I mean, I do my work, I did it, and I'm out. There's definitely a focus and make a plan each day on my practice days of what I need to work on and I stick to it.

Q. (No microphone).

COLT KNOT: No, it's like I go to the golf course, tee it up and if I work, I work, if I don't, I don't. Right now, I know what I do, I have a plan and I'm sticking to it.

Q. Colt, where did that 63 at TPC Sawgrass, where does that rank for you in your best rounds?

COLT KNOT: The best ball striking round I think I've ever had, for sure. I mean, hitting 18 greens. I think I made one putt over ten feet. But it's definitely up there. I mean, as far as like obviously the conditions were kind of easy with it being soft and everything. But it's one of the top rounds I've ever played, for sure, and guaranteed best ball striking I've ever had.

Q. Was there anybody who ever gave you a kick in the butt about you need to buckle down and work a little harder?

COLT KNOT: I've had a lot of advice from a lot of

people. A few have stuck more than others, but, yeah, I mean, obviously me and Randy are very close, and he's always the guy I go to with things. He's obviously the reason I'm here.