



May 23, 2007



### The Ocean Course ~ Kiawah Island

| Hole #  | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | 8   | 9   | Out   | 10  | 11  | 12  | 13  | 14  | 15  | 16  | 17  | 18  | Out   | Total |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|-------|
| Yardage | 394 | 535 | 390 | 458 | 185 | 450 | 537 | 170 | 425 | 3,545 | 439 | 562 | 428 | 445 | 194 | 421 | 540 | 197 | 430 | 3,656 | 7,201 |
| Par     | 4   | 5   | 4   | 4   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 3   | 4   | 36    | 4   | 5   | 4   | 4   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 3   | 4   | 36    | 72    |
| Score   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |       |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |       |       |

### AN INTERVIEW WITH:

### MARK O'MEARA

KELLY ELBIN: Mark O'Meara, ladies and gentlemen. Competing in his first Senior PGA Championship. Mr. O'Meara is the winner of the 1998 *Masters* and *British Open*, a five time member of the *Ryder Cup*, U.S. *Ryder Cup* team, including the victorious team in 1991 here at the Ocean Course at Kiawah Island.

Mark, welcome back to Kiawah and I imagine that playing a couple of rounds now brought back some good memories.

MARK O'MEARA: It did. Thank you. It's nice to be back, needless to say. I was here about 2 years ago doing an outing for Goldman Sachs, but the golf course has changed a little bit from certainly from '91. But it's still one of the toughest tests you could ever want to play. And what makes it interesting is that the actual layout is the same, but the greens have been softened a little bit since '91. There's not quite as much slope in the greens. And some of the areas around the greens have been cleared out a little bit. And also the paspalum grass, which is a new surface out there on the golf course is a little bit different.

But overall, we were just speaking that when the wind is blowing like it is out there, it's a tough test. There's been times where it comes the other direction and it's interesting, it's like in that aspect it is a true links course because one day you can come out and hit a driver, 4-iron on the first hole and a 405 yard par-4 and next day it might be 3-wood and sand wedge or 3-wood and a

wedge. So, to me, that's kind of what golf's all about, to have change of the elements depict how a golf course is going to play.

This week, this course, if it, even if the wind doesn't blow, it's still challenging out there. If it doesn't blow this morning it should do reasonably well, but if the conditions are like this right out here, right now, I would imagine even par come Sunday afternoon would be a very good score.

KELLY ELBIN: Open it up for questions.

**Q. Looking back on '91 do you have any particular horror stories that stood out from those three days on this course?**

MARK O'MEARA: No, because I know I lost my individual match, but I remember Nick -- that Paul Azinger and I played Nick Faldo and David Gilford, pretty much shellacked them pretty good 7 & 6. So that was pretty good. Because Paul is such a feisty, fierce competitor, he was so fired up. And I'm kind of more laid back, you might say. But, no, it was nice to give them a pretty good drumming.

Then I certainly remember how difficult 17 played. Because I remember the horror stories that we saw there. We know what happened to Mark Calcavecchia. I was 1-down, 2-down, playing that hole and I hit it in the water, so my match was over. And it's just, there's no, the thing about the 17th hole and some of the other holes out there on this golf course is there's no real -- you really have to play the shot. There's no bail out. We didn't try to play safe, there's no real, there is no real safe place to play at Kiawah.

So, and then the aspect of standing around the 18th green with our captain, Dave Stockton and he was -- certainly *Payne Stewart*

and all the guys, and wondering what it must be like to be standing over a six and a half to eight foot putt that Bernhard Langer had, that after three days of competition that it was going to boil down to if he makes that putt Europe wins, if he misses that putt, the United States wins.

I know he missed it and I was kind of happy that we won, but I have a tremendous amount of respect for Bernhard Langer and I felt difficult, you know, and sad for him because you wouldn't want anybody to be in that position.

To his credit he came back and won in Europe the next week, which goes to show you how tough and solid mentally he is. It's not really that he didn't lose it, it's just that it came down to that element.

So we were proud that we won. I thought that Captain Stockton did a great job. I know it's been a tough go for the **Ryder Cup** over the last few years or last few matches, but -- and I know a lot was in the print about the War on the Shore and this and that.

And all I can tell you is I played on five **Ryder Cup** teams, and two winning teams, two losing teams and one tying team. And the unfortunate thing for us is that it seems like the two winning teams that I was a member of was here at Kiawah, and the other one was at **Brookline**. And we were kind of like the ugly Americans. I'm not saying -- I don't think that the actual players were; and were there some incidents on the course? Sure there probably was. But I've been in **European**, it's the same over there. It's no different. So when we lose over there we lose.

But it's a great sporting event, the **Ryder Cup** is. I know everybody looks forward to it and I certainly hope next time around that with a new selection process that the **PGA of America** has put into place, that it will be a little bit more competitive and the United States side will give them a good fight.

**Q. Getting back to the wind on this golf course. Do you think the wind this week will limit the players who could win and/or should everybody not fall into that?**

MARK O'MEARA: Well, I would say you have to look at players that have done well on windy golf courses. Players that like to play in the wind. To me if you were going to ask me what do I think it takes to win on a course like this, it takes a lot of some perseverance. You got to have some perseverance out there. You got to drive the ball well, keep the ball in play.

And then I think a good short game and certainly putting. Any Major Championship kind of

comes down to having a good short game and putting. Because you're going to miss some greens out there. So you're going to have to rely on not trying to short side yourself, give -- you're going to miss, give yourself the best opportunity to get the ball up-and-down. And then once again, putt well.

So players who -- I feel like over my career I've been a fairly decent wind player. Winning five times at **Pebble Beach**, winning the Hawaiian Open, winning the **British Open**, having success in Europe. So I like it when it's blowing and challenging out there.

So I would say this: I've played in six **Champions Tour** events or six Senior events so far, and what I told the media then and I'll tell the media today is that the guys on the **Champions Tour** can really play. There's some very fine players. The depth of field might not be as great as the **PGA TOUR**, but some of the scoring is quite remarkable.

So I just hope that I can be one of those guys that has a chance come this Sunday, to just play well enough -- if I swing the way I have at home and when I practiced, make a few putts, then and just get myself in position to have a chance, that's what I would like to try to do.

KELLY ELBIN: Mark is currently 12th on the Money List on the **Champions Tour**.

MARK O'MEARA: I haven't played in a month, so I've had some time off. I'll probably play about 17 events on the **Champions Tour**, on 16 to 17, probably 17 on the **Champions Tour**, 21 to 22 globally, and I still play overseas once in awhile. And I still play the Major Championships, the **Masters** and the **British Open** for awhile until I feel like my game is not competitive enough any more.

But I think that this week playing here this is as tough a test as you would ever want to play. On the scorecard it's 7200, I imagine when we played the **Ryder Cup** it was similar yardage. It's not like the **PGA of America** is pushing the tees way up or anything like that. It's a stern test of golf out there. And you're going to have to rely on hitting solid golf shots. Really solid golf shots. Because the wind is going to have a big impact if it continues to blow like it probably will for the first couple days.

**Q. You haven't played since the Legends tournament, what have you been doing?**

MARK O'MEARA: My last month I've been -- my main home is in Orlando, Florida, but I

also have a place in Park City, Utah. And my kids are gravitating to the west. My daughter is a sophomore at USC at Southern California and my son is graduating this Saturday and he's going off to school at University of Southern California, Irvine. So we spend a lot of time out west.

So I would say the last two and a half, three weeks I've been in Park City and I've been rolling my drift boat down the Green River fishing with a couple buddies. And I was up on the south fork of the Snake River outside of Idaho Falls fly fishing for trout. And that's where my passion is.

And after this event I'm going to play next week, try to qualify for the U.S. Open. If I make it, fine. If not then I'll be back out there fly fishing, camping out. And at 50 years of age I know I still compete, but I've been doing this for 27 years, so I have a lot of other things that I like to do. I just, I don't, I don't fancy myself playing every single week. I would be miserable if I did. I want to do other things in my life.

And I'm also pushing my golf course design business. I've done three courses, O'Meara Design Courses. And I've been in the process of hiring a friend of mine to come run that business for me. And try to promote that, get that started out there a little bit more. If I could do one, two, something like that courses a year somewhere around the world, I would really enjoy that. Because the courses that I've done have gotten good reviews. So why not. And I enjoy doing it. So those are some other avenues that I'm looking at.

**Q. You made a reference earlier to the paspalum greens. What makes it different from some of the other surfaces that you have seen on TOUR?**

MARK O'MEARA: I think what makes paspalum different is it's a pretty unique, it's a relatively newer type grass. This will be the first time that I've actually putted on paspalum greens in competition. It's a different type of blade, a little bit thicker blade, but it doesn't have much grain out there. Which is really unique.

In other words, most Bermuda greens or most thick bladed grasses tend to get grainy, where the grain would lay over, usually with either one of two things, with the slope of the green, with would depict how the green would go or the way the water runs off the green.

Well here this paspalum you don't really see any grain in the greens. Because it sticks kind of fairly straight up. But they roll, they're really in pretty nice shape and they roll pretty true. I think it's just going to come to matter of having the right

speed and really focusing on -- that's probably the No. 1 thing in putting is speed more than anything else. They're not lightning fast, but yet downwind and down slope they could be pretty tricky. So you better -- the better you can get your ball up on top of the grass and rolling, the better off you're going to putt.

**Fred Funk** has won in Hawaii earlier this year on paspalum on the **Champions Tour** and then he won the TOUR event down in Mexico. That was on paspalum. So is Freddie playing here?

KELLY ELBIN: He's playing **Colonial**.

MARK O'MEARA: He's playing **Colonial**.

So that's good.

(Laughter) I like that. Let him play **Colonial**. It's one less guy we got to worry about. But they have a great field here this week. It is my first chance to play in a Senior Major Championship event. I feel like if I swing well and can play the way I know I can play, then hopefully I'll have a good week.

KELLY ELBIN: Questions?

MARK O'MEARA: You guys are so easy -- and gals. Thank you. You guys have a great week. I hope I get to talk to you later in the week.

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