

US Open Championship 2016

Wednesday, June 15, 2016

Angel Cabrera

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon. Welcome again to the 2016 U.S. Open Championship at Oakmont Country Club. It's our pleasure to welcome this afternoon the 2007 Oakmont U.S. Open Champion Angel Cabrera. Angel, welcome to Oakmont.

Can you give us some quick emotions on being back where you won the U.S. Open title nine years ago.

ANGEL CABRERA: Well, it's been very emotional this week with all the memories from back in '07. So I've been waiting several years to actually be back here at this moment, to be back and play Oakmont again. Certainly, very emotional to be back.

THE MODERATOR: Oakmont is known as a difficult U.S. Open venue. How many of the players have reached out to you for advice on how to play Oakmont this week?

ANGEL CABRERA: Well, not very many, but it's very difficult to give advice on this golf course. It's all about putting the ball in the fairway.

Q. Were there any differences on the setup on the golf course between '07 and today?

ANGEL CABRERA: Besides a couple of bunkers on the 18th hole, the course is pretty much the same, playing really tough, like it was playing back in '07.

Q. Angel, which club is most important this week, and why is it the most important one?

ANGEL CABRERA: The most important shot is going to be the one off the tee certainly because, if you play from the fairway, it's going to make it a lot easier. If you don't hit fairways, it's very difficult to hit greens.

Q. Angel, obviously, a lot of very big names historically have won here. What does it mean to you, now that it's been a few years, to reflect on being part of that club?

ANGEL CABRERA: Certainly makes me really proud to be part of that very exclusive group of players that have won here. But let's not forget that this is the U.S. Open and the U.S. Open is bigger than any other thing, whether it's played here or there. So just the fact that I have won the U.S. Open gives me a lot of pride.

Q. Two of your three PGA Tour wins, Angel, have come in Majors. Is there something about these

sort of bigger events, bigger tournaments that brings out the best in your game?

ANGEL CABRERA: Certainly, it's already been proved that for some reason I just play better at Majors than regular tournaments. There's something about the Majors that gets a lot of focus from me, a lot of the best of me, and that's been basically the case for all of my golfing career.

Q. We hear that U.S. Opens test the players mentally a lot. Was there, during 2007, was there anything you did mentally to kind of forgive yourself for the mistakes and kind of to overcome the tough mental test that this course gets you?

ANGEL CABRERA: I think the game of golf is a mental game. Of course, not only for the U.S. Open, but if I have to speak about the 2007 U.S. Open, I was hitting the ball so well off the tee, and I made some crucial putts that week. That was the mental part of the game that was better than any other week.

Q. How is your game coming into the U.S. Open? And have you been working on something in particular lately coming into this U.S. Open?

ANGEL CABRERA: Well, it's been a very tough season for me. I haven't been playing well. And I've been working really, really hard in all of the areas, different areas of my game. Not only putting, but every single aspect of the game.

So I know that coming into a U.S. Open is going to take the best of me, and I'm not in the best position to actually play right now, but I hope just not to suffer too much this week.

Q. There's rain in the forecast for the next two days here. At a place like Oakmont, what sort of an impact would a wet course have? Would it make things a little bit faster in terms of how far the ball rolls or goes? Does it make the greens slower?

ANGEL CABRERA: If it rains a bit, it's going to be better for all the players because that's going to soften the greens quite a bit and it's going to make it a little bit easier on the golfers. So let's hope for a bit of rain so it's going to take it easy on us.

Q. When you won back in 2007, if I'm not mistaken, the Pittsburgh fans adored you, golf fans adored you because of your blue collar mentality, which is



Pittsburgh has a blue collar mentality. Did you feel the love from the fans back then, and did that encourage you?

ANGEL CABRERA: Well, I certainly felt a lot of warmth from the fans, from the golf fans here from Pittsburgh. It was a special week, and I don't know if it was for who I am, but certainly it felt well, and I was really happy to feel the warmth of the people from Pittsburgh.

Q. Are you staying in the same place you did last time you were here? Have you done anything else similar?

ANGEL CABRERA: No. Different place.

THE MODERATOR: Speaking of history, you will be playing the first two rounds with two U.S. Open champions, Jim Furyk and Ernie Els, who also won here at Oakmont. Can you talk a little bit about what you expect that pairing to be like?

ANGEL CABRERA: Well, when I actually saw the tee times, I was very happy to see the grouping that I was supposed to play with, two U.S. Open champions, two great champions, and two great guys with whom I have played so much golf with in my career.

Certainly, it's going to be fun to play with them and share these first two rounds. It's going to be really special to share it with these two great guys.

Q. I would like to know if you are going to play the course differently as in 2007, or are you planning any change?

ANGEL CABRERA: Well, it's difficult to say a strategy for this golf course because it's such a tough golf course that sometimes you hit a good shot and you end up with a bogey. So you just have to try to hit the fairways and try to hit the greens on the right side of the greens so you make it easier for yourself. That would be my strategy basically, but it's difficult to say that there is any strategy at all.

THE MODERATOR: Angel, thank you so much for joining us this afternoon. We wish you well throughout the week at Oakmont.