

**April 25, 2016**



## US OPEN MEDIA DAY

ADAM BARR: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

Welcome to Media Day for the 116th U.S. Open at Oakmont. We're delighted to have you all here. My name is Adam Barr, Senior Director of Communications for the USGA and a hometown boy and really delighted to be back. We appreciate your time today and we know you're busy people, so I would like to help out by providing you with these future hockey scores. Penguins 3, Capitals 1. Penguins 2, Capitals 1. Penguins 6, Capitals nothing. Capitals forfeit. So, you can get straight to those stories now. But on to the golf.

To open today's program, please welcome the 64th President of the United States Golf Association from Saint Simons Island, Georgia and a graduate of West Virginia University, Diana Murphy.

(Applause.)

DIANA MURPHY: Good morning. Thank you, Adam. I did graduate from WVU a few years ago and I would say that Pitt has all the bragging rights when it comes to football versus WVU. During that period of time certainly.

But we really were struck by what a wonderful sports town Pittsburgh is and it has been a real treat to watch this week and congratulations to the Penguins for going on to the second round of the Stanley Cup playoffs. We hope that we have the opportunity of celebrating the finals here real close to the U.S. Open.

We're certainly thrilled to be at Oakmont again for the 116th U.S. Open Championship. It's just amazing that we have the opportunity of having this fabulous championship for a record ninth time at Oakmont. We have never done that before, and we certainly feel like we're coming home here.

That really is quite a historic record for the USGA. We also like to think that our championships, and particularly the U.S. Open, make history every year. And we thought it might be fun to start this program this morning with a very brief video of some of the historic moments that we may all remember from the U.S. Open.

(Video played.)

DIANA MURPHY: Gives you a little bit of a chill. It is the greatest game. We certainly believe that and we think the U.S. Open is the greatest championship. So needless to say we're quite honored again to be here and to celebrate the history that we have had with Oakmont Country Club. We have been good friends since 1919 when we held our first of 15 USGA championships at this lovely course. It doesn't happen without a lot of support, certainly from the members of Oakmont and the community at large. You all have really made us feel like we're coming home again and that doesn't happen all the time, but it certainly has this year. And thank you. I think that we really are so excited to have this championship in a few more weeks, and I think you will all enjoy the course later today. You'll see that Oakmont is slowly but surely rounding into form for the 116th U.S. Open. But again we couldn't do any of this without the support of a variety of people and if you will allow me a couple of moments I would like to acknowledge some of our local champions.

There's tremendous amount of planning that goes into what we think of as almost a military operation now, to get this championship ready for the thousands of people and the millions of viewers that will be watching it in just a few weeks. And we wanted to just make sure that we had an opportunity to give a shout out to particularly the key people that have been helping us plan this for several years.

Certainly in addition to the mayor of Pittsburgh and the city of Pittsburgh we would like to recognize some other guests that I believe are

with us today and if you would, please stand and hold your applause until the end. The first is the commander of the 911th air wing, Colonel Jeff Van Dootingh. Colonel, are you here?

(Applause.)

DIANA MURPHY: Great. Thank you. The Oakmont Borough Manager, Lisa Jensen. The Plum Borough Manager, Michael Thomas. Certainly the President of Oakmont, Ed Stack. And I would also like to mention all of our partners and talent with our broadcast partner Fox Sports and particularly Eric Shanks, the President CEO and executive producer of Fox Sports and their whole team, many of whom are on the course now. So again, thank you all.

(Applause.)

DIANA MURPHY: In addition to working with this dedicated group of individuals and all of the staff, we really wanted to make sure that all of you recognize that our intent with this global championship is to provide golf's ultimate test on what we think is one of golf's grandest stages. We really couldn't do it without, not just the people that I've mentioned and their support staff, but also the volunteers and I think many of you know, we are a volunteer organization. We have over 5,000 volunteers, that every year plan their vacation time around helping us run this wonderful championship and without them, we couldn't put all the pieces of the U.S. Open together.

In addition to that, we have a very talented USGA team that the staff under the leadership of Mike Davis is just terrific and there are a few people that I would really like to recognize right now that ultimately have the responsibility for the U.S. Open. That starts with Mike Butz our Senior Managing Director of Open Championships and Association Relationships. Mike? He's in the back there.

Reg Jones, our managing director of the U.S. Open Championships and certainly his team. Reg.

And someone who probably doesn't need an introduction to many of you in this area is Charlie Howe whose been living here for quite some time as our championship manager for the 2016 U.S. Open. Charlie?

And then finally, it gives me great pride to say one of our Executive Committee members, Bill Fallon is a long-time member of Oakmont, he's been on our USGA Executive Committee for five years and he chairs our Equipment Standards Committee. Bill?

(Applause.)

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DIANA MURPHY: I do hope you'll have a chance to meet some of the other senior executives that are here today and throughout the next few weeks. Again, it's a very special team of very talented executives that I know all of us at the USGA Executive Committee are quite honored and privileged to have the chance to work with. We also want to thank all of you, the media in particular, you've got a wonderful job and in conveying both the history of this wonderful championship and then also enjoying playing today, but then really helping us tell the story of the next dramatic U.S. Open, which we don't know who is going to win, but we know it's going to be quite a competitive and wonderful opportunity and I hope that you take the time to really enjoy this course today and I hope you don't have too many 3-putts.

Our next speaker is a long-time friend, certainly, of the USGA, who holds a special passion for our championships and in particular the U.S. Open Championship. He also has a bit of an allegiance to this wonderful hockey team in town. It's now my pleasure to introduce Oakmont's co-general manager of the 116th U.S. Open Championship. Robbie Hoffman.

(Applause.)

ROBBIE HOFMANN: I'll start by saying I'm delighted there are steps over there. Diana, thank you very much for your kind words. My name is Robert Hofmann and on behalf of my fellow co-chairman, Bob Wagner, we would like to welcome all of you to a beautiful, glorious, magnificent day at Oakmont Country Club.

To say the least, our membership is ecstatic about holding another USGA championship and in particular our ninth U.S. Open in history.

All of us embrace the championship legacy of our founding family, the Fownes family and we're very thankful for the leadership of Diana Murphy and Mike Davis as we move forward towards crowning our next champion.

At this time, I think it's appropriate to recognize a few people in the audience. First of all Reg Jones, my adopted son, Charlie Howe, Charlie is here. And the entire USGA staff who have worked diligently the past two years to make sure that our preparations are on schedule.

I would also like to acknowledge the great work and dedication of our Oakmont staff members Bob Ford, our director of golf. And I spoke with

Bob earlier today and this is Bob's ninth national championship he's participated in.

Devin Gee, head golf pro professional. Paul Mroz general manager. And last but not certainly least John Zimmers, our very talented golf course superintendent.

So we're confident that Oakmont Country Club will be ready to once again test the finest players in the world and provide an exceptional stage for all of our guests during championship week.

So today, please enjoy your round of golf on our golf course and as we always say to our very special guests, who have never experienced Oakmont's exceptional greens, may all of your putts be uphill today.

(Laughter.) Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

DIANA MURPHY: Thank you, Robbie. And again we really do want to convey our thanks to all of the board members and the membership at Oakmont. We are partners and couldn't do this without the support and really look forward to getting the championship started.

Our next speaker is Stu Francis who is in his second year on the Executive Committee and his first year as our Championship Chairman. He's played in qualifying rounds for the U.S. Open and he's also played in three U.S. Amateurs, as well as two NCAA championships. His amateur record is quite enviable and we're delighted to have his expertise in supporting our championships. From Hillsborough, California, Stu Francis.

STUART FRANCIS: Thanks for that very nice introduction Diana. The USGA has been conducting championships since 1895. They are the building blocks of our whole association and they're a source of pride for us as we travel the country crowning new champions and inspiring future generations of golfers.

Individuals who win USGA championships become part of golf history and they also become an important part of USGA family, and we truly celebrate, honor, and treasure these relationships. For example, three players who have won USGA championships at Oakmont Country Club have actual rooms named for them at the USGA Museum. You'll recognize the names, Bob Jones, Ben Hogan, Jack Nicklaus.

In addition, Pennsylvania's favorite son and beloved by all, three-time USGA champion Arnold Palmer is celebrated as the name sake of the USGA's Center For Golf History.

Beyond the elite competitors that have played in the USGA championships and have actual rooms named, the USGA relies on champions of many kinds. Both in terms of golf as well as service to the game. We have three great local Pittsburgh champions with us today and I'm honored to introduce them to you. I would also say, few cities have the kind of golf stature that you're going to hear from this afternoon.

Our first is Nathan Smith, a familiar name to all of you and all the people around golf. Nathan is far from done in his quest to continue to add to his USGA resume. He's a four-time USGA Mid-Am champion and he and Todd White won the inaugural U.S. Amateur Four-Ball last year at Olympic Club. He's a three-time member of the Walker Cup Team representing the United States. He's a member of the Western Pennsylvania Golf Association Golf Hall of Fame and I know he's proud to call Pittsburgh home as well. Additionally, he is attempting to qualify for the U.S. Open here at Oakmont. Please welcome Nathan Smith.

(Applause.)

NATHAN SMITH: Wow, thank you. Look at all the cameras here. Geez. I'm honored and humbled to be here today. Everything I am in the game of golf is because of the USGA. I can't thank them enough. I'm indebted to them. The places I've been able to travel with my family and friends, the people I've met through these great championships, it's been priceless over the years. It's been so much fun. One of the funnest experiences I had was playing on a Walker Cup Team, three actually, and there's no better feeling than I'll probably ever have in my life of the honor of representing your country in those Walker Cups.

We managed to win a few and I think what was fun about that is that the time passes and years go by and you realize the matches happen so quick on Saturday and Sunday, but what you don't see is a lot of the guys bonding a week or two leading up to it. Close bonds are formed for life.

As the years go on, I still keep in touch with all those guys and that's what's so special about it. I think a few of those guys have a great chance maybe Sunday night of lifting the trophy here at Oakmont. We'll see what happens with that. But some of them were texting me and asking about the course and there's a lot going on out there. They better bring their putter. So it's pretty tough.

Another great experience I have had is

competing in the U.S. Mid-Am through the years, meeting a lot of guys my age, forging lifetime friendships with a lot of guys and having your name associated being a USGA champion is for life; it is one of the greatest feelings and on top of that, getting an invitation to play in the Masters then on top of that, which I mean that's just something I never would dream I would be able to do is play Augusta National or play in the Masters. So that was something that I will never forget. So I can't thank the USGA enough. I never thought I could get out of the game of golf what I did and I can't thank them enough for that.

As far as the U.S. Open, it's been tough. I've tried for 20 some years to qualify, I've been close a lot, I've never made it. Last time the U.S. Open was here in 2007 I was an alternate in the local and the USGA called me on a Friday before the Monday sectional and they said we got a spot in the sectional, do you want to go? And I said absolutely, I'm in. They said, the only catch is it's in Surrey, England. Okay. So I thought about it for a second and being that it was here, I just said the heck with it, my dad and I took a red-eye over Saturday night, to Surrey England. 36 holes, two different courses. He walked the one course, I walked the other, we put our heads together. You probably know how that turned out. Not great. We were a little jet lagged, but it was a lot of fun. I've had a lot of close calls, but who knows, maybe this is the year.

But being from Pittsburgh I'm so excited that it's here. This course will not let you down. It will be a great championship out here. I'm happy for Oakmont, I'm happy for the community of Oakmont and Pittsburgh, and also want to thank Oakmont for everything through the years, the people here, the members, everybody from Bob Ford, Devin, the membership, everybody's been so good to me through the years. So as a Pittsburgh native, I'm honored to have it here and I can't thank the USGA enough for everything they have done through the years and ongoing. So, thank you.

(Applause.)

STUART FRANCIS: Thanks, Nathan. It's great to have those perspectives from someone with such a respected set of accomplishments in golf.

Our next guest is Carol Semple Thompson. Her record is truly extraordinary. A seven-time USGA champion, yes, seven. She's played in 124 USGA championships. She's earned the USGA's highest accolade, the Bob Jones Award. And she's a member of the World

Golf Hall of Fame. She truly understands what it takes to be a champion and she represents the game superbly.

She's also holds the record for the most USA appearances in a Curtis Cup with 12 and she's been a winning player and a two-time winning captain in the Curtis Cup as well.

Her family also has very strong USGA roots. Her father served on the Executive Committee and is a past USGA president, her mother served on the Women's Committee, and Carol herself has served in this seat on the Executive Committee. She's just a great ambassador for golf. Please welcome Carol Semple Thompson.

(Applause.)

CAROL SEMPLE THOMPSON: Thank you, Stu, that was a very nice introduction. First, I want to say that I am blessed to have grown up as a USGA brat. I grew up watching both of my parents competing in USGA championships and then giving their time back to do Committee work. My mother was on the Women's Committee for 15 years and then on the Museum and Library Committee for another 20 years, I think. And my father ended up as president of the USGA. I just saw them doing all this, so giving back to the USGA and to golf certainly came naturally for me.

I've had a great thrill in winning national championships, I won't lie, I loved winning every single one of those seven championships. Even the four seniors when I was old.

But the next logical step was to volunteer for the game. And giving back to the game has given a lot to me. I enjoy working with young players, to show them my excitement about the game. I don't know how to teach them, but I can at least be enthusiastic.

But I'm not alone in volunteering. So many people have given their time. I was just at Rules school here in Pittsburgh a couple of weeks ago and there are so many people who are interested in giving back to the game, helping with Rules officiating, I have to say officiating was not my forte. Whenever I was a walking official for the U.S. Open on my own I was in a panic mode for the next four to four and a half hours that someone was going to ask me a question about Rules.

So that was not my favorite thing. But there's so many ways to be involved. We'll see all these thousands of volunteers here this coming U.S. Open and there are people who literally take

their vacation to come and help with this great game. I'm very proud to see the U.S. Open come to Oakmont again, particularly because we know that golf actually started here in Western Pennsylvania in Latrobe with Arnold Palmer.

So it's just a natural. But nine Opens, I'm proud also that Oakmont has held two Women's Opens. Six years ago I was Chairman of the Women's Open and I really learned what was involved in running a major championship. I was just one tiny little cog in a huge wheel. But I also want to thank Oakmont for everything they have done for the game of golf. For me, it's a wonderful spot. Of course it's a great golf course, but I think the membership is terrific also.

I congratulate Oakmont and its membership on the sacrifice of time to have this championship here. But I'm looking forward to another great championship and I hope you all are too. I know we'll have a great champion come the end of the week. Thank you.

(Applause.)

STUART FRANCIS: Thank you, Carol. Great words from truly a great competitor who gives back to the game, obviously, in so many ways.

Our next guest is Terry Teasdale. Our good friends and partners in golf are represented by Terry Teasdale of the Western Pennsylvania Golf Association. He and his staff do stellar work at the local and regional level and bring the work and mission of the USGA to life to all the players and qualifiers as well as local tournaments, etc.

We would be remiss if we did not mention their outstanding work at all the qualifiers around the country and all the state regional golf associations who help us, specifically here we have three local qualifiers at Butler Country Club, the Country Club at Nevillewood and Scotch Valley Country Club and Pennsylvania in general has a whole series of local and sectional qualifiers. I would like to turn it over now to Terry Teasdale.

(Applause.)

TERRY TEASDALE: Thank you, Mr. Francis. I would like to thank the USGA for inviting me to speak to all of you today right here in the greater Pittsburgh area. This is certainly a very special place with a lengthy and storied history of championship golf.

The WPGA's relationship with Oakmont is also lengthy. We have been partners in serving the game of golf since the club was elected into membership by our Executive Committee way back in 1903. We have had a long and prosperous

relationship with the USGA since we were founded by a group of five clubs back in 1899. This relationship has evolved much over this time and into the solid partnership that it is today, as our common mission is to serve the game.

The USGA is not only the ruling body for golf, but also a partner in the Western Pennsylvania region. This year with the assistance of our many knowledgeable volunteers, we'll be conducting 17 qualifying rounds for 10 different USGA championships.

Qualifying starts with the three locals that have been mentioned earlier for the U.S. Open, which will be held in a couple of weeks. And added to our schedule this year are qualifying rounds for the U.S. Girls Junior and the U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur. We are excited to conduct both of these for the first time.

As an association, we also administer the USGA Handicap System in our region and we work together with the USGA to make sure the procedures of the handicap manual are followed and interpreted correctly by both our members and our member clubs. Collectively, we all work together to make handicapping function in this region.

And that leads us to the backbone of the USGA Handicap System. The USGA Course Rating System. We can't produce an accurate Handicap Index without precise USGA Course and Slope Ratings. Our staff and volunteers have been well trained by the USGA in the Course Rating System. Our goal is to make sure the ratings we issue are an accurate representation of the relative difficulty of the golf course on a day-to-day basis.

As an association we rate probably about 35 golf courses per year.

Since the U.S. Open is being held within our region, we had an additional local qualifying round this year. Participation increases every time the USGA the U.S. Open comes to Oakmont which is why we had to add the additional qualifying site for this year. Once the spring arrives, we finalize all the details with the club manager and superintendent to make sure the qualifying round is run to the highest of standards.

Most of the time everything runs seamlessly. Sometimes the weather won't cooperate. But it's all part of our commitment to serving the game.

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the WPGA and our member clubs and each of our members the unique opportunity that is at the core of our mission and programming. That is to associate and interact with one another to strengthen the game of golf in our region.

Every visit we make or meeting we attend there's always discussion about the U.S. Open and about Oakmont Country Club.

There are four players in this region who have won the U.S. Open. Ed Furgol, Sam Parks, Arnold Palmer and Lew Worsham. They're all from Western Pennsylvania. And also four have won our open, the West Penn Open Championship.

Back in 2014 at one of the qualifying rounds we conducted, a local professional was the oldest player to advance through local qualifying to sectional qualifying. That man was Bob Ford. The long-time golf professional at Oakmont.

There's one thing I can say about qualifying for the U.S. Open, from the perspective of a regional golf association: Media coverage is magnified. It says a lot about the incredible history and interest in our national championship, having the U.S. Open in our region magnifies this interest and this interest is good for everyone involved in golf. And that is good for the game of golf. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

STUART FRANCIS: Great insight on all the work you and your colleagues do and certainly this year with the U.S. Open here, this is a terrific support of the USGA and the game of golf.

Thank you very much.

Now, to present our comments on Oakmont, a really iconic golf course that is superbly suited to the U.S. Open, I'm honored to introduce the USGA Executive Director and CEO, Mike Davis.

(Applause.)

MIKE DAVIS: It's often said that the city of Pittsburgh is a tough sports town. After all, you don't win six Super Bowls by being weak. For more than a century, the USGA has wanted the U.S. Open to be a tough test, a rigorous test. The most complete test in golf.

The U.S. Open's played on the country's grandest golf courses. The U.S. Open is an examination of shot making, it's an examination of strategy and course management, and it's a strategy of nerves. It's an examination of nerves.

That's the U.S. Open.

Oakmont more than meets all that criteria. The golf course is indeed a great golf course. It's got a storied championship pedigree and I don't

think it's a stretch and we don't think it's a stretch to say that really it meets the gold standard of a rigorous championship test.

From a historical standpoint you've already heard that this is its ninth U.S. Open. But it's also hosted five United States Amateur Championships, two U.S. Women's Open Championships, three PGA Championships, three Intercollegiate Championships, and really countless Pennsylvania Golf Association and West Penn Golf Association Championships as well.

If you're a member of Oakmont Country Club, you have got championship golf in your DNA. I've certainly not seen a golf course around this country that is more focused on championships than Oakmont Country Club.

It's often said that the USGA could host an Open literally on a moment's notice and while I'm not sure that's exactly correct with all the grandstands and tents that you see outside, I really do believe this is the one golf course in the United States that, if we had to make a call one to two weeks before the U.S. Open and say, we're in a pinch, can you host the national Open Championship, this place could do it.

And it could do it because it has such a championship pedigree. The golf course seemingly is always in championship condition and certainly tests all aspect of the game.

It's also been said that and maybe somewhat in jest -- I hope so in jest -- when the USGA comes to town, Oakmont must cut the rough, must slow down the greens, and utilize easier hole locations. I'm not so sure that that's not a little bit of a stretch, but you get the drift here. This place loves tough championship setups.

You know, great courses really do have a knack of producing great drama with championships and ultimately producing great champions. And if you look at Oakmont Country Club and its history, it's a who's who of who has won here. You've got Gene Sarazen who won a PGA Championship, the great Bob Jones won the U.S. Amateur here, Tommy Armour, Sam Snead, Ben Hogan, Jack Nicklaus, Johnny Miller, Ernie Els, Patty Sheehan and most recently certainly you had Paula Creamer and Angel Cabrera win Opens. Folks, those aren't one-hit wonders, these are champion golfers. I think what's also interesting and very telling about a great golf course is that while you may not see great names always win, it's amazing great golf courses seem to bring the

cream to the top.

I just mentioned a who's who of whose won here, but look at who has been a runner-up. You have got Sam Snead, who was runner-up to Hogan in the '53 U.S. Open. Arnold Palmer in the '62 Open with Jack Nicklaus. You've got Tom Watson who twice has been runner-up, once in the '78 PGA and the other the '83 Open. You've got Jerry Pate, Colin Montgomerie, Juli Inkster and most notably or, excuse me, most recently Tiger Woods and Suzann Pettersen.

So I think that Oakmont again and again delivers great drama and certainly produces great championships and great champions.

I think Oakmont has a fascinating history and certainly culture. It was conceived of and designed by Henry C. Fownes in 1903. Henry really was like the champions here at Oakmont. He was a one-hit wonder with respect to the architecture of the golf course. And what's interesting is, three of the most famous golf courses, really top-10 golf courses in this country were one-hit wonders.

You look over at Merion with Hugh Wilson and then just close to Merion, Pine Valley with George Crump. That is amazing, but that was back in a time when a lot of architects didn't do it for a living. They did it for the love of the game. I think that Henry, who was known as HC and his son William, who was known as WC, it's a fascinating background, but those two ruled over this club for roughly four decades.

And they were both accomplished players. In fact WC, who was the son, won the 1910 United States Amateur Championship, was the first playing captain of the first USA Walker Cup Team in 1922 and then went on to be the President of the USGA in 1926 and '27.

But what was interesting about both HC and WC, is that they went to the penal school of golf course design. They loved a hard setup. And for nearly four decades, they lived it. So when Oakmont first opened in the fall of 1904, it had less than a hundred bunkers. Well by the time those two got done there were more than 300 bunkers and it was interesting when you read back through history, if there were places that members would hit a ball and either HC or WC didn't think they got sufficient penalty, guess what? A bunker ended up there in short notice.

Or if a member happened to carry a bunker that shouldn't have been carried, a bunker got moved.

What was fascinating, they weren't just bunkers either. When you go back, really you go back to the early days of Oakmont, the bunkers used to be furrowed. Why were they furrowed? Well this was done because you're in heavy clay soils here in Western Pennsylvania, and they couldn't dig those big pot bunkers like you see in the links land of Scotland, England and Ireland, so they just decided, you know what, we can't dig down, but we're going to do something to make these bunkers penal.

So they put in these crevices, these furrows into the bunkers with these heavy rakes where a ball would inevitably sit down two, three inches and you had to hit a great shot just to get out of the bunker.

Well, it was interesting and as you move forward, if you fast forward to the 1953 U.S. Open, that Ben Hogan won, there was a battle between Oakmont and the USGA. And our organization didn't think that furrows should be part of the game and certainly Oakmont did think they should be a part of the game, so we compromised and the two to three inch furrows became one inch furrows. But it still had the players griping and I think there's a couple great quotes that WC made years ago and he said, in terms of difficulty and why there should be a furrowing, he said a shot poorly played should be a shot irrevocably lost.

And I genuinely think there's some members here at Oakmont that still have that mindset. It's a great culture.

WC also went on to say about those complaining about Oakmont being too tough, and I quote, "Let the clumsy, the spineless, the alibi artists stand aside." So Diana and Stu, you know maybe we need to remember that line this June, although maybe you two should remember that line this June.

STUART FRANCIS: We'll be right behind you when you get done.

MIKE DAVIS: Anyway, if Oakmont has a signature, it has to be these lightning fast greens. And listen, this isn't a recent phenomenon. These greens have been like this really from day one. In fact if you go back the 1935 U.S. Open that was played here the players were complaining incessantly about the greens being too fast. That was 1935. In fact some of them almost boycotted and didn't want to play.

And what was interesting, in 1935, we didn't have anyway to measure speed of greens. I

think HC Fownes, if you read history, said, well, I know the greens are right at Oakmont if I drop a ball at the back of the second green and it rolls the whole way off the green, then I know we have got them right.

But at that 1935 U.S. Open, there was a gentleman named Ed Stimpson. He was at Oakmont. He was a Harvard engineer and a big golfer who decided he thought the greens were too fast, but we needed a way to measure. And that was the birth of the USGA Stimpmeter. Go back to 1935. All right here at Oakmont.

So the greens themselves really are a wonderful and very different type of from an architectural standpoint, set of greens. Some of them slope right to left, some left to right, some back to front and there's some that slope, in fact three greens here, that slope front to back. These greens have plateaus in them with valleys going through them.

The point is they are extremely fast, but they're extremely strategic. You are always playing into the greens or playing around the greens or putting on it, it's as Robbie Hofmann said, you want to be below the hole. Which may mean that you want to be on the left side of the hole location, right side, short of it or even past the hole location in the cases of those greens that cant away from you. But they really are what makes Oakmont Oakmont.

And I think that as far as Oakmont the golf course goes, it's a very balanced test. This is not an overly long U.S. Open, by U.S. Open standards. But there's a nice blend between short holes, long holes.

But what is interesting is when you study the routing and architecture of Oakmont, the holes actually are very straight. 16 of the 18 holes play really straight away.

And what Fownes did was really lay the golf course on those hills, used the topography to really make an incredibly exciting, but challenging golf course.

So you get very, very few flat lies at Oakmont. And in addition to the bunkers, which I've already talked about, there are drainage ditches that run through this golf course. In fact, 10 holes are impacted by those drainage ditches that have been here from day one.

What's interesting is they're all marked as water hazards but it's unique because, unless we get a gully washer, there will not be water in those. I think from an architectural, but also a strategic standpoint, it's fascinating, because when a player

gets his ball in a ditch, he's going to have a chance to play out. Most water hazards that's not the case, but it's not always a sure thing coming out.

So I think that certainly the ditches play a marvelous part of the architecture here. Then just because of the rolling land, you have a lot of blind and semi blind shots, which, if you go back more than a century ago, they didn't use bulldozers to move it, so they just laid the golf course on the land.

But I think that element of being blind or semi blind really makes a golfer from a strategic standpoint have to commit to a shot.

We have a nice mixture of par-4 holes. Five of the par-4s are actually less than 400 yards. The only other U.S. Open course that's like that is Merion, which also has five par-4s that are under 400 yards.

The par-5s there are two of them, the 4th and 12th holes. They are wonderful holes. But I would say with respect to the 12th hole, I personally don't think there's a more strategic par-5 in all of U.S. Open golf. It is, from the time you're getting on the tee, whichever tee we end up using for that given day, you have to think your way through and you have to execute because of bunkers, cross bunkers, the ditch, a green that slopes front to back, and it's just a wonderful golf hole.

In terms of par-3s, you get four very different holes architecturally and you even have the 8th hole, which in 2007 we played one day 300 yards in length from the where the tee markers are set to the flagstick and I recall a few of us were out for practice rounds in 2007 and Paul Goydos who at that point was a veteran on the PGA Tour and really a kind of a clever guy with a good sense of, dry sense of humor said, gee, Mike, this is really a neat hole. It's just fabulous. Congratulations.

He goes, in my two decades of playing the PGA Tour we have never had a hole where you could have a long drive contest and closest to the hole on the same hole. So nice going.

So as a fan, if you are a fan of golf course architecture, a tough challenging test and drama, you've come to the right place at Oakmont.

For the roughly 10,000 players who are going to try to qualify for this championship, what are they going to expect in terms of golf course setup in June? A lot of sameness. And I say that because we are playing it the same yardage as 2007. Every hole is exactly the same yardage as

2007.

The same fairway widths and contours as we played in 2007. In fact, these are the same fairway widths and contours the members here at Oakmont have been playing for years and years. They're the same grass heights from 2007. The same green speeds as 2007. The same general hole locations as 2007. Same bunkering and the same wonderful course conditioning that John Zimmers and his staff have done.

So the point here, ladies and gentlemen, is we can come to town and essentially take Oakmont as is. It's that great a test of golf and we simply can't do that other places we go.

Will there be anything different in 2007 versus this year? A few minor things. One of the things we saw in 2007 is that these very penal bunkers, particularly the ones in the drive zones, we saw some rough grass the last go round between fairway and the bunker and we have eliminated that, so the balls actually roll down into the bunker instead of getting stuck on a very steep hillside. We think that's more the way Fownes would have wanted the architecture to be.

There's also, and this was done by Oakmont itself, which is wonderful, but not only have you seen over the last couple decades, the removal of trees, which get this back to the way the Fownes designed it.

This was pasture land. When they bought it, they wanted it to resemble a links-like course. Not only has the club done that, but they have done a few restoration things architecturally.

First one being the 6th hole, which is a par-3. They have put back the back right portion of that green, which didn't exist for, I'm not sure how many years. So it will give us a good strategic hole location back there.

And in addition, they did remove two bunkers short left of the 12th green that got put in that really in some ways compromised the architecture of the hole.

But the biggest change is apt to be what we're going to get weather-wise. If you look back to 2007, we got some rain Wednesday night beforehand, which made Thursday a little soft. But then Friday, Saturday, and Sunday we had a dry Oakmont and it was also, for a couple of those days, a breezy Oakmont. So Oakmont played very tough in 2007.

But the bottom line is I think we believe that in 2007 and for that matter every time we have had a championship at Oakmont, it's performed beautifully.

So, in summary, the USGA wants the U.S. Open to be a tough, rigorous test. We want it to be the ultimate test in golf. We believe this national treasure here at Oakmont really will identify that week's greatest golfer and it certainly is going to, as I said, to be successful here at Oakmont. You have to execute and in terms of shot making, you've got to think strategically and manage yourself around this course, and you've got to be able to handle your nerves.

The player who does those three things the best is going to make history and ultimately be crowned the 116th United States Open champion.

So, with that, I'm going to turn it back to Adam and we would be pleased to take some questions.

(Applause.)

ADAM BARR: Thank you, Mike. Great insights. We will take your questions now and before you ask, raise your hand and either Brian or Ash Lee will bring you a microphone. So we can make sure that everybody who is listening elsewhere will hear the questions. First one?

**Q. You kind of answered one part of the question, which is how much of a blueprint from 2007 will you use this year and when you go to places like Chambers Bay, next year Erin Hills, you're learning about the place, here you don't have a lot to learn, you know what it is. How much, how does that affect your job, how much easier does it make it for you?**

MIKE DAVIS: It's wonderful, Jerry. You're right. We, when I say we, it is the collective we of Oakmont itself and USGA. We're able to look back on all championships played here, whether it's ours or others, and really know how holes play when it gets dry, how holes play when it's soft, and I will tell you that I'm not sure I can think of a course that plays more different than Oakmont in terms of a soft Oakmont and a dry Oakmont.

Because these greens are so fast, it's not just the putting, it's when you hit to one of these greens, it's where a ball feeds to, particularly when it's firm.

So, I would not want to try to setup Oakmont if we didn't have some experience. This is, this really is on the cutting edge of a test of golf and it's so helpful to be able to have that past and see how it plays.

**Q. Terry Teasdale mentioned course**

**ratings and such. Just out of curiosity if you had to estimate the course rating and the slope of Oakmont the week of the U.S. Open, what kind of ballpark numbers could you come up with?**

MIKE DAVIS: Great question. I think in the past the Course Rating has been somewhere in the low 80s, so I think the average golfer, even if it's not setup for a U.S. Open, has no idea how exacting this golf course is. But we can get you that answer, but I believe it's around 80, 81, 82 Course Rating for particularly when it's set up for the U.S. Open.

**Q. No. 12, you talked about strategic play on that hole. What options do you have in terms of how many tees you use, and how far back will it go on one two, how many days you decide to go all the way back?**

MIKE DAVIS: So, yeah, on the 12th hole, what's interesting is if you go out, when you go out today and look at it, we actually utilize the back teeing ground on number 10 and we flip flopped each day. So one day we'll use the back teeing ground for 10 and then we'll go up to the penultimate tee for 10 the next day and we'll move from the penultimate tee the first day on 12 to the back, because it keeps on the exact same angle on both holes.

And so on the 12th hole, you can play that either at 667 yards or 632 yards. Now the entire hole plays downhill. So it's not as long as that yardage says. But what's fascinating is that it really is two completely different holes from those tees. From the back tee, you've got two bunkers that are out there that the left bunker which is -- the far bunker really is in play from both the up tee and the back tee, but from the back tee, you really have a hard time carrying the first bunker on the right.

The reason I bring that up is that where you aim off the tee from those two tees really is different for today's tour-level player. From the up tee, which is 632 yards, most of the players if they hit two good shots can get it down or right around the green in two. From the back tee it takes a really long hitter and some firm conditions.

But I think that what's interesting about 12 at Oakmont is it's not only a challenging drive, and if you have played here you know that green, it slopes front to back and just trying to keep it on the green is hard.

But the second shot is so strategic, because you've got a ditch on the right, you got a ditch on the left, you got cross bunkering, and it's

just you know you can play it so many different ways but I can promise you, it's probably that hole and 14 at Pebble Beach are the two toughest par-5s we play for U.S. Opens for very different reasons.

And if a player could play that four rounds in 20 strokes, he would be elated, because it is a hard hole.

That just doesn't happen on par-5s on the PGA Tour. They usually step up to a par-5 and they're automatically thinking birdie. And not here at Oakmont's 12th.

**Q. You talk about the tradition and obviously the setup here being something that has a continuity throughout the club hosting the championships. How telling though is it for you to try to tinker with things and do you find yourself not wanting to maybe change a little bit of how you would strategically layout some of the holes because of the history or is it a help or a hindrance at times?**

MIKE DAVIS: Yeah, that's an interesting question. When we were here in 2007 what was interesting, just because the players were hitting the ball further in 2007 than they were in 1994 when many of the players were still using persimmons.

And three of the par-4s here at Oakmont, the 2nd hole, the 14th hole and the 17th hole, really did become drivable par-4s. And that's become kind of an in-vogue thing, but back in 2007 it wasn't an in-vogue thing and we pushed that a little bit to say, hey, these holes are so good architecturally that you can play them different ways, why not dangle that carrot, introduce risk/reward some, and we did, and it worked out beautifully.

So I don't think there's much tinkering that we need to do. This golf course is so good that, you know, listen, we will monitor the weather very closely because sometimes with a soft Oakmont versus a firm Oakmont, you really do want to set it up slightly different, because there's certain things you just can't do with a firm Oakmont, you need to be very conservative. It's almost where the balls funnel onto greens. And if it's soft you can maybe be a little more aggressive.

**Q. Could you describe how you're planning to do the 8th hole, as far as variety of lengths and everything that weekend, or during**

### the four rounds?

MIKE DAVIS: So on the 8th hole, what we did in 2007, I don't remember the exact order, but we played it rounds one and round two once up, which is the 252 tee, it's hard to think that it's 252 yards is the up tee, but once on the back tee which is 288 yards. And that really worked out well because we could pick hole locations.

And I think that, as we said in 2007, before everybody thinks we have lost our marbles making a par-3 300 yards, when you go back and you read historically about what HC and WC Fownes wanted, they designed that hole to be a driver, 3-wood hole. The only way to get it to that way nowadays is to get something back there.

And what's so neat about that design is, the 8th is one of the largest greens at Oakmont and candidly it's one of the flatter greens there. And you can land, I think there's a cross bunker there the Sahara bunker that if you fly it, you've got about 43 yards to bounce your ball, before you even get to the green, where it's nice and firm, a slight downhill slope. So even if you were playing it 300 yards, you might be able to hit it 250, 260 in the air and have it bounce up there. So it's great strategy, but it's nonetheless a tough hole.

**Q. We all know for U.S. Opens you've had your fair share of complaints from players and stuff. But does that tend to be limited when you come to Oakmont, knowing that the players know how hard this golf course is anyway? Does that quell a little bit or do you just get them all, regardless?**

MIKE DAVIS: I hope so. You know what's interesting is, there's a long, long history of, as I said to you earlier, literally over a century. If you go back, read about some of the U.S. Opens in the late 1800s, Myopia Hunt Club, it's been a tough test from day one.

And we kind of joke internally that if we get all compliments from the players, we have probably done something wrong. And that what want is tough, stern conditions, but we want good shots to be rewarded, we want mediocre shots to have mediocre results, and poor shots, we want them to be penalized.

So, when you talk to some of our past U.S. Open champions, Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, Curtis Strange, they love the fact that other players were complaining. Because they felt like, you know what, that player's complaining, okay, I don't have to worry about him. That player, I don't have to worry about him. So, that is part of

the DNA of a U.S. Open and of USGA championships.

So I don't think any of us try -- and there's lots of us involved in this golf course setup, it's not just me, and I don't think any of us take it personal, it's just we try to do our best, try to anticipate what Mother Nature is going to give us, but it's the U.S. Open.

**Q. For any of you up there, how much do you miss the old Hulton Bridge and did you happen to watch the video of its demolition in February and have any reaction to it?**

DIANA MURPHY: I don't miss it at all. I think we'll be very pleased to know that there won't be too many people feeling somewhat claustrophobic. So I really do commend everybody that's been involved in helping us transport and move thousands of people that week.

MIKE DAVIS: In addition to the Hulton Bridge, you think about the bridges going across the Allegheny and you go back to early U.S. Opens, Oakmont Country Club didn't have any bridges. You had to go out on Hulton Road and cross that way. And I can remember back even in at the '94 U.S. Open, there was only one bridge, that pretty narrow bridge, that as you're playing down 1 it's the closest bridge to you, and before the 2007 U.S. Open a member of Oakmont kindly built us a second wider bridge and it's from an operational standpoint, much better now.

**Q. We see a lot of courses now being built to try and emulate the links style courses. This course obviously has been around a long time. There's some links elements, but there's some key differences. To you, is this the sort of quintessential American test that we have?**

MIKE DAVIS: Well, I think the reason people inherently love links-like golf or links golf is because it's such a fascinating thing to play golf when you have to think about what happens when your ball lands. Where's it going to bounce to, where is it going to roll to. Can I bounce my ball on a green? If I'm landing the ball on the green where is it going to go? And the softer you get, you take away that element.

Here at Oakmont, as I said, when Fownes found this property, it was just pasture land. It was a couple hundred years, a couple hundred acres of pasture land.

And it was interesting, when the club

started to plant, this club started to plant trees in 1960 and then we saw what it was like the whole way up through the mid 1990, it really became much more of a parkland look. I do think that it took away some of the strategy of the golf course that Fownes designed. It certainly took away some of the wind that you would encounter.

But I think for us, when we always talk about firm fast conditions at a USGA championship, it's that element of trying to say, we want the player to think about what happens when his ball lands on the ground. And we want him to be able to play him or her different types of shots. So, when it's aerial golf, you're just taking away a wonderful element and a strategic element of the game.

ADAM BARR: An update my staff crack research staff has handed me most recent rating and slope, 77.8 is the Course Rating and the Slope is 148. So, yes, your game travels well out here.

MIKE DAVIS: Yeah, but that's, just to clarify, that's not the U.S. Open rating. That would be what you're normally playing, so.

ADAM BARR: That's right.

MIKE DAVIS: So it's up in the 80s somewhere.

ADAM BARR: U.S. Open more so. Next, please.

**Q. Mike, a year now in with Fox Sports, what are your thoughts about Fox as a partner and presenting the U.S. Open and all of your USGA championships.**

DIANA MURPHY: Let me comment on that. Thank you for the question. We're delighted to have Fox as our partner. We have really had a wonderful experience with them in year one, recognizing it was their first year, and I know how excited they are to get out there beginning next month with our Four-Ball at Winged Foot and I think many of them are on the course today having a great time with the course and also doing some video.

But I think that their innovation, their technology, their enthusiasm and energy in bringing golf to the world has been remarkable. And we're looking forward to continuing that partnership for many years.

ADAM BARR: I want to take just one more and then leave time for everyone to have lunch and get ready for golf. Over here.

**Q. What would you, what would concern you or give you, keep you up at night**

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**more, another 63 out here or two 65s in the same day?**

MIKE DAVIS: That's an interesting question. You know, if somebody's going to shoot 63s and 65, I can assure you it's going to be on a soft Oakmont. The golf course just won't give up that -- particularly the 63 -- on a dry Oakmont.

But, from our standpoint, contrary to what a lot of people think, I don't think anybody from our side gets overly upset if somebody shoots a low score. Let us not forget, I mean credit where credit's due, I think I'm right on this fact, when Johnny Miller in 1973 shot that 63, I think there were only four players that even broke 70 that day. And I believe there was one 65 and maybe a couple 69s.

The point is, that was a great round. And you know what, when somebody does that, you applaud that. And so if this is a soft Oakmont, of course we're going to see some scoring, because they're going to be able to throw the balls at the flagsticks and not really have to worry much about where it's going it feed to.

In other words, it lessens some of this great architecture.

But nobody's losing sleep, I would say this, a few of us might lose some sleep if we do something with the setup that compromises this great golf course where you say, oh, boy, now all of a sudden great shots weren't being rewarded, that's what keeps you up at night. But we can't control Mother Nature and it's an outdoor sport, so I guess that is how I would answer that question.

ADAM BARR: All right. I want to thank you all for your questions and I know Mike has a few last words he wants to say and then I will have some really quick housekeeping items and then we can get on to the afternoon part of the program.

MIKE DAVIS: Well, real quick, just a few things. I guess, No. 1, to Oakmont and its board, thank you for having us. It's not just the ninth U.S. Open, but what you do for our other championships, but almost more importantly, what you do for the game of golf. And this championship will in fact inspire people of all levels. So, thank you to all the board members for continually having us back. I know Ed Stack, the President, couldn't be here today, but Ed has been tremendously supportive of the USGA and everything we're doing.

And to Robbie Hofmann, to Bob Wagner, you're long-time friends, we couldn't be, we just

couldn't be better to work with as co-general chairmen.

And then I'll also say that there are so many people that make this U.S. Open happen. I mean, the thousands of volunteers that were mentioned earlier, the members giving their club, the township, the city, so on, this just can't happen with everybody wanting it to happen, but there's two people I did want to single out, for slightly different reasons. One is Bob Ford. And I think Bob is somewhere in the back. Yeah, there's Bob.

(Applause.)

MIKE DAVIS: Bob's been here at Oakmont since 1975. He became the head golf professional in 1979. We all know about Bob Ford and Bob, and in so many ways, if you were going to create a blueprint on how you become a golf professional, you would be that blueprint and it's interesting, I went back and checked a little bit, Bob's played in many championships, multiple PGA Championships, U.S. Open Championships, but he played in 1983 and I think what's remarkable about this is, he tied for 26th, beat a lot of great players that year. But what's interesting is he won \$4464.67.

But the thing Bob also did was, he was running the merchandise that week. Now, I mean, when I look at it now, I'm like, how can you possibly play in the National Open and do that? But Bob, I suspect you probably made more off the course than you did on the course that week. But thank you for all your support over the years.

The other one is John Zimmers, John's been the long time golf course superintendent here. We worked with John very closely for the 2003 U.S. Amateur and 2007 U.S. Open and 2010 Women's Open. And, John, you're as good as anybody in the business. The condition in April that you got this golf course now is just terrific and you're a wonderful person that we enjoy working with and thank you for all the efforts you've truly elevated this golf course over the years, so thank you.

(Applause.)

ADAM BARR: Couple of quick housekeeping items and then on to the fun. Usopen.com, the home for all things U.S. Open information and coverage is live today. So use it. A lot of great information on there. We hope it will help you with your coverage. Photos with the U.S. Open trophy and interviews with our speakers today and other USGA representatives and Oakmont people are also available now. See a communications staffer for help.



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A transcript of today's program will be available a little bit later this afternoon.

And please see a member of the communications staff if you have any questions about media service or operations at the U.S. Open proper.

We have a new tool, an on-line media center, which you can access through [usga.org](http://usga.org), our year round web site. Go to the bottom of the page, click on media. That's good if you're off site, it's good if you're here, and it's late at night and you've already left the media center and you need a transcript or some information. So make use of that.

We look forward to working with you all at the U.S. Open. Tomorrow here at Oakmont we're having a know before you go session which will get into the nitty gritty of traffic and getting around and all the things that local spectators and folks in your profession will want to know. That is between nine and 11 a.m. tomorrow here at Oakmont.

Thank you again for making the time today and for your attention. We really look forward to working with you over the next few weeks.