

U.S. Amateur Championship

Friday, August 21, 2015

Kenta Konishi

Press Conference



PETE KOWALSKI: We'd like to welcome our fourth semifinalist, Kenta Konishi from Japan with a 1-up victory over Matthew Perrine in the quarterfinals and advancement into the semifinals of the U.S. Amateur.

Kenta, congratulations, first of all, on getting to the semifinals. Do you consider this the biggest accomplishment in your golf career.

KENTA KONISHI: This is the biggest tournament in my life and I think I'm playing really good this week.

Q. What made him decide to enter the U.S. Amateur field, and can you talk a little bit about your experience in Japan? Have you worked with anybody specifically? Have you played with any professionals? There's a discussion about Hideki Matsuyama; can you explain how you got hooked up with that coach?

KENTA KONISHI: So the first question, one of my close friends, he knew about this tournament. He says this tournament, this U.S. Amateur, is always played the same condition, close -- difficult conditions as U.S. Open. So I wanted to try and I wanted to play in this tournament. I was thinking to play this tournament about three years ago.

Q. Just the connection with Hideki Matsuyama and Hideki's coach and is that your coach and how long have you been working with him?

KENTA KONISHI: So I'm going to the same school as Hideki, and when I was a freshman, he already started playing on the professional tour. So I didn't get in touch with him so often. But when he comes back to Japan, we are going to play together. He's kind of a big role model, so I want to play at the tournament like him.

Q. What school is it?

KENTA KONISHI: Tohoku Fukushi University. So that one is the biggest golf school in Japan.

PETE KOWALSKI: You played at Karuizawa for Japan in the World Amateur in 2014; right? You represented your country there, and now you have a chance to represent your country and possibly be the first Japanese player to win the U.S. Amateur. Is there any kind of pressure difference?

KENTA KONISHI: So I don't feel any pressure, but only I can focus on one tournament, one match. So I want

to just focus in on a match tomorrow and do my best.

PETE KOWALSKI: Have you heard from people back in Japan, support, whether it's text messages or phone calls, anybody prominent have you heard from?

KENTA KONISHI: I got some messages from my friends at university. Yeah, I want to play good to reply to their expectation.

Q. What you describe as being the strengths of your game?

KENTA KONISHI: No, nothing special. I play all around equally. So that one, I think that is my strength; I can do everything well.

PETE KOWALSKI: Do you know anything about your opponent, Derek Bard?

KENTA KONISHI: Sorry, I don't know at all. So it doesn't matter whoever I'm going to be playing with.

PETE KOWALSKI: The U.S. Amateur is a very physically fatiguing golf event. How do you feel as you've played this much golf over the course of the week; do you feel tired or do you feel good.

KENTA KONISHI: So my trainer is traveling with me, so we are conditioning after the tournament. So it's no problem to play more matches.

PETE KOWALSKI: And this is always an important question for someone who comes to the United States: Have you found good places to eat here near Olympia Fields?

KENTA KONISHI: I found a Japanese restaurant along here, so I like going there. And also, I tried some American steak a couple times. But if I eat it every day, it's too much.

PETE KOWALSKI: What will you do tonight, Japanese restaurant?

KENTA KONISHI: Maybe. (Laughter).

PETE KOWALSKI: Very good. Congratulations. Thank you.