

U.S. Senior Open

Press Conference

Wednesday August 10, 2016

Jack Nicklaus



THE MODERATOR: Ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure to welcome 18-time Major champion and eight-time Senior Major winner, Jack Nicklaus into the Media Center.

Jack has won eight USGA Championships, the 1959 and 1961 U.S. Amateur, the 1962, '67, '72, and '80 U.S. Open, and the 1991 and '93 U.S. Senior Open, and he is the honorary chairman of this year's Senior Open here at Scioto Country Club.

Jack, you grew up here in Upper Arlington, and played some of your first golf here at Scioto. How did you get into the game of golf?

JACK NICKLAUS: I got into the game of golf, my dad broke his ankle, and he had three operations. The doctor told him to take up something, and he had to walk, and he played golf as a kid, so he took up golf.

We were living on the campus of Ohio State, and he decided that, well, if he's going to play golf, he had to move out someplace where he was close to a golf course. So he did. And he opened up a drug store in Lane Avenue Shopping Center, which is not very far from here, and he took up golf and took me along to carry the bag, and that's how I got started.

After, carrying the bag and hitting a few chip shots and things like that, he said, would you like to learn how to play? That was the year Jack Grout came here. Jack Grout came here in 1950. And in 1950, I was 10 years old.

THE MODERATOR: And there's a plaque out here on the driving range where you, Jack Nicklaus, hit your first golf ball?

JACK NICKLAUS: It was exactly right there. Pretty close. It wasn't far from there.

THE MODERATOR: You took lessons from Jack Grout. You made your first hole-in-one here. A course record of 66 when you were 15 years old. What are some of the other memories, thinking back with perspective, that you remember from coming here as a kid at Scioto?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, Scioto shaped my game as far as what the game of golf is for me. If you guys go out

and observe the golf course, you'll find out that all the out of bounds on this golf course is on the right. So I don't think that I would end up aiming the ball out of bounds and trying to hook it away from. It seems to me you would aim for the center of the golf course and then cut it. That's how I learned to play left to right, because that's what the golf course demanded that you play. So it was a left-to-right golf course, I thought, anyway.

And I was given the opportunity to play it. I would come -- they just dedicated a park over here that I walked through as a kid. I lived about, oh, probably 300, 300 to 400 yards from the golf course, and I used to walk down through this park to come down here, and through a couple houses to the 4th tee.

And I'd play the 4th hole, tee shot at 5, usually play nine in and go to the clubhouse. We had to get there before 8:00 because juniors had to play before 8:00. So I'd get there and I'd go play 18 holes in the morning and come in, and we'd have lunch and hit some balls in the afternoon. Then when 4:00 rolled around, when juniors could play in the afternoon, we went back out at 4:00. So I spent a lot of time here not only -- you know, obviously with Jack Grout, but obviously playing the game.

As I said, left to right is sort of how I learned to play this golf course, and that's how I basically shaped my game for life.

THE MODERATOR: And back in 2007, you redesigned the course, working a little bit with Mike Hurdzan as well. What were some of the design features you were either trying to restore or introduce to the course?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, there's no restoration. The golf course was a golf course that's totally different than I grew up on. I grew up on an Donald Ross golf course, and it was an old style Donald Ross golf course of small greens, pretty flat. A couple of them had a couple of tiers in them. It was a little sort of just peanut bunkers, peanut-shaped bunkers, but the golf course was tired.

Billy Yeager was the fellow who was doing it, was the greens chairman at the club, and Billy said, who are the best architects? And I said, well, Dick Wilson has

probably got the best reputation today, and that was in the early '60s.

Now, Dick came here, and I didn't know Dick was on his last legs at the time, and he ended up basically having the front nine turned over to Von Hagge, and the back nine was Joe Lee, the two guys that worked for him. And the two nines ended up being very different. The front nine was smallish greens with a lot of slope on them, deep bunkers. The back nine were very large, relatively flat greens.

Still a good golf course, but it wasn't as good as what they started with. And time went on. Probably, I don't know, 15 years ago I'm getting -- maybe 12 years ago, whatever it was that the club engaged Mike Hurdzan. And Mike came in and did a lot of bunkers and did a lot of things to the golf course.

And they were getting ready to start on the greens, and some friends of mine that I grew up said, Jack, they're redoing Scioto. Why are you not involved? I said, well, I haven't been asked. They said, well, if they ask you, would you get involved? I said, I'd be delighted to. Are you kidding me? That's where I grew up.

So Greg Wolf came to me and some of the guys that I grew up with that were members here, and they were all delighted that I would get involved. So, basically, I was respectful of what Mike had done and tried to keep the bunkering pretty much what it was. We changed a couple of little things, but not that much. But I did have the opportunity to really do the greens.

I was a little bit in my bumpy phase of life at that time, so we got a little pitch of the greens and a few different looking bumps here and there, but not excessive. So I think the golf course turned out to be quite nice.

My goal was to try to get the front nine to have some larger greens and tone them down a little bit, and the back nine was to reduce the size of the greens and get a little more movement in them so that we'd get a golf course that looked like it matched.

And I think that the golf course matches pretty well right now. I think it's a really nice golf course. It's one I think everybody I've talked to -- I've talked to quite a few of the players. They love it. They said, this is a place you could play every day, and that's a nice compliment.

The one thing that we finally got done that Wilson put in here at the 8th hole was a par 5, which was a wonderful par 5 when I grew up. And we came down, and it was an area that flooded a lot. They decided to put a lake down there. Now, why in the world they put a moat around a green, I don't know, but they put a

moat around the green, and that moat was there for about 50 years. And it was ugly from day one, and it was ugly when they took it out. It did not bear any resemblance to what this golf course should be or how it played. It was way out of place.

I finally convinced the membership to take the moat out, and I think it's a really nice par 4, par 5. I don't know what you're playing it this week. Are you playing it as a 4 or a 5?

Q. 4.

JACK NICKLAUS: Playing a little shorter. Long 4. How long are they playing it, at 470, 480? 490? Seniors? Okay. But it's downhill. It's downhill.

But anyway, it plays as a really nice par 5 now for its membership. Par 4 for the tournament. Sits on the water, moat's gone, have a bailout to the right or you can run the ball into the green. I think it plays quite nicely.

Those are the things I contributed to the golf course, and I'm very proud to have grown up here because Scioto's always had a great reputation.

When I started in 1950 when I was 10 years old, the PGA Championship was here in 1950, and Jack Grout, I remember him taking me through the locker room and getting autographs of Sam Snead and Lloyd Mangrum and Bob Hamilton, Skip Alexander, guys that were playing in that time.

I'll never forget Lloyd Mangrum until the day I die. Lloyd Mangrum was playing cards in the locker room. He had a scotch beside him and a cigarette hanging out of his mouth. Jack Grout took me to him, and he looks up and goes, what do you want, kid? As only Lloyd could do. Anyway, I said, I'd like to have your autograph Mr. Mangrum. So signed my autograph. I got to know Lloyd pretty well. He wasn't that gruff guy that he portrayed himself to be. He was a nice guy.

But anyway, that was the year that I started, Jack Grout came here and the PGA was here. So all of it was part of my development of really becoming a golfer and getting into the game.

THE MODERATOR: And then you were just 10 years old and since have played hundreds of rounds, I would guess, here at Scioto. For the 156 competitors starting the championship tomorrow, what piece of advice or couple pieces of advice would you have for them?

JACK NICKLAUS: I haven't played it in ages. Did I play it after we opened it, Greg? Once?

Q. Two years ago.

JACK NICKLAUS: That's probably the last time I played it in the last 20. I just don't play golf anymore. I came down and played a couple of years ago, and I thought it was quite nice.

I think golf courses, it's the same routing that Ross did, but it's a golf course that's always required a little bit of patience, a little bit of back-off here when you need to back off. You don't need a driver on every hole. What length are you playing it at?

THE MODERATOR: Is it 72?

Q. 7,129.

JACK NICKLAUS: That's a good length. It was probably around 6,950 when I grew up on it. So it's about 100 yards longer, I suppose, or 150.

I don't know really what to tell somebody. I think the golf course pretty much tells you what to do. I'd avoid bunkers if I were anybody. Bunkers are deep, tough bunkers, and this should guide you around the course.

I would also tell you how it bounces on the right, and I'd play the inner part of the golf course, which is what I've done since I was 10 years old.

THE MODERATOR: Good advice. Also, we have a group here from the First Tee and LPGA Juniors Golf. I don't know if they have any questions to lead it off.

Q. What was it like when you were inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame?

JACK NICKLAUS: That's so long ago, I don't remember. It was about 40-some years ago. It was a hot, sweltering day in Pinehurst, and there was about 20 of us who were inducted that day. It was the start of the Hall of Fame at Pinehurst, '74, '73.

THE MODERATOR: '74.

JACK NICKLAUS: You know, it's always nice to be inducted into a Hall of Fame of any kind. That was the first one we had that was really recognized in the game of golf.

Q. How old were you when you first started playing golf?

JACK NICKLAUS: Ten. When I was 10 years old, 1950. I was a late bloomer. In those days, I was early, but today I'm late.

Q. What was the hardest course you played?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, the one I was playing at the time I always say is the hardest. But the hardest course we played on tour is probably -- in a tournament setting, I always thought was Carnoustie. I thought

Carnoustie was an awfully difficult golf course. We played some golf courses that maybe were tougher to score on, but they were just bad golf courses, and I didn't pay much attention to it.

What I called good golf courses, I think Carnoustie was a very good golf course and probably the most difficult good course we played.

Q. Do you ever crack under pressure when you played golf when there were people in the stands?

JACK NICKLAUS: People in the stands?

THE MODERATOR: If there was a big crowd.

JACK NICKLAUS: You mean with the crowds?

Q. Yes.

JACK NICKLAUS: I never even knew they were there. You get so used to that. When you start to play golf and people -- first of all, you've got a gallery of your mom and dad, and then you get a gallery of maybe your cousins will show up. Then you've got a few other people that come along and somebody else you're playing with's mom and dad.

Then all of a sudden, you've got a few more that come along, and pretty soon you start playing in front of people. You just get used to it. You just don't pay any attention to it.

I never really thought much about people. Did I ever crack up on a golf course? I cracked up every day and every time I played because you have to go out, and somebody says, well, do you choke? I said, everybody chokes to a certain degree. It's just to what degree do you choke and how do you handle it.

If someone is putting the pressure on you to play well, it puts you in a position where you start to have problems. You might blame it on the gallery. You know, my dad very early on came out and watched me, and I said, dad, you make me nervous. He said, well, you're going to be nervous then because I'm not going to hide behind a tree and I'm going to be here a long time so you may as well get used to. So that ended that story. So I ended with that.

But I think that part of learning how to play golf, part of learning how to handle what goes on is learning how to play with people, learning how to play when you're coming down the stretch, learning how to be able to be successful and how do you manage yourself. And, of course, how you manage yourself will be how you manage your game.

Q. Jack, you talked about how this course, this place, Scioto, shaped your shot or shaped your

game. How did it shape you as a person? The people you came across, maybe Jack Grout, how did it affect you?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, I grew up here, and many of the members that were here, it was 1950. So they were 24 years removed from Bobby Jones playing here in 1926 and winning the U.S. Open. So many of those members knew and were at that tournament and watched it and so forth.

So as I grew up -- and, of course, when you are a young fella being thrown into an older membership, which is what was being done, you learn to be respectful of people and you learn how to behave yourself and how to handle yourself, and I think that's the beauty of the game of golf because not everybody's the same age. You have all ages, and everybody does it, and everybody needs to behave themselves, both young and old.

So I think that Scioto taught me -- it had a good membership and an active membership, people that loved the game of golf, and they loved being here, and they loved watching me grow up and play.

They were very supportive of what I did, and they shaped me from a person of having to deal with adults and being around them and dealing -- of course, I would play in club championships when I was 14 years old and that kind of stuff. So I'm always playing against somebody that was 25, 30, or 40 years old, and so you learn all those things of how to handle yourself with adults. And I think that's an important part of shaping your life.

Q. Jack, now that it's finally here, you've had such a big role in golf coming back into the Olympics. Wondering just how curious, excited, interested you are in seeing it come to fruition and what happens this week.

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, I guess the Olympics for golfers starts tomorrow; is that right?

THE MODERATOR: Yes.

JACK NICKLAUS: Annika and I worked pretty hard to get golf back into the games. We did all the things we were asked to do and helped in trying to do that.

I was a little disappointed when some of the golfers dropped out, but also the same thing with tennis. Some of the tennis players dropped out too. And I think that what has happened -- even though golf is in for two times, but they vote on it in '17 for it to stay beyond '20, golf needed to put its best foot forward this time. Whether they will or not, I don't know. I think we've still got good people playing. There's a lot of

good players, and not everybody has to be there to be right.

But golf is different. Golf and tennis are both different than most sports in that most sports, the Olympics are the pinnacle of their sport, where golf it's not. We have the U.S. Open, the Masters, the British Open, the PGA, and we have Australia and the Wimbledon, French, and U.S. Open in tennis, and those are the pinnacles of that sport.

Now, would I have loved to have been an Olympian? Would I have loved to play golf in the Olympics? Yes, I would have loved to do that. Even though the pinnacle of your sport may not be that, I think a gold medal would be something I would really treasure.

So I may be looking at it differently than other people, but I look at the Olympics as a way to grow the game, particularly in areas where the game is not mature, areas such as Brazil, such as Russia, such as China, such as India, places where the game has barely started.

So I see the Olympics really having the opportunity to grow -- it would be a shame to lose it because I think it has the opportunity to grow the sports in those countries, which to me only enhances what happens with the game of golf.

I was a little critical of the guys to start with. I thought it might have been selfish of them not to go. Then I started looking at that, and it is not the pinnacle of their sport. It's a pretty awkward time of year because they just got their Major championships. And, of course, then they have also the Zika problem. So I worried about that.

But I think when Rory said he was not into growing the game, he was into playing the game. Well, I look back at it. I mean, I'm past playing the game. My game is gone. My focus on the game of golf now is to grow the game. So, yeah, they are into playing. When I was playing the game, I wasn't into growing it either. Did I play a lot of places? Sure. And by playing a lot of places, that helped to grow the game. But I was there to win, not grow.

So I can understand where they are, and I think I was probably wrong on that. So I think that the guys today and gals that are playing, I think they'll have a great event. They'll have great fun. One of them's going to walk off with a gold medal which they'll treasure the rest of their lives. And as I say, I would have loved to have been one of those myself, but we never had the opportunity.

I hope that they look favorably upon the game of golf

next year when they vote again so it goes beyond 2020 and a lot of guys and gals will have the opportunity to try for a gold medal.

Q. Just want to ask you one other thing, switching gears. You mentioned Major championships, and this year at Troon, the showdown between Henrik and Phil was pretty spectacular and very compelling. I think I read somewhere that you said it might have surpassed the Duel in the Sun between you and Watson. I wonder why you think that and how much of it you did watch and where.

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, they scored better than we did. On the last round that Tom and I played, it was 65, 66. And they were 63, 65. Is that right?

THE MODERATOR: Yes.

JACK NICKLAUS: And a par 71, and we were a par 70. So they scored better. Did that mean they played better? I don't know. But I happened to watch the 1st hole -- I turned the TV on, and I saw it, and they both played well. So I just started watching a little bit. I sat down and watched the whole thing, and I never do that.

But they both played terrific golf. Stenson was -- he was unbelievable. He just was terrific. As was Phil, frankly. So I thought it was one of the great events that I really -- as I said, I don't really ever watch golf very much, but I did have the pleasure to watch that, and I enjoyed it, and I thought they played great.

When Watson and I did it, we were the 1 and 2 players in the game. Those guys were not the 1 and 2 players in the game, but they sure put on one heck of a show, and I thought it was pretty special.

Q. What were the goals you set for yourself early in your career before it really took off for you?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, I always looked at golf or anything I did as that I wanted to get better and I wanted to improve. I always felt like I was trying to climb a mountain, and that mountain just kept getting taller, and I just kept trying to climb up higher.

So when I was a kid, I played all sports, and golf was just another sport to me. But I mean, I enjoyed playing it when I played it, and I loved competing, as I did everything else I did.

But as I started focusing a little bit more on golf, I actually got around to about -- I was 18 years old. I won the Trans-Miss so I made the Walker Cup team when I was 19. And I came back in, and my golf coach at Ohio State -- I was a sophomore at Ohio State. He said, Nick, great going. He said, you made the Walker Cup team. He said, boy, are you going to have a great

spring.

And I said, I don't understand, Kep. What do you mean I'm going to have a good spring? We've got the golf team going here. We're going to play golf.

He said, no, you're not going to play golf this spring. He said, you made the Walker Cup team. You're going to go play in the Masters, you're going to play the North-South, you're going to play the British Amateur, you're going to play the Walker Cup matches. You play golf next year.

Not many golf coaches would say that, and he did. He was a great guy, Bob Kepler.

And so I did that. I didn't go to school in the spring. We were on quarter system back then. I didn't go to school in the spring, but I played my first Masters, then I won the North-South, and I lost the quarterfinals of the British Amateur. Of course, I won my matches in the Walker Cup. So I learned a lot about golf.

And I started to think, you know, to make the Walker Cup team, I must be one of the 12 best amateurs in the country.

Well, later that year, I won the U.S. Amateur, and I was ranked No. 1. And I said, hmm, I didn't think I was that good. I never wanted to be able to scratch my ears out here. I didn't need a big head. I said, well, I must be better than I think I am.

So now, all of a sudden, now I'm a good U.S. Amateur -- or I won the U.S. Amateur so I'm No. 1. The next year, I almost won the U.S. Open when I was 20, and I'm sitting there, hmm, that's pretty good. I guess I can compete against these guys. These guys are pretty good. I guess I can compete against them. So I had another mountain, and I kept climbing up that mountain.

And the next year I won the U.S. Amateur again, and I won several other tournaments that year. And I said, well, I think I've done about what I can do at amateur golf, and now I want to be the best I can be at what I can be. That doesn't mean I want to be the best in the world. It just means I want to be the best I can be. And I said the only way I can do that is to play against the best. The only way to do that is to play in the Tour. That's where you play against the world's best golfers. And, of course, I won the U.S. Open my first year on the Tour, my first tournament I won.

So I felt like, hey, I'm getting better. And I just kept doing that all my life, trying to get better, trying to improve. And I did that until probably about my mid-forties, and finally I started to see my skills erode, and I

knew that I wasn't quite going to be what I was once. We didn't have the modern day equipment then. If I had modern day equipment, I could have kept doing it, kept improving.

But then I went and got to Senior golf, and I knew my skills weren't quite as good, but I felt like the Senior golf could be fun. I didn't play a lot of Senior golf. I played the four Majors and usually one or two other tournaments during the year. I think I won eight Majors on the Senior Tour, and I won two other tournaments. So I won ten tournaments on the Senior Tour, not eight.

THE MODERATOR: Eight Majors.

JACK NICKLAUS: Eight Majors. And I did that, and then I finally found -- sort of getting into the latter part of my career, and I didn't have any more mountains to climb. Then I was 60 years old.

So I climbed mountains until I was 60 years old, and that was fun. And that's what I always tell kids. You know, keep going after your dream, keep trying to get better, keep trying to improve. Maybe you'll be just as good as you can be. That's all you can ask for. And if that's really good, sometimes that may be the best of anybody, but you don't know until you just keep working at it and keep trying.

That's what I always did all my life. I always kept that attitude. I think it worked very well for me.

Q. Lovely shirt, by the way, since we have the same color. We're matching.

JACK NICKLAUS: Do you have a bear on the back of it?

Q. I'll get back to you.

It may be a stretch of the memory, but since I always ask your college winners at your event, what was the most memorable shot you ever hit at Scioto over the years? Definition being most memorable to you, whether it mattered in a tournament or it was recreational or whatever.

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, I did make a double eagle at 8 before they ruined the hole. I think that was my first double eagle.

I think the most memorable day at Scioto for me, when I was 13 years old and I was working in the drug store with my dad, and my dad and I -- we would work until about 4:00, and he would say, let's go play some golf. I'd say okay.

And I hated the summers and I hated holidays because my dad hauled me into the drug store for help. All the

other kids were out there playing, and I was in there working. Probably the best thing that ever happened to me, but it was always that.

Anyway, we'd get into late afternoon, and he'd say let's go play. So one day we went out, and I shot 35 the front nine. And I said, oh, gosh, dad, I've got a chance to break par today or break 70, or whatever I was going to do. I think my low score at that time was 73. He said, we've got to go home. I promised your mom I'd be home for dinner. Oh, come on, dad.

He said, well, I'll tell you what. He says, if we can rush home real quick and grab a bite to eat, we'll satisfy your mother, and we can get back and have time to play. I said, okay, let's go.

So we ran home and got a quick bite to eat, and we came back. I played the back nine, and I got to the last hole, and I was 1 under par. 18 was a par 5 at the time. And I hit a driver, and I don't remember what I hit onto the green. Knocked it on the green about 35 feet from the hole, and they had the sprinklers. In those days, they had hoses on the sprinklers. Sprinkler was going around, and I went on and pulled the sprinkler off, water all over the green and everything else, and I had this 35-foot putt, and I drained it for 69. So that's the first time I broke 70. That was probably one I'll never forget.

Q. What club did you hit on that double eagle, by the way?

JACK NICKLAUS: Oh, I was just a kid so it probably was a 3 wood. I don't remember. I had to run it into the green, so it probably was.

I mean, I made two birdies on that hole one time. I remember hitting my second shot and hitting a bird in the air, dropped down and knocked it on the green and made another birdie. That's a story you probably shouldn't tell. Get all the wildlife people on me. But I didn't aim at it. How's that?

I had the story of 1965, which was sort of the precursor of the Memorial Tournament. We did an exhibition here for the American Cancer Society, and I had Bob Hope and Jim Garner and our pro here, Walker Inman, we played with that day.

Barbara went and rode around in the cart, and Barbara was expecting. She was close to expecting -- or close to delivering. And so we went back to the house that night, and we lived -- I lived just up the street here. So we all went back for dinner.

Barb says, you want to fix the fire? I said, oh, I'll fix the fire in a few minutes. We're going to play a game of pool. So we went down and played a game of pool,

and about 20 minutes later, she said, you want to come cook the steaks? I haven't fixed the fire yet, Barb. I fixed the fire. No problem. She says, come up and fix the steaks. I'll be up in a couple minutes to fix the steaks. About 20 minutes later, she calls down and says, food's on. I cooked the steaks for you. Why are you doing that, Barb?

Anyway, we sat down at the table about 9:00, and we started eating. And about not far into dinner, Barbara excused herself. Didn't think anything about it. After probably about 30 minutes, I said, I wonder where in the world did Barbara go? Because we're all talking at the table and going through and so forth.

I went back in the bedroom, and Barbara said, now, don't get excited. She said, I've called the doctor. She says, I'll call a taxi. You can stay here with your friends. Don't worry about me. I said, what are you talking about?

So I went out, and I said, guys, I've got to go. I've got to take my wife to the hospital. She's about to have a baby. This is getting to be a little after 10:00. And they were out of that house like a shot.

And so we're on the way to the hospital, and we decided if it was a boy, we were going to name it Robert James after Hope and Garner. And so it turned out to be Nan. It was a girl, our first girl. And she was born at 12:15. So I spared about an hour, hour and 15 minutes to get there.

I did better than Jack Grout. Jack Grout delivered one of his in the car on the way. But Nan was born. So Nan came along, and she had her first three kids, and she named her fourth one Robert James. So we have a Robert James in the family still.

Now, that's more memorable than the golf shots, I promise you.

Q. Was Nancy Sinatra at that party, by any chance?

JACK NICKLAUS: No, no. There was a gal that grew up and Barbara would baby-sit for, and her name was Nanette. And Barbara loved her and loved the name. I didn't like the name Nanette, so we compromised on Nancy, and she's been Nan ever since.

Q. I just wanted to ask you, Jim Furyk shot the 58 the other day. Just wondering what you thought about that and if you ever had a round or a day in the middle of the round or something where you thought you had a shot at doing something like that.

JACK NICKLAUS: No, I never did have a shot at it. I shot 59 in an exhibition at The Breakers one time. Par

70 golf course, not very hard. I was in Australia for -- I was playing at Manly, playing in the Dunlop Masters, and I think that was a par 72, I think. And I had it, I think, 11 under par going to 17. A short par 4. I drove it on the fringe. And I took three from the fringe and then bogeyed the 18th hole. So if I chipped that in, I'd have been 60, and I'd have had a shot for 59 if I'd birdied the last hole. 62 is the lowest I shot in competition. I just choke too much.

(Laughter.)

Q. A lot of us work in the game, in the industry to grow the game. It's kind of everyone's talking about that. We believe that it's about being fun for kids. How do you, as a father and grandfather, how do you have a lot of your kids engaged and playing the game? What do you think the secret is to do that?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, I wish I did. 22 grandkids, and I've got one playing golf. A lot of them play a little bit, but not much. I've got one 13-year-old that's a pretty good player, but the rest of them are just play two or three times in the summer, and that's all they play, not many. They all played other sports.

I think the biggest problem we've got today is young kids and parents are into the park systems, and you're in there playing football, basketball, baseball, soccer, lacrosse, whatever it might be. And if you go to a park and you see how many families are in that park, mothers and dads are not playing golf, and neither are the kids.

So we have to be in the park systems, and I've been working a little bit with the PGA of America. We're trying to work how to get this to move forward. I think we're gaining on it, but we've got to get kids at a young age. Kids start at 5 or 6 years old. And by the time they're 8 or 9 years old, they pick their sports. If you're not in the parks playing those things, golf's not going to be one of them.

SNAG has been a good way to introduce that, Starting New At Golf, and I think that's a pretty good way to get kids started. And the PGA of America takes them at about 9 into their PGA learning schools.

So I don't know where all that's going to go, but we have to have programs where we get the kids and the parents engaged on a basis that brings young kids into the game. We do not have that other than at clubs and some of the public facilities, and First Tee is what we have.

None of those are really geared to really start to get masses of people playing the sport. First Tee is more

about the kid and more about his values in life and how you teach him lessons of life, which is what you've got right here. I think First Tee plays a very, very big important part in our society today as it relates to kids, and I think it's terrific.

If you want to talk about actually bringing golfers into the game, then I think we need to have more of a system in the parks for the kids.

Q. Did you play in any tournaments when you were younger?

JACK NICKLAUS: I played every tournament I could possibly get in. We didn't have a lot of tournaments when I was young. I played my first tournament when I was 10 years old, which was the club champion here at Scioto, and I won it and shot 121, and I had shot 91 that year. I choked terribly. I shot 30 shots too high.

But that was about the only tournament I played when I was 10. At 11, I started playing district tournaments. And then when I was 12, I started winning district tournaments, and then I started playing state tournaments. And then I started playing national tournaments when I was 13. I played whatever I could play. Nothing beats competition. Competition is just great for you.

Q. Mr. Nicklaus, I don't have a question. I want to thank you. I'm Kelly Trent, I'm the head pro at Raymond Memorial Golf Course, and we are doing the SNAG golf in our park system, and it has been the most incredible thing we've ever done. So thank you very much for bringing that to light.

JACK NICKLAUS: And it helps gets kids started, doesn't it, in a safe way.

Q. Absolutely.

Q. How did you think of SNAG, like the idea?

JACK NICKLAUS: I didn't think of it. It's already been done. Terry Anton, he was the fellow who did it, started it. And it's basically plastic clubs, wiffle balls or tennis balls and velcro that you're not going to hurt anybody with. That's what's nice about it.

THE MODERATOR: I'd like to thank our honorary chairman of this year's U.S. Senior Open, Jack Nicklaus. Thank you very much.