

Oak Hill Country Club ~ Rochester, NY

Hole #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Out	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Out	Total		Yardage
452	401	214	570	428	170	461	428	418	3,542	429	188
372	598	323	181	439	460	469	3,459	7,001		Par	4
4	3	5	4	3	4	4	4	35	4	3	4
5	4	3	4	4	4	35	70		Score		

AN INTERVIEW WITH:

MARK O'MEARA

KELLY ELBIN: Ladies and gentlemen, two time Major champion, Mark O'Meara joining us in the second round of the 69th Senior PGA Championship at Oak Hill. Mark in with a low round of the championship thus far, 4-under par, 66, stands at 2-under par, 142, for two rounds. Mark, congratulations, looks like a fast start and an adventure-filled front nine.

MARK O'MEARA: Yeah, thank you. I obviously I'm pleased to shoot that score today. Considering yesterday. And I made three doubles and a triple bogey out there yesterday. And I shot 6-over.

But I drove the ball pretty well. Except for my drive on 10 where I let it go there. And today I just tried to put the ball in the fairway, I drove it pretty well today. Except my drive on 18. And then that kind of sets up this course.

It's a difficult golf course out there as you all know. The rough is thick. It's deep. The wind was a little bit more severe yesterday than it was today. But I made a bunch of birdies. I made five birdies yesterday and I think I made six birdies today. So that's always good. My putting I think was pretty good too.

KELLY ELBIN: Go through those six birdies starting off with No. 1.

MARK O'MEARA: I hit a good drive on 1. Hit a 9-iron to about maybe 10 feet. Made that for birdie.

Number 3, the par-3, I hit a 4-iron to about 12 feet. Made that for birdie.

Number 4, the par-5, I hit a wedge to about maybe 20 feet. Made that for birdie.

The bogey on 5, I drove it just in the left rough, hit a pretty good second shot, just came up about a foot and a half short of the green. Pitched it to about seven or eight feet and missed it.

6, the par-3, I hit a 6-iron to about eight feet. Made that for birdie.

7, I drove it in the left rough and pitched down the fairway and hit a 7-iron on the green and missed it from about 12 feet. Made bogey.

8, I hit a good drive and a 9-iron to about a foot and a half for birdie.

The birdie on the par-5 on 13, I hit a pretty good drive, laid up with a 3-iron, hit an 8-iron to about maybe 25, 30 feet of the made a big curler down the hill there.

I made a good par on the last hole. Drove it in the right bunker off the tee and had the big face and I didn't want to risk it, because I had a decent round going. So I hit a sand wedge out and hit a pitching wedge on the green pin high to about 12 feet and made that for par.

So the putting was good. Considering I haven't really played as well as I would have liked to this year, up to this point, at least I'm playing on the weekend and hopefully I can keep it up.

KELLY ELBIN: Questions?

Q. You haven't really played well here in the past, '89 and 2003, and then yesterday's round, how did you avoid getting discouraged and come back with such a great round today?

MARK O'MEARA: I got a lot of issues going on in my life right now. So I'm kind of hanging in there. Off course it's been a tough year so far. Just some personal issues I'm dealing with. And I've been battling. So I just, I don't know. I just try to hang in there the best I could yesterday. I always do that. I never try to give up.

So just try to take one shot at a time, do the best I can. Today I felt like my patience and my attitude was a little bit better today. I tried to stay more I guess you say in the moment. And not get too far ahead of myself, not get too far behind myself. Yesterday the conditions were a little more difficult.

And it is trying. You make a couple birdies and then you make a double and then make a birdie or two and then you make a triple, every time I kept bouncing back I would make a double. And I was proud, I know 6-over sounds like not a great round to all of you, but if you would have saw, just to keep hanging in there and hanging in there, I was proud that I shot 6-over. I know that sounds crazy, but it could have easily took it to 10. That's just not who I am. I'll always try. I may not do very well, but I always give it my best.

Q. Was yesterday's round a great round spoiled by a couple of bad swings or a bad round saved bay bunch of birdies? Obviously you played pretty well?

MARK O'MEARA: I made five birdies yesterday. So I did hit some good shots. But when you make a triple bogey on 17 from the middle of the fairway with a 5-iron in your hand -- it's one thing to hit it in the trees and whack it around a few times and make a triple. But from the fairway to make a triple bogey is just ridiculous.

Then two of my doubles came on par-3s. I didn't hit it in the water either. And I made doubles. So I kept short siding myself yesterday. And you just can't do that with the rough the way it is around the greens.

If you do that, it's hard to get on the green on the next one and if you do, you know, you're so far away from the hole that double bogey is in play. So today the whole idea was to make some birdies, eliminate the big score, and fortunately I did that.

Q. You alluded to it earlier, but how, after what you've been through,

how rewarding is it to at least have something like today?

MARK O'MEARA: No, it's good. It's certainly good. Because it would have been easy to go out there today and kind of shoot another 4 or 5 or 6-over par and be down the road. But that's just, one thing about me is that I have been practicing and hitting the ball well at home practicing. I was in the desert last week working on my game and I was hitting it pretty well. And golf is a confidence thing and your technique can be good, but if you're out there kind of not trusting it as much, and have a little bit of doubt, that's all it takes. Especially on a difficult golf course like Oak Hill.

So today I just tried to be a little more committed to what I was doing and thinking more about working on my technique and the things I need to do in my swing which aren't that many things, but just be a little bit more committed to it. And that's probably why I hit some better shots out there.

Q. As a follow-up, the conditions as tough as they were yesterday, how much more welcome, I mean then weren't fantastic?

MARK O'MEARA: The breeze is still blowing out there, still a one and a half club wind out there. And it does come down like I said earlier to, really this golf course, my analysis would be that you have to drive the ball well here. If you drive the ball well, you usually got chances. If you drive it poorly, you got really no chance.

Q. Do you think that your ability to keep the ball in play, or straight, your straightness of your accuracy has helped you this, today with your round?

MARK O'MEARA: It did. It did. I drove it pretty well even yesterday. I hit 11 or 10 fairways. Even though I made the three doubles and a triple and today I probably did about the same. Hit about 10 fairways. So you're right, you have to do that around here. You got to keep it out of that thick grass. If you do that, then you can be a little bit more, you can get the ball on the green. Because I think around this golf course with the rough and the thickness of it, even if you miss the greens and close to the greens, it's very difficult still to get the ball up-and-down.

KELLY ELBIN: For the record, you only had eight fairways hit today, but you hit 13 greens in regulation.

MARK O'MEARA: Okay. Well I hit a couple fringes, so, I'm giving myself credit on those. Sorry.

KELLY ELBIN: Absolutely.
(Laughter.)

Q. You alluded to it earlier, did you feel like your game is in a good place coming into this week or what were your thoughts?

MARK O'MEARA: I think my game is -- practicing, spending time on the range is decent, but emotionally it's been a battle this year.

So I'm dealing with a lot of different things and it's hard to keep your focus out there when you're going through some of the things that I'm going through

and just keep trying. That's all you can do.

Q. You talked about your nature of hanging in there and not, the fact that it's a Major on this tour, do you sense anything different in other players here during this time as opposed to it would have been on a Regular Tour Major, I mean in that grind being, I'm going to stay in it, I can get myself right back in it. Do you sense, obviously to yourself there is, but is it similar?

MARK O'MEARA: Very similar. I think that most of these guys out here have had nice careers and they're established players. But it does come down to that. It comes down to just kind of hanging in there, hanging in there, especially when the golf course is a good test.

It's a pretty difficult golf course out there. So you're going to make some mistakes, it's just that you got to just realize everybody else is going to have difficulties too somewhere along the round. So you just got to try not to get going too far south. Just hang in there.

Q. Thankfully the weather is supposed to be a little better over the weekend, will that change things out there?

MARK O'MEARA: I still think that right around par is going to be a heck of a score. Probably more like over par is going to win. I just, with the pressure and the rough and I just think it's going to be, yeah, even if the wind's not blowing it's still very difficult course.

Q. Seeing that Jay Haas was the only one to shoot under yesterday, you know, what's a 4-under, you know is that like a 10-under in other courses?

MARK O'MEARA: No, no, no. That's like maybe -- it's hard to compare. But certainly I putted well yesterday and I putted well today. You got to do that. Because you're going to have to make some birdies and it does come down to making the putts. And even making a good par save on 18 there so I believe that 4-under is a heck of a score around this golf course. I think you take it any time of the week. Anything in the red is a good score.

Q. We're hearing how difficult it is, but we're trying to maybe put a little perspective on it. What do you think a 10 handicapper would have shot yesterday and today?

MARK O'MEARA: In the hundreds.

Q. Really?

MARK O'MEARA: Yeah. Absolutely. The rough is about as thick and deep as it is when we played here in -- maybe a little, just a touch deeper in '89, and 2003 when we played the PGA, but not much different though. Certainly a few of the tees are up more. 1 we played from the same tee. 2 we played from the same tee. They moved the tee up on 3. 4 we played to the same tee. 5 the tee was up maybe 10 yards. They moved the tee up on 6. And they moved the

tee up on 9.

But I mean there's, I mean we are seniors. We're supposed to play from the next tee up. I mean, what the heck? We're not supposed to be playing from where the 25 year old guys play from. I'm 51 years old. My dad wants to, he's 78, he wants to play from the front of the ladies tees now. I said, listen, man, you know, it's not -- I think that the guys that play out here, I played maybe 16 last year, so I played like 22 events on the Champions Tour. And I haven't won yet. But I reckon the guys are a lot better than the people give them credit for. Okay, the depth of field is not as deep, but like at Houston last year, shooting 17-under far for three rounds and losing by eight shots, you know, to Bernhard Langer, 25-under. If they played a Regular Tour event there I don't think anybody could have shot 25-under, in my opinion.

So it's pretty impressive the scoring that the guys shoot out here. We're pretty darn good.

Q. You missed the cut the last two Majors that you were here. What a great feeling of satisfaction must it be for you to tame this course finally today?

MARK O'MEARA: It is. Certainly there's still a lot of work to be done. There's still two more rounds to go and Jay's a very fine player. Hits it straight. Good putter. Good manager of the game. There's a lot of other good players that are up on the leaderboard. So there's a lot of golf to be played. Hopefully on the weekend I can continue playing like I played today and at least give myself a shot at the title.

Q. You were talking about these difficulty of the scoring conditions, if somebody gave you a pair of 70's right now, and Sunday you're sitting in the clubhouse at plus two?

MARK O'MEARA: I like my chances. I would. I would. I wouldn't -- listen, I wouldn't, yeah, I wouldn't mind, I wouldn't have a problem. Shooting even par on the weekend, I wouldn't have a problem with a 2-over. I think that's got a very realistic a chance.

Q. Is your son at the point now that you call him and does he give you tips on your swing and you call him for advice?

MARK O'MEARA: No, he called me last night and says, hey, dad, and I said, what? He says, you got the Christmas tree on your scorecard. Because I had all the beautiful colors, you know.

(Laughter.)

Yeah, yeah, it was a Christmas tree, all right. He says, you were playing like me, that's what I usually do, make doubles and triples, you're yelling at me all the time.

I said, well, I said, I guess I should be able to take it, but the only difference is, I made three doubles and a triple and I still shot 76. You make those kind of numbers and you shoot 83.

(Laughter.)

That's the difference. All right, thanks, everybody.
KELLY ELBIN: Mark O'Meara.
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PAGE 1

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