

RBC Canadian Open

Tuesday, June 4, 2019

Rod Spittle

Herb Page

Mary DePaoli

Laurence Applebaum

Jay Monahan

Sandra Post

Quick Quotes

THE MODERATOR: We are here today to induct two new members into the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame. It's a special day for them and for their families and friends and all of people who love golf in Canada. We are also here, of course, to celebrate the RBC Canadian Open, and what a field we have this week competing here at the Hamilton Golf and Country Club. I can't wait to get things started.

Please welcome right now to give us welcoming remarks from Golf Canada, the CEO, Laurence Applebaum

LAURENCE APPLEBAUM: Good morning, everyone. It's an honor to welcome everyone to the RBC Canadian Open day, which is one of the most special days on the golfing calendar for us. I would first like to recognize that we are located here on a traditional territories (local names) together with our partners at RBC and the PGA TOUR, we are proud to conduct the 110th playing of Canada's National Open Championship.

I want to share my warmest welcomes to Mr. Rod Spittle and Mr. Herb Page, who have made this day such a momentous occasion for all of us, and as you can see by your new group of peers around you, who have travelled long and far, I really want to welcome you all to this incredible day of Canadian golf history.

It is also my pleasure to acknowledge our chair, Sandra Post, a Hall of Famer, a major winner, and the driving force behind the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame. Welcome.

Every year we are very lucky to have a special guest, and this year is in exception. It is my pleasure to welcome the Commissioner of the PGA TOUR, a



golfer, a hockey player, and don't hold it against him for being a Boston Bruins fan, Mr. Jay Monahan.

As Bob mentioned, our field is incredibly strong this week. We are so graced and blessed to have such an amazing event at the Hamilton Golf and Country Club with our new date, and we couldn't be more pleased to be sharing this with our title sponsor and friends at RBC.

As you'll hear throughout the rest of the week, and today, especially, RBC is connected to every level of the game of golf in Canada, from our Future Links program to our Team Canada, to our RBC Canadian Open, and even our CP Women's Open and even our Canadian Golf Hall of Fame. They are the lifeblood of sport in Canada, and I would also like to introduce the chief marketing officer and executive vice president, Mary DePaoli.

There is so much exciting activities ahead of us today. We have an incredible day planned and thank you very much for coming out and have a wonderful week. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Now, as Laurence introduced her moments ago, let's hear from the woman who is representing the company that's made everything happen here this week, Mary DePaoli from RBC.

MARY DEPAOLI: Good morning, everyone. Thank you, Bob. Laurence, and welcome, everyone. It is so good to be here today, and good to be back in my hometown. I feel very special.

I also want to express a special welcome to Jay Monahan and his team. They have joined us from Ponte Vedra today. We are so proud to be celebrating your outstanding contributions to the sport. Thank you very much. It's an honor to be with you.

I just want to take a few moments to say a few words about the importance of the RBC Canadian Open, and the traction that is being built. Traction that you will feel this week and I know will carry on in the years to come, and for all of us at RBC, this tournament is of great importance. It represents more than just our National Open, our National Championship.

It's a celebration of golf and community from coast to coast, and 2 1/2 years ago, we recommitted to this tournament. We recommitted to the RBC Canadian Open, to the RBC Heritage, we recommitted to team RBC and, in fact, expanded team RBC to include a new up and coming Canadians, recommitted to amateur sport and to all of our fill philanthropic donations we make to so many communities that support golf. It is very personal to us, and we couldn't be more proud.

I'd be remiss if I didn't acknowledge two people that are here on the stage and their teams, to Laurence and Golf Canada. They know how to take this tournament and put it on the world stage and really show the best of golf in Canada and make our nation proud for all the world to see, and not to mention everything they do for the sport at the amateur level, to grow the game and to grow the fan base.

Thank you, Laurence, to you and your team. And also, to Jay, to Jay Monahan and his team who are here. They truly understand the importance of golf to Canada, to our nation, and without their support, we would not be celebrating this new day on the PGA TOUR schedule. So on behalf of all Canadians, Jay, thank you, for all of your support.

We're very excited, and I'll simply close by saying that it's so wonderful to see many elements come together. We have got a very strong field. The weather forecast looks terrific, and as a result of RBC's partnership with live nation, we have two phenomenal concerts that will take place here on Friday and Saturday evening, and so we hope as a result, that the fan base grows; that the love of the sport grows, and that we have a very successful five days ahead.

So thank you for being here. The volunteers, the fans, members of the media, thank you for embracing the RBC Canadian Open, and with that, I will turn things over to Jay Monahan.

COMMISSIONER MONAHAN: Well, Laurence put me in a bad spot, and marry redeemed me, so thank you very much, Mary.

On behalf of the PGA TOUR, it's my privilege to speak here today. Let me start by congratulating Herb Page and Rod Spittle for their careers and contributions to this great game. Both have remarkable and inspirational stories. Herb, for his longevity and success as golf coach at Kent State, that included 23 conference titles.

And Rod, for his extraordinary self-belief; self-belief that he could play and win on the PGA Champions Tour, which he did in 2010 after a remarkable amateur

career and after working in insurance for 25 years.

To reiterate what you've heard from Laurence and from Mary, the RBC Canadian Open is the fourth-oldest tournament on the PGA TOUR schedule, dating back to 1904. Walking the grounds here at Hamilton Golf and Country Club today, the excitement is truly palpable.

Our thanks, heartfelt thanks, to RBC, one of the PGA TOUR great partners, represented today by Mary DePaoli and Golf Canada led by CEO Laurence Applebaum, and tournament director Bryan Crawford for their support and vision in leading the RBC Canadian Open into this new era.

Why this excitement? And I must say, I'm very proud of these facts. The new date as part of the revamped the PGA TOUR schedule, much closer to the beginning of the golf season here in Canada than the end, better promotes golf participation, as well as fan growth and interest, in the RBC Canadian Open, and the FedExCup. Our fans are our No. 1 priority, and the RBC Canadian Open has embraced this concept.

In addition to the golf, all the activities schedules on site, such as the RBC concert series, as up to a week that provides something for absolutely everyone: A great field; three of the top four in the Official World Golf Ranking, world No. 1 Brooks Koepka, defending champion Dustin Johnson and Rory McIlroy playing the RBC Canadian Open for the first time in his career; an exquisite golf course in Hamilton Golf and Country Club that we return to for the first time since 2012.

Our players are our biggest asset for how they represent our sport both on and off the golf course. RBC has embraced this concept with 20 ambassadors from both the PGA TOUR and LPGA Tour, as well as young, emerging Canadians embarking on a career in professional golf. This diverse support has been incredibly impactful for the game of golf on so many levels.

When you add all this up, professional golf in Canada is in better hands than it's ever been before. We have a record ten Canadians currently on the PGA TOUR with four different players having won PGA TOUR events over the last five years, including RBC, ambassador Corey Connors at the Valero Texas Open earlier this year. With the support of RBC and Golf Canada, we expect that number to continue to grow.

Now we haven't seen a Canadian winner at your National Open since Pat Fletcher in 1954. I know I'm not supposed to play favorites, but I can only imagine the scene here on late Sunday afternoon if a Canadian is atop the leaderboard. He would truly have the

support of an entire nation behind him.

And before I conclude, I just want to say that it is completely humbling to be on this stage with so many greats of the game and to be here in Canada on this special day. Thank you very much.

THE MODERATOR: If you think the crowd at the Raptor game was big, wait till you see what happens when Corey or Adam or Mack or somebody is walking up 18 about to win that championship.

As the Commissioner mentioned, there is quite a lot of talent on this stage. I'd like to introduce them all to you right now (introducing members, applause.)

I'd now like to call up Sandra Post to say a few words.

SANDRA POST: Thank you, everyone, welcome to the induction of Herb Page and Rod Spittle. Like to thank RBC for including the Hall of Fame in the opening day ceremonies, and also to Golf Canada and the Golf Foundation for their commitment to the museum and the Hall of Fame, and to the director of heritage services, Meggan Gardner, and her tremendous stewardship.

Thank you to the Hall of Fame members for your support, not only the Hall of Fame, but for coming together to celebrate the 82nd and 83rd inductees into the Hall of Fame, and it's a special day, really, for all of us, and to our special guest, Commissioner Monahan. It is sincerely a thrill to have you join us.

And lastly, to the dedicated Hall of Fame selection committee, thank you for your support, and it has been a pleasure working with you.

There are two Hall of Fame categories that one can be inducted: Either as a builder or a player, and we have one of each this year. Both of these gentlemen were born in Ontario and have lived most of their lives in Ohio, and that is purely a coincidence.

In the builder category, Coach Herb Page, born in Markham, has lived the last 50 years in Kent Ohio. He is the first NCAA coach to be inducted into our Hall of Fame. He built an empire of golfers at Kent, but what really set Coach Page apart for us, he recruited all the way across this country, over 50 of our Canadian golfers, and he built that empire with a lot of them, and he also built the women's golf program there at Kent. In fact, the first women's golf team at Kent was all Canadian. (Laughter).

The coach has 23 mid Atlantic titles to his name and 24 times named MAC Coach of the year. He is in five Halls of Fame, including our own Ontario Golf Hall of

Fame.

On behalf of the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame and all its member, congratulations and let's welcome coach Herb Page.

COACH HERB PAGE: Good morning. I would first like to thank, obviously, Golf Canada and Laurence for this special day. RBC, your continuing support of Canadian golf, the junior tournaments, it's tremendous. I get to come up and see them when they are young, and thank you for your support and keep it going.

Special thanks to the Hall of Fame committee for obviously putting me in this elite group, and to Sandra Post, as the chair.

Sandra, when I got that call from you, I have a little story later for lunch, but it was truly amazing to get a call from such an iconic golfer as Sandra Post. I know we mentioned Meggan Gardner. Where is Meggan? I cannot thank you enough for the organization, all you've put up with, and your week is just starting, but I want to have a special round of applause for Meggan Gardner. She is awesome. Thank you, Meggan.

I am very pleased to share this honor with -- I've got Larry Grove is out there. I went to grade school with him, a two-room schoolhouse, and his sister. I have my friends, my family, my players, and a lot of my players put me in here. They are down here. My friends are here from Kent State university. My family is here, my wife, my brother, sister. I just want to share this day with you.

I've got a teammate here, and he doesn't look like he's a teammate, Mike Castle, thank you for being here. But it's a day for me, to share this, like I say, with my friends, my family, my university, but most important, my players. I can be very biased today about the Canadian Open, and I'm going to tell Jay that I've got a few Flashes playing this week. We have four of them in the lineup.

And to Ryan Yip, to MacKenzie Hughes, Corey Connors and to amateur Josh Whalen: You can win this thing, trust me. We are going to have a pep talk before we start an old college pep talk, and we are going to get you fired up, and I hope there's a great celebration, whether it be one of the four Flash Canadians or any Canadian. It would be wonderful for our country to have a champion from our country.

Again, I'm looking forward to the luncheon. I get a little more time, so I can tell some stories, but again, to the Hall of Fame committee, thank you very much for this tremendous honor, and I just -- when Bob read those

qualities, I'm going, what am I doing up here.

But as a boy growing up in Markham, there's childhood idols here. There's colleagues that I saw just dominate golf, and it is truly my honor to be sitting up here with you and to be inducted into your Hall of Fame. Thank you very, very much.

SANDRA POST: Thank you, great job. In the player category, Rod Spittle, born in St. Catharines, won the Canadian Amateur back-to-back in '77 and '78 while playing at Ohio State. He helped the Buckeyes win the Big Ten championship three times in a row after graduating. He settled in Columbus, Ohio and for the next 25 years, had a successful amateur career.

Then, rod turned 50, and the five-year plan for the Champions Tour became a reality. Rod, without question, was one of the most steady and most popular players on the Senior Tour. In 2010, he Monday-qualified. He did a lot of Monday -qualifying, but it was a special week at that AT&T and he went on to win in a playoff.

On behalf of the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame and it's members, let's congratulate and welcome, Rod Spittle.

ROD SPITTLE: Good morning, everyone. I didn't need these 42 years ago, so bear with me this morning.

I truly appreciate the kind words, Sandra, and the gracious introduction. Thank you so much. I'd also like to echo all of the comments that herb mentioned already this morning. Thank you to the Hall of Fame committee, the associates of Golf Canada, and the members and management of the Hamilton golf club for hosting the Canadian Open this week.

This really has been a blast since I got the call from Sandra. I have to tell you that. This is very, very cool. It is indeed an honor to be recognized and inducted into Canada's Golf Hall of Fame and to share the stage today with coach Herb Page.

As Sandra mentioned, when I turned 49, my wife and I decided to make should career changes. We each quit jobs in the corporate world. We sold our house and created a five-year plan to chase my dream of becoming a touring golf professional, to play the PGA Champions Tour. It all started out by spending a year on the Canadian Tour for warm up, followed by 3 1/2 years as a Monday qualifier and associate member much the Champions Tour.

As our time was winding down in 2010, I won the last tournament of the year in San Antonio, as Sandra mentioned. It was a huge thrill, and provided us with the spring board to play eight additional years with full-

time exempt status.

When the 2018 season began, Ann and I had already decided it was going to be our final year on the Champions Tour. We had more fun than we ever could have imagined. We had played with the best. We had made wonderful friends with terrific memories, and on occasion, I even got to call Mr. Langer by his first name, "Sir."

We set our schedule knowing that our last tournament would be in Calgary over the Labor Day weekend, but the tournament was over and things were winding down and the reporter reminded me that I had been the oldest player in the field that week -- how profound. It was still all okay. We had checked all of our boxes, and for us, it was just the right time to step aside.

It was a few months later when we were back home in Dublin getting ready for the holidays that Sandra called me with an early Christmas present. That's when she told me that I would be sitting in the S row of the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame, seated next to Marlene Streit, my good friend Cathy Sherk, and my childhood buddy, Warren Sye.

I am still, almost, speechless. Some of you may be familiar with a paragraph in the Rules of Golf entitled "The Spirit of the Game." It's on page 1, section one of the book. I love this message.

It goes like this: "Unlike many sports, golf is played for the most part without the supervision of a referee or umpire. The game relies on the integrity of the individual to show consideration of other players and to abide by the rules. All players should conduct themselves in a disciplined manner demonstrating courtesy and sportsmanship at all times."

Irrespective of how competitive they may be, this, is the spirit of the game of golf. Quite simply, our sport is so much more than a score behind a player's name. We are all called to be stewards of the game, and it is paramount that we pass along the life skills that it teaches, such as honesty, integrity, hard work and etiquette, to future generations, whether they be inside or outside of the ropes.

This is, the legacy of our game. Once again, I am truly excited and humbled to join this amazing and distinguished group of individuals in Canada's Golf Hall of Fame. Thank you all very, very much.