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DENVER BRONCOS QUOTES

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DENVER BRONCOS 2018 U.S. SENIOR OPEN PREVIEW QUOTES (5/8/18)

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USGA U.S. SENIOR OPEN PREVIEW

“Good afternoon everyone, my name is **Brian DePasquale**. I’m the Manager of Championship communications for the United States Golf Association. I would like to welcome you to the championship preview for the 39th U.S. Senior Open Championship, which will be held at the Broadmoor’s east course in Colorado Springs, June 25 through July 1. We would like to thank the Denver Broncos for hosting the preview today. As many of you know, Pro Football Hall of Fame quarterback and Broncos Executive and General Manager John Elway is serving as our honorary chairman for the 2018 U.S. Senior Open. He’s been extremely supportive, and you may also know that he’s going to attempt to qualify on Monday, May 28, at the Broadmoor.

“Let me introduce our panel today that will take questions. Over the next few minutes you’ll hear from **Brianne Wyatt**, who’s the Championship Director for the Bruno Event team. To my immediate left, **Robbie Zalneck** is the Director of USGA Championships. To my far left is **Ben Kimball**, USGA Director of the Senior Open. Each will talk about the championship preparations, both on and off the course. You’ll also hear from this man in the middle, our 2013 and 2017 U.S. Senior Open Champion, **Kenny Perry**.”

On the Broadmoor being selected to host the 39th U.S. Senior Open Championship

RZ: “Thanks Brian. Obviously, you heard from Mr. Elway the Broadmoor is a special place and they invited us to conduct our championship there. Any time we get an invitation from a place like the Broadmoor, it’s natural. This will be our 8th USGA championship we’ve had at the Broadmoor. It started with the 1959 U.S. Amateur won by Jack Nicklaus as he was talking about in the video. We’re excited to be coming back. It’s a marvelous golf course (the east golf course). Kenny had a chance to see it and I’m sure you’ll hear a little bit about it. We’re really excited to be coming back and appreciate the help from everyone, all the way through the state of Colorado.”

On setting the courses to be challenging

BK: "That's absolutely the truth that the Senior Open Championship is the ultimate test in senior golf. We want to make sure we test every facet of every player's game. We test a lot, not only their physical ability but their mental stability on the golf course as well. I think Kenny would attest to what he saw over the last two days, the Broadmoor East Course will certainly do that."

On his thoughts on the course

KP: "For one thing, it's beautiful. The setting from the hotel to the facilities. The clubhouse, the range, it's a total package. They kind of showed me around for eighteen holes and I got to see the nuances of the golf course. I got to thank these guys for picking that golf course. For a guy who hits a high draw, and that's exactly what I hit, it kind of fits right into my wheel house. I know when they played there in 2008, I think only three players broke par and I could understand why with 3.5 inch rough. That blue grass rough is very difficult to hit out of. When you look at 30-yard fairways or however they tend to set it up, what Ben said is true, for thirty something years the USGA has always tested my mind and my body in their championships. It's by far the toughest championship and I always thought it was the hardest one to try to win. So when I look at this golf course, it just fits in to what they do, how they set up the facility and how they get the golf course ready. It tests the player in every facet of this game. I think for the wives and the children, I think it's going to be great for the families. For the senior players, it's really going to be a nice fit for us to come here. I really had a great two days. I got to go yesterday to the Olympic training facility. That was fantastic. I got to meet some of our Olympic athletes and now I'm here at the Broncos training facility. This is going to be neat for me to get to see inside the ropes here a little bit and see what they have here. I'm thankful for these guys and their hard work and for their integrity, for how they continue to grow the game of golf and for how they continue to keep the playing field of golf at such a high level. I think it's going to be a great championship. It's going to be tough and you're going to see a lot of guys struggling out there. It's not going to be a birdie fest and it will be the guy who can maintain his poise and his posture and his confidence. Someone who'll be happy to settle with even par goes a long way out there. If you do good with the par, then you've got a great shot at winning this championship."

On the events that will take place during the championship

BW: "We have a really exciting week planned out for everyone. Monday is our Military Day. There's a big military population here in Colorado, especially in the springs as you know. All military and their families will be admitted for free on that day to just come in and enjoy themselves and they have 50 percent off of our daily gallery ticket any other day of the week as well. We'll have a clinic on Tuesday afternoon with Hale Irwin, a clinic on Wednesday afternoon with Tom Watson, and then we'll celebrate the Broadmoor's 100th birthday on Friday the 29th with a firework show that everyone is invited to stay at and join us after play concludes."

On Perry's favorite NFL team

KP: "Growing up in Kentucky, we don't really have NFL. But my daughter was a cheerleader for the [Tennessee] Titans for three years. Nashville is like 35 miles from my house, so I pulled a lot for the Titans. For whatever reason, when I was a little boy, I always loved the Minnesota Vikings. I was always the friend talking about [Former NFL Running Back] Chuck Foreman and the 'Purple People Eaters' but I was a little dude at the time. For whatever reason that's always stood with me. When [Former NFL Quarterback] Brett Favre was a quarterback there he sent me one of his signed jerseys. I hung it in my house and I thought it was pretty neat. Those are the two football teams I always rooted for."

On whether he will be giving John Elway tips before his qualification attempt

KP: "I would love to. I think he's going to need them (laughter). You know, I've never played with John. I've seen him swing the golf club. He's OK. With the Broadmoor golf course, he's going to have his hands full. That golf course is going to test him mentally. He's been in the draft room getting ready for the season, he hasn't been practicing or preparing. Just like anything you do, if you don't practice or prepare it's hard to be successful. I'm going to be rooting for him. I hope he makes it."

On the role altitude will play in the championship

KP: "It'll play a huge role. There was a bunker that was 320 yards that you aim at on the 10th hole. I hit a five wood that went 312 yards, laid up to the bunker and then I had 200 yards in and I hit an 8 iron on the green. Normally I hit an 8 iron 160 yards, so there's 40 yards I picked up just from the 6,000 feet of altitude. Russ gave me a tip. He said if you're hitting toward the mountain, towards the shrine it's about 2 percent. If you're hitting down away from the mountain, away from the shrine it's 10 percent. And if you're parallel with the mountain, it's about 5 or 6 percent. It's a guessing game no doubt, and obviously the higher you can hit it, the further you can hit the golf ball. It's really going to test our patience out there because it's really easy to overshoot a lot of those flags. You think you've hit a good golf shot, then next thing you know it's over the green. If you're over, you're dead. The rule of thumb is you want to keep the flag steep between you and the mountain because you'll always be putting up hill to the slowest part. The other way they say it's almost impossible to get the greens up to 12 or 11.5 on the stint meter. There's going to be a lot of guys struggling to putt. It'll be interesting"

On low scores in senior events

KP: "That's a great question. That's probably like four times a year because it mentally taxes you out there to be patient. You get a 25-yard fair way with 3.5 inch rough, both sides with a lot of bunkering and fast screens. There's a lot going on out there and it can get away from you in a hurry. You got to have patience. I turned 50 in 2010 and I still played the regulars in 2014. My best years were '08 and '09. I won five times on the regular tour at 48 and 49. I wanted to go see what the championship tour was all about. I went to Houston where we actually played last week. I played beautifully. I shot nine or 10 under, about the same score I shot last week. I lost by 11. Fred Couples shot 21 under. I'm thinking, 'I'm going back to the regular tours because it's easier.' Some of the setups on the championship tours is that if you don't shoot four to six under on the first day, it just seems like it's a track meet, like it's a 100-yard dash and you've got to really get it going for three straight rounds. Whereas this event, you've got four days. You don't feel like you've got to be spot on for four straight days, which is very hard to do in golf. We've got five majors on the Champions tour, that's enough for me. But I'm actually going to play one more. I'm going to play Shinnecock on the U.S. Open this year. I'll play six and I'll be stressed out when that time comes."

On playing a championship event at the Broadmoor

BK: "For the Senior Open Championship or all of our championships, it takes years. It's not months leading in. There's a lot of preparation that goes into setting up for a national championship. What we try to do is look at each individual hole and try and pull out of it what the architects original intentions were. What is it trying to challenge that player who's playing that hole to do. Then if we do that properly, when you put them all together, it's going to test every aspect of a player's game. In different parts of the world, you have to adjust. Obviously, there's a factor in the championship at the Broadmoor that I can't control and that's the weather, the dry air and the altitude. There are so many additional things besides what the players are going to see on the ground, that are going to impact how they play, which is what makes the Broadmoor more intriguing. I could just put the tee markers in the ground and pick any hole location and it's going to be tough regardless because of those other things. We were fortunate a couple of weeks ago to be at a champions tour event in Mississippi and we were chatting with a lot of the players down there and none of them had been to the Broadmoor. They didn't participate in 2008 so a lot of them are going to see the venue for the very first time. I don't know if Kenny's going to share any secrets with them or not leading into the championship. There's a lot more to think about than just how high the rough is and where the hole location is. Mother nature I has a big hand in it."

TIGHT END JEFF HEUERMAN

On hitting golf balls with reigning U.S. Senior Open Champion Kenny Perry

"It was cool, especially hitting balls on our practice fields over there. It was a cool experience. He's a phenomenal golfer. I'm just glad that he used my club to hit some shots. Hopefully he'll rub some luck on it."

On whether he's ever hit golf balls on a football field

“Never. It was a little deep. [Director of Sports Turf & Grounds] Brooks [Dodson] over there, I may question the yardage he gave me (laughing). It was cool and it was a lot of fun.”

On how great the practice fields look

“It is Brook’s yard. You noticed we were hitting off of the rough. He told us we cannot hit off of the short stuff over there. They take phenomenal care of that grass. It looks like golf course grass out there honestly (laughing).”

On hitting golf balls in front of so many cameras

“It’s one thing on Saturday morning with your buddies teeing off. It’s another thing teeing off with a champion over there and all of the cameras over here. It’s a little nerve wracking. It’s just different. Golf is a completely different sport than football in so many different ways. That’s what makes it challenging. I think that’s why [K] Brandon [McManus], [QB] Case [Keenum] and I and a lot of us enjoy playing because it is so different and it is very challenging.”

On if he asked Perry for any tips

“No, I have not yet. I was talking to him about the percentages. If you’re hitting into the mountains, it’s two percent. If you’re hitting away, it’s 10 percent. If you’re parallel with them, it’s five percent. It explains a lot. Now that I think about it, it might save me a few strokes. I was talking to him about that.”

On what Keenum has been like around the building

“I think the bigger thing is just the veteran quarterback presence. We haven’t really had a whole lot of that the past couple of years. Just having the veteran quarterback presence and how he leads and how he manages things is huge.”

On how difficult it is to play with multiple quarterbacks during the season

“It’s definitely very challenging. I guess it would be kind of like playing golf and not knowing any of your yardages and kind of guessing. It’s a week to week thing. It was definitely challenging. It’s like anything, you have to make the most of it.”

On his excitement heading into OTAs

“We’re really excited, especially getting to work with Case. Like you said, knowing your starting quarterback and knowing who is going to be taking snaps week one [is huge]. You’re able to do a lot with that this time of the year when you have your starter for the year. I think you get more versed in the playbook and stuff like that.”

On being the veteran of the tight end room

“It’s crazy. Time goes by fast.”

On what he sees his role with the young tight ends being

“Obviously being the veteran in the room and being the leader in the room—I know [TE] Jake’s [Butt] situation. I’ve been there before. [TE] Austin [Traylor], he played a little bit last year. I think we’re going to be a good group. We’re working a lot with Case and hopefully we can build a good connection there.”

On what he thinks is key for him to produce more

“I think just getting into a rhythm and getting into a groove. You were talking about playing with three different quarterbacks and going week to week last year. It’s kind of tough sometimes getting into a rhythm and getting into the groove of things. Hopefully with Case we can get into a good rhythm and build on that week to week. Hopefully it will take us deep.”

KICKER BRANDON MCMANUS

On football players who like to golf

“It has a lot to do with how you grew up. I grew up playing golf. I took a break in high school and college, but I picked it back up. These are the greatest athletes in the world, so when [S] Darian [Stewart] is so hesitant to swing the club it’s just because he’s not comfortable doing it. Golf is a very humbling sport. The best athletes in the world struggle with it. You just have to commit to the

shot and you have to be able to do it full speed. it's a big hand eye coordination sport, similar to baseball, except the ball is sitting still."

On why specialists and quarterbacks are better at golf

"Free time. I think it's free time (laughing)."

On the parallels in kicking a field goal and hitting a golf ball

"Every golf shot that's a put is very similar to kicking a field goal. It's a lot of getting your hips through, like when you're kicking. Golf is all about rotation and getting your hips through, squared to the target. The mental aspect of the games is very similar as well. I struggle a lot more with a 3-foot put than I do with all the field goals I kicked in the Super Bowl. I'm way more nervous to make a 3-foot putt. It helps you to stay calm out there out on the golf course and to stay calm out there on the field."

On interning with the United States Golf Association

"I interned in Lancaster, Penn., with the USGA. It was a lot of fun. I was on site for a full month up until the tournament through the tournament. I did everything from placing porta pottys, making sure they were off the TV camera lines, to shipping and receiving packages. I woke up early in the morning, went out to set up the golf course and picked the pin locations. On my last day I walked and scored behind the players and watched them throughout their rounds. It was an amazing experience. When I'm done playing, I want to be involved with golf in some realm."

On if QB Case Keenum will take his spot as the team's best golfer

"He's already passed me. We played once and he's definitely better than me, so I have to work a little bit harder. I have a little more free time than he does, but he's an 8-point handicap and I'm a four. My best chance is to do match play against him, but I think he'll always be able to beat me until I get down to his low scores."

On President of Football Operations/General Manager John Elway's chances to qualify for the U.S. Senior Open at the Broadmoor later in June

"I have seen John play in our Broncos Golf Tournament that we do every year, but I haven't played with him, so I can't really say. I've seen videos of him, like last year he played in the Colorado Championship. I hope he gets in. I think it'll be super exciting for fan to go out and watch John as well as some of the best golfers in the world. I do hope he makes it."

SAFETY DARIAN STEWART

On what S Su'a Cravens brings to the team

"I think he's going to bring a lot of energy. He's still young. He has great energy and he seems like a smart football player. He's going to be helpful. I think that was a good addition for the secondary."

On how Cravens has been around the building

"He's putting in the work every day with us. For me, as a leader, it's important for me to help bring him along. I'm willing to do that and he's willing to learn. He's going to be ok."

On the attitude of the team after last season

"I think we're 100 percent over it. We added the pieces in place to help us compete and win the AFC West."

On the impact the safeties make in the defense

"There's going to be multiple safeties on the field. It's good for us as a group. It helps us learn every position and it's challenging us. I think it's going to be a big help for us."

On helping the incoming rookies

“If you want to win, you’re going to help your young guys. That’s how I look at it, and I’m always willing to help anyway I can with those guys and give them any information I can. It doesn’t do me any good just holding things back. We don’t get better as a team. Me helping them as best as I can, along with the coaches, is going to make us that much better.”

On who he looked up to as a rookie

“[Former NFL S Oshiomogho] ‘O.J.’ Atogwe, that was a good guy of mine, and [Former NFL Safety] James Butler. Those guys took me under their wing as a young Safety, and I’m paying it back.”

On how he wants to improve from last season

“Being more detailed. I think as a whole group we need to be more detailed and own up to our responsibilities.”

On his golf swing

“It was good today. I surprised myself. I didn’t expect to hit the ball, especially since I’m used to hitting it off the tee (laughing). I was happy with what happened today.”

On whether he think playing football or golf is more difficult

“This one (golf) was probably the hardest. I’m probably going to miss it. That’s what I was expecting to happen. But I kept my own about it and got a good swing out of it.”

On the Broncos selecting OLB Bradley Chubb in the first round

“Great pick. I think he’s going to boost this defense. I look forward to being in the top five again in all categories. He was a great pick and he’s going to help us out a lot.”

On how Chubb will help the Broncos

“We still have the key players in place, and with him, he’s going to boost that pass rushing and we’re going to be able to make more plays on the ball.”

On his reaction to Chubb being picked

“I was happy. Yes sir, I was happy. I’m looking forward to helping him, having him in here and working with him.”

On if he watches the draft more closely than he did before

“No, not as much. It comes through on my phone, so I get the picks that way. I’m excited about the draft picks that we have and I look forward to all of them helping us.”