

HAROLD VARNER III

MARK WILLIAMS: We would like to welcome Harold Varner III to the 2020 Bermuda Championship. Thanks for giving us some of your time. I understand you just played nine holes in the pro-am. Is that your first look at the course or have you been here just a few days extra?

HAROLD VARNER III: No, no, first look. Obviously you've got to do the quarantine in your room until you get your test back. First time being on the course.

MARK WILLIAMS: What's your first impressions of the golf course and Bermuda in particular?

HAROLD VARNER III: It's really good. It would be a lot better if this Dodgers fan wasn't behind the camera. But no, it's really good. It's really hilly, that's for sure.

MARK WILLIAMS: You've already played a couple of events this season, not shot a round over par, T-29 at Safeway and T-13 at Shriners.

HAROLD VARNER III: Don't be jinxing this now.

MARK WILLIAMS: No, I'm saying your form is really good. What are you feeling this season? You finished I think top-10 at Wyndham was your last top-10, but what are you feeling in your game right now?

HAROLD VARNER III: I'm just pissed off. Obviously didn't play in the last two. Just seeing the best in the world play and not being in those fields, just extra motivation that I needed. Just unfortunate not to finish the season very well, so going to make the most of when I do play and play as much as I can.

MARK WILLIAMS: So you see this Bermuda Championship as a great opportunity for yourself being here with a number of other players that are here for the first time, too.

HAROLD VARNER III: Yeah, obviously every week's a great opportunity, but yeah, I feel great about my game and the direction it's going and what I want to do in this game and this is a great opportunity to do that.

MARK WILLIAMS: You got married recently. How has that changed your outlook or your practice routines or anything? Is it very different or is it kind of the same?

HAROLD VARNER III: Yeah, great question. No, nothing different on the golf side. Figuring

out how to wear a ring and play golf was a big deal because I used -- you know the little ring thing you put keys on, I sent that to the guy for the measurement of my finger and it didn't come out great. So I went to sleep with my ring on and it cut the circulation off in my finger, so that wasn't a great idea so that's been a little different.

Just doing the same thing, nothing new. Just a lot of construction at home, but that is what it is. You just deal with it, it's a part of life.

MARK WILLIAMS: Do you play with the ring on or do you take it off when you play?

HAROLD VARNER III: I keep it on. It's better to keep it on because I'll lose it.

MARK WILLIAMS: During COVID was it a tough decision to go ahead with the wedding and get married? A lot of people are going through this situation now and putting off plans and stuff like that. What was your situation?

HAROLD VARNER III: The most important thing to me was just not eating this fly. No, the big is thing for me was to get married. I didn't have a wedding. Obviously I wanted a lot of people there to see it, but the biggest thing was getting married to my wife, that's the most important thing.

I think weddings are getting a little blown out of proportion. What are you really getting married for? Are you getting married to party? Like I can throw a big party, I'm good at that, I have no trouble with that.

But getting married it's a sacred thing about her and I and it was pretty simple. Obviously it worked out -- our date of our wedding worked out because they I guess lightened it up in North Carolina so we were able to have 150 people. Obviously a lot of older people left after the ceremony. And the reception was a lot of fun because it became a big party, but a lot of close friends. We were super fortunate. We were going to get married whether it was two of us or 300 of us.

MARK WILLIAMS: Good for you. You know you got a lot of publicity recently, you're such a popular guy, you do so many good things in the community, but singing with Mia at the Shriners got a lot of hits on social media. How impactful was that for you and how did you get involved in that?

HAROLD VARNER III: So I was playing in a pro-member and Doug texted me and was like, "I'd really love for you to do this thing, this singing thing." And what's funny is like two days before I thought I could sing. So Doug texted me and I'm like, "Well, I'll do it if I can do it in person," because then you can vibe off of 'em and kind of like help 'em out, encourage 'em.

And then it just like, once I talked to her for 10 minutes obviously on web chat and she started singing and I'm singing and I'm like, dude, I'm definitely messing her up.

I just love perseverance and she's like she should be right next to that in the dictionary. I try to keep things in perspective obviously in golf and life and talking to her just makes it that much easier. She's just so real, been through a lot and I can't wait to meet her. I think it's going to be an awesome time.

But weirdly enough, I never watched the video portion of it because it just kind of messed me up. Some people just been dealt a different hand and I just can't keep watching that. I guess it was really good for social media and clicks and all that kind of stuff, but I was just really touched by her. She was super courageous. She's really good at like selling herself to make herself better, even though she can't always do that.

MARK WILLIAMS: Well, you could tell you guys had a really legitimate personal connection there. Do you think you'll continue to see her or stay in touch with Mia?

HAROLD VARNER III: Yeah, I think the PGA will help out a lot with that, so yeah, I don't see why not. It's easy to follow her, though. She's pretty famous in the Shriners community, so it's pretty cool.

Q. Congrats on getting married.

HAROLD VARNER III: Thanks, appreciate it.

Q. I wanted to ask, did you have any (inaudible) morning? Like what was kind of the mentality or the emotion that day?

HAROLD VARNER III: The most nervous thing is that when you're getting ready, her dad's in the room and you kind of want to talk to your boys like how you talk to your boys and you can't really do that, can't mess around like that. That was the nervous part. But no, man, I've known Amanda since I was 17 so I've kind of messed up sometimes and just seen it through. It's been pretty -- I've been very fortunate on my end.

Q. What was the song for walking down the aisle?

HAROLD VARNER III: Don't even know. I know what song our first dance was. It was Van Morrison, I think, Crazy Love. It was really good. It's awesome, I listen to it like every day.

Q. How was the dance floor at the wedding?

HAROLD VARNER III: It was good. I definitely lost all my clothes.

Q. And it's crazy, it's been five years since you played Korn Ferry Tour. You've had five years out here, this is your sixth season on the PGA TOUR. Kind of looking back at these five years, what are a couple of the positives that you take away and a couple things that you kind of wish you still --

HAROLD VARNER III: I want to win. Obviously the goal is just to get better. I've always said that since I've had any type of status, but that's the truth. That's all I want to do. If I keep getting better, something good's going to happen and the win's going to come. Obviously you see more -- I keep getting closer and closer, so more people are obviously like watching. They're like, "When are you going to win?" I'm like, "My time will come. It's my journey. I get to run it and I'm going to run it the best that I can."

Q. Your theme of always getting better, like you said, you've been saying that for seven years, since I've known you. Is that something a mentor instilled in you or something you always said when you were little?

HAROLD VARNER III: Yeah, a friend of mine used to always say it. This member at my club, Rory Hunter, he used to always say like if I stop thinking about winning, I'll stop getting better. So I always went back to let's get better and I kept getting closer to winning.

Q. What kind of are you most proud of from your last five years I guess in general in your career so far?

HAROLD VARNER III: Oh, it's got to be 2017 when I almost lost my card. Yeah, I was going to be all right, 126, I was getting a lot of opportunities, but I played really well in Greensboro on the last day and that meant the world. It gave me all the confidence in the world that I could play bad and still manage out here.

Then it helped me out a lot in my marriage. Had a tough year like dating wise, Amanda lost her brother and just things that I wasn't ready to handle as a 24-year-old. But just going through that and handling life while also being able to play golf. People have to do that in their 9:00-to-5:00s and that was a hand I was dealt.

Q. Is it crazy to think that you're 30? Does it feel like time's kind of flown by?

HAROLD VARNER III: Didn't even think about it until you just said something. The craziest part is I'm 30 and I've been out here five years, to be honest with you. If you would have told me this would be my rookie year coming out of college, I'd be like, oh, it doesn't surprise me, I'm less experienced, I'm going to work my way up. You know, just take it one day at a time.

Q. And I wanted to ask about the -- you know, in the game, the trends and Bryson trying the 48-inch driver. What's your take on where everything's going? Have you experimented with that sort of stuff?

HAROLD VARNER III: No, I've never experimented with that stuff, but obviously it's working for him. Only time will tell.

The biggest thing for me is if we're going to stop anchoring from the belly, why would we anchor from the arm? I don't get it, but I've always had an issue with that. I don't think it

should touch your body at all, but that's not my -- I don't have the power to change that. My job's to be the best I can with what I've got and I think if I play really well I can compete with anyone, whether they anchor it or not.

Q. So in your mind, you're good with how far you hit it for you? You don't feel like you need --

HAROLD VARNER III: Hell, no. I want to hit it further, what are you talking about? No, I want to hit it further, but technology will take care of that or we'll just go backwards. You know how it is, Kev, always want more, but some days on most good golf courses the fairway is very important on Tour, so we'll see if that's an important thing.

Q. And lastly, I had to ask as you mentioned at the beginning, your Tweet about the hoodie.

HAROLD VARNER III: Love it. Go ahead. Fire it up, Kev. I ain't scared of it, Kev.

Q. What's your take on hoodies on the golf course?

HAROLD VARNER III: The funniest part is I was watching the Panthers play, I had some beers and I've had people ask me about a hoodie. I'm like, "Damn, is it really a hoodie?" They're like, "What's the deal with the hoodie?" So I had about five or six people ask me about a hoodie and I just, I said, "The problem with golf is that we're talking about a freakin' hoodie."

And the funniest part about the whole thing is my tweet had nothing to do with a hoodie, it's the fact that we're talking about a hoodie and we're not worried about how we're going to get more people into golf and how we're going to grow the game. That's the part that's funny to me because some people are bitter, man. They want it to be like a certain way.

I don't care if you want it a certain way, do the right thing. Like don't freakin' donate your money to a program just because you feel good and you have all this money and it doesn't really make golf grow.

So quarantine helped me out. I fired at a lot of people yesterday. It's the right thing to do. I care about this game, this game changed my life and it's just funny that a hoodie made it come out even more. I'm passionate about it. I don't really care that you're mad what I think of a hoodie, you know, and if you really think a hoodie's a problem, then you probably suck at golf anyway.

Q. Do you think you might wear one anytime in a tournament?

HAROLD VARNER III: No. That's another point, I would never wear a hoodie. If I put on a hoodie, man, I wouldn't take it past my hip.

It's just very interesting. It's the world we live in. Everyone's so offended and so soft, but they won't address the real issues, they'll just go to the issues they can nag on and talk about pointless things. Let's talk about how we can make this game a better game for everyone and that has nothing to do with a hoodie, that has to do with access.

MARK WILLIAMS: Harold, just one more question to wind down and get off the hoodie subject for a second. So in 20 years your answer might be completely different, but what's the best wedding you guys got?

HAROLD VARNER III: Oh, dang. So I got a flag made out of a 500-year-old whiskey barrel, that would be one, but Amanda's not going to say that.

And to be honest, the best one was cash. Cash is king because right now I have 48 plates in my house and obviously I'm so thankful, but like I didn't open the box very neatly and I guess there's a return thing. Amanda didn't tell me about that. And they're not going to be returned, so we'll help some family out during Christmas. It could be the best gift for someone else, so that gives me more joy than anything else.

MARK WILLIAMS: Well, we love your spirit and thank you for spending time with us. You're always a rock star.

HAROLD VARNER III: Thanks, Mark.