

editor's
letter

BY
BENNY TEO

IN TIME WITH

ROLEX

A DAY WITH MARTIN KAYMER

A HUMBLE HERO

or someone who has been the world number one, and reached the heights of sporting fame, Martin Kaymer displays the sort of honesty that one would normally only find with their best friend. On a whirlwind trip that takes him to Tokyo and Singapore in 48 hours for sponsor

Hugo Boss to meet and play golf with their clients, the 33-year-old German exudes confidence and charm in equal measure.

Both qualities belie the fact that he had just travelled around the world and red-eyed two destinations with a full schedule of work. It also betrayed the fact that, coming into the 2019 season, his world golf ranking has dropped to 159 and that the next year would be his final exemption on the PGA Tour.

Nevertheless, when Martin Kaymer stepped into Singapore Island Country Club's Island Course on Oct 18, he felt like a friend coming in for a quick morning nine holes instead of a superstar strutting in, and the guests felt his genuine friendship when he teed up with them.

Later, during an exclusive interview with Swing, he talked about his career and how he is preparing for the coming season.

"I bought a home in Florida so I will go there in the wintertime and practice. I have a priority list so it's chipping, pitching and putting because hitting fairways and greens, it's ok, the short game is where I need to focus," he said.

When asked why the short game was so important, he said, "The short game was holding me back this year. Hitting it close, no problem but taking advantage of the chances; if you hit 14, 15 greens over 18 holes and you make

only three, maximum four birdies, that's not enough."

Apart from that, Kaymer had also come off a difficult year where he had to deal with injury and admittedly, a lack of preparation prior to the Masters. That led to missing the cuts at two other Majors this year, and most painfully, missing out on the Ryder Cup.

"When that happens, it's hard to do anything. It was one week on, one week off, and then play another four or five weeks, and I need to rest as well. So I didn't give myself enough time to practice and prepare properly.

"I was really never ready before a tournament and already knowing this, I didn't like that feel of not being ready, so now I'm going to make sure next year is different. The first thing is that I need to improve my fitness, I need to get fitter and faster, so I can hit the ball farther," he added.

The new season is also different in that the PGA Tour schedule had been cramped up to finish in August with key tournaments like The Players and PGA Championship and Kaymer looks forward to it.

"I think it actually takes away pressure because now you really need to prepare, November, December, January. Those three months you need to use your own ideal way because from February until July, it's going to be fast. And then after that, you have seven months where there are no major tournaments and you can relax and prepare for the next year.

"You can imagine, if you have a good run for two or three months, you could win tournaments, I think it's great.



Martin Kaymer sharing a light moment with guests of Hugo Boss.

Ideally, I'd like to spend some time in America and some time in Europe, but you can't have everything,

"I like to travel, I like to go to Asia, America. I think it's the best education. I enjoy different cultures. When I return home to Germany, I try to take back some of the positive influences of when I travel into my life."

But coming into the new season, it is not just fitness and short game that the German has to work on. His longtime caddie, Craig Connelly, has parted ways as well.

"Relationships, sometimes, it becomes a bit flat, and it's been like this for about 12 months already and we try to be aware of this and fight against it, wanting to stay together and at one stage it just didn't work out anymore and it has nothing to do with performance or he did something bad or we as a team didn't do well, it was nothing like that. It was a natural thing that we reached a point where we had to go separate ways.

"I have some ideas on who could fit in our team and it's a decision that you need to take time on because it's not just about golf, it's a person you spend so much personal time with so I think you need to choose wisely. I have not found one yet, I have two or three on my list that I have to decide on."

Back to a topic that is more light hearted, the Boss Golf Martin Kaymer Collection is something that he takes great pride and pleasure in. Admitting to feeling a lost initially when traveling to fashion shows and being asked his opinions on style and colours, he is now relishing the process and looks forward to meeting with the brand's designers to plan his collection.

"When I see something nice, a polo shirt or a pattern or design, or material, I can maybe go back and say, can you do this for my next season? For example, the collar with the button, I always thought it looks quite classy, It's never been done on a golf collection so I said, 'Maybe we can try this and see if its received well.'

"They did a sample and showed me and I was quite proud that they did what I ask. There is pressure on them also. They need to deliver and sell shirts. If they don't sell just because Martin Kaymer had an idea, that's not good."

And what about his personal style? What does he like to wear?

"I like berry colours, not reddish, but purple. When I won at TPC Sawgrass, I wore a berry coloured shirt, that one. I like baby blue. And I like checks, I wear them everywhere, to the bar, to a date, everywhere."

photos courtesy of Hugo Boss



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