

2020 – The year that was.

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It is hard to comprehend, let alone put into words, what 2020 has meant for us all. This unprecedented year has reminded us all just how fragile life can be, but remarkably, in a year that has kept us all apart, it has also brought us closer together. Historically, through adversity comes strength, and we can draw immense inspiration from the courage of health care workers and volunteer's who have shown us that real change comes from being part of something greater than ourselves. With this new sense of community, it is my hope that we will see brighter times in 2021.

Looking forward.

Despite the ebbs and flows of 2020, Golf participation numbers went up, and manufacturers reported an excellent year with more casual players than ever returning to the game in these socially distanced times. Interestingly, more players are now committing to buying equipment rather than hiring, and Golf has become an extremely healthy pastime option.

Semblance of normality?

Through it all, Golf has been able to give us some semblance of normality by either still being able to play, or by watching it on TV. The PGA, LPGA and Korn Ferry Tours somehow found ways to continue the season, albeit without crowds. I don't think we can underestimate just what an undertaking this has been logistically, but somehow the PGA managed to stage 17 events with only 10 positive Covid results.

So, what happened on Tour?

After the 2019 season break, Bryson DeChambeau turned up looking like the incredible hulk and set about changing our perceptions on what is possible in the game. He polarized opinions from fellow players, media and fans, but ultimately, he let his clubs do the talking and ended up with 9 top ten results, and finished it off by winning the US Open at Wingfoot by 6 shots.

Dustin Johnson's rollercoaster career continued. In August, he regained his #1 spot in the world rankings, tested positive for Covid in October, and then came back to win the delayed Masters in November.

For a couple of years, there has been a lot of talk about a new kid on Tour by the name of Collin Morikawa. He began his PGA career by making 22 consecutive cuts, a feat only surpassed by Tiger Woods and is one of the purest ball strikers to come along for some time. It was no real surprise then

that he won his first major – The PGA Championship, and had two other wins on Tour.

Scottie Scheffler went from the Korn Ferry Tour player of the year in 2019, to be the PGA Tour rookie of the year. He finished 5th in the FedEx Cup and is only the 3rd player in history to do this. He looks like an exciting prospect to keep an eye on for 2021.

Two other players who made incredible strides in 2020 were Daniel Berger and Harris English. Berger went from 154th in the world standings to 13th, while English jumped a massive 154 places from 183rd to 29th.

Biggest surprise.

The classic underdog, feel-good story of the year must be Jim Herman defying 600-1 odds to win the Wyndham Championship. The former assistant Pro was ranked outside the top 300 and had missed 11 cuts when all of a sudden, his game turns around and he shoots 63 in the final round to win. Possibly as big a surprise as Jim Herman's win, but for different reasons, is the fact that Rory McIlroy didn't win anywhere worldwide in 2020 after a promising start.

Quote of the year.

I don't think we can go past our friend Bryson at the 3rd hole at Augusta when he asked an official -
"Is this a lost ball if I can't find it?"

