

editor's
letter

BY
S. MURALI

IN TIME WITH



ROLEX

nd to be at my age now, at 40 years old ... I'm the first one to admit: I can't do the

things I used to be able to do. Most people can't at my age, versus when they were younger. I have to find different ways to go about it.

—TIGER WOODS

NO WRITING OFF THIS PREDATOR

I thought Tiger Woods was joking.

You see, the question asked by interviewer Charlie Rose was whether Woods was still looking at equalling Jack Nicklaus' record of 18 Majors.

Woods' reply? "To be honest with you, no."

But asked if he accepted that finality, Woods said, without breaking stride: "I've accepted I'm going to get more."

Even Rose must have thought Woods was joking as he asked once again later if the former World No 1 was planning to break Nicklaus' record. The answer this time was a short "Correct."

Why did I think Woods was joking when I first heard that reply? Because he has not won a Major since the 2008 US Open.

And he seems short on confidence, having pulled out of this month's Safeway Open the week of the tournament, after announcing he would play.

Plus, winning another five Majors would be a splendid career for any other golfer, forget about one who has already won 14 in what seems now an unbelievable stretch of domination.

With a bum knee, a bad back and a litany of other injuries, how on earth can Woods expect to win another five Majors in his forties and beyond?

Considering his current world ranking is 802, it would probably count as the greatest sporting comeback in history.

Do I think he can do it? Sorry, as much of a fan as I am of the man, I don't think so.

And I think I'm not alone in making that call.

What intrigues me is why he said it. Perhaps he is fed up with all the epitaphs being written on his career.

Following his pullout at the Safeway Open, many experts came out of the woodwork to postulate on the reasons for his late withdrawal.

He's got the yips again, said one. He must have realised his game was poor, said another. He got stage fright, said a third.

Woods must have bristled at the comments, especially since he himself admitted that his game was not as sharp as he had wanted it to be.

So Rose provided the opportunity to make a statement to the golfing world in general and his detractors in particular.

Woods is not coming back to just provide them fodder for columns. For them to analyse his game and see whether he can play good golf again.

He plans to win Majors, just like he used to. It is as brazen a statement of intent as you can get.

Come back and challenge what I'm saying when you have won 14 Majors yourself, he seems to be suggesting.

And it is that sort of swagger and confidence that took him to such dizzying heights in the first place.

So yes folks, it was no joke. Woods, the Tiger, the ultimate predator, still has Nicklaus in his sights.

I'm just glad I will be around to watch him resume that incredible chase.

Can you imagine if he starts proving us all wrong? Wow.

Illustration by Cel Guapao

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