HIDEKI MATSUYAMA: Things have changed a little bit, and I welcome that.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: He's been that one pro that's been on the PGA TOUR from Japan, that really could do it. And they put so much weight into him and so much pressure.

MASTERS ANNC: Matsuyama is Japan’s first Masters Champion!

JIM NANTZ: The story of Hideki delivering Japan its first green jacket was so gigantic. I can't even imagine how his hands weren't shaking the whole time. My hands were shaking and I was just broadcasting it.

JORDAN SPIETH: How big golf is there and trying to become a major champion. To win the Masters, I mean it's just otherworldly.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: It was monumental. His win transcends over throughout the world.

JORDAN SPIETH: The impact that could have on the game in Asia what a special opportunity for him going forward to continue to hold that torch for the younger generations that he for sure inspired.

HIDEKI MATSUYAMA: I realize now the responsibility that goes with a major championship. I’m flattered by the added attention, and I'll try my best to prepare well for what's to come.

***The Hideki Effect***

ANNC: Japan rejoices…..

**MORE THAN HALF OF JAPAN WAS TUNED-IN TO HIDEKI MATSUYAMA’S EVERY SHOT AT 8-AM ON MONDAY, APRIL 12TH…**

JAPAN FANS REAX PHONE CRYING

**AND THE EXCITEMENT OF THE NEWS SPREAD TO ALL OF ASIA AS A WHOLE.**

NAT: Whoo Hideki Matsuyama, let’s go team Asia.

NATS TRAIN CROSSING

**PERHAPS NO WHERE MORE SO THAN MATSUYAMA’S HOME CITY.**

Hitoshi Iwamoto: His last name is Matsuyama same as the name of Ehime's capital city. Our first daily newspaper was published in 1876, one hundred forty-five years ago, and we've been issuing our paper every day since then. We'd been waiting for that moment for forever. Every year we were ready to publish the extra. So we were very happy to finally have the opportunity.

H.Takata: I was at home watching the coverage all night long. As soon as he won around 8 am, I came to the office to report the breaking news. I remember it was like I was still dreaming as I made my way into work. I am sure the extras headlined "Matsuyama won the Masters" will be cherished forever. He's become the world-famous Hideki, but I believe he will continue being an athlete who values the bond between the people of Ehime and him forever.

**THE REACH OF MATSUYAMA’S WIN WENT WELL THROUGHOUT THE CITY…**

**TO EVEN A LOCAL FAMILY RUN SOY SAUCE FACTORY, A PRODUCT MATSUYAMA TRAVELS WITH TO REMIND HIM OF HIS HOME.**

Ryuji Uruki: It was established in 1923 so this is our 98th year. For my work, I try and not to take a day off. If you take time off, you become complacent. I was at home watching the coverage. I pushed back our operation time a little bit. Of course, I was happy to see him win.

**AS WELL AS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRYSIDE TO THE REST OF ITS PRIDEFUL PEOPLE.**

ISAO AOKI: I was up at 3:30 am every morning during Masters week watching him play. When he made the last putt, I just looked down without saying a word. I managed to fight back my tears. I was just so happy.

**OF COURSE, THERE WERE MANY LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR JAPANESE GOLF…IN ESSENCE, THE “CAUSE” BEHIND THE “HIDEKI EFFECT”.**

ISAO AOKI: In my case, I was curious. I wanted to see how golf was played in the United States, and what kind of players were there. Back then, golf was played by administrative executives, not managers but directors and higher positioned people. I'd say golf was for upper-class people.I didn’t have a full set of clubs, so using the ones that I did have, I had to use my imagination to figure out how to move the ball around. If I needed to hook it or slice it or hit a high ball or low ball, I could do it all with just one club.

**ISAO AOKI TURNED PROFESSIONAL IN 1964 AND SKYROCKED INTO JAPANESE NOTARIETY WHEN HE JOINED THE JAPAN GOLF TOUR IN 1972.**

**AND IN THE MID-70’S, HE BEGAN COMPETING IN LIMITED EVENTS IN THE U.S., GAINING MAJOR NOTARIETY IN THE 1980 U.S. OPEN AFTER FINISHING 2ND TO JACK NICKLAUS – IN WHAT WAS COINED “THE BATTLE OF BALTUSROL”.**

ISAO AOKI: Even though I lost, I look back at what I accomplished and can accept that defeat with no regrets.

**BUT IN THE 1983 SONY OPEN IN HAWAII, JAPAN SAW ITS FIRST WINNER ON THE PGA TOUR…**

ANNC: That’s a beauty. Oh, I don’t believe it, that’s in the hole.

**AFTER A TOUCH OF PACIFIC FATE.**

ANNC: That is impossible. What a finish!

ISAO AOKI: I’m grateful to the golfing Gods, for creating the sport we call golf. Every time I play, whether it’s in a match or just out for fun, whenever I tee up my ball, I’m grateful that we have this wonderful game.

SHIGEKI MARUYAMA: I was able to make it to the PGA TOUR because I saw Aoki-san win the Hawaiian Open when I was a kid, and I wanted to be like him. Then, Naomichi Ozaki-san came along. That's what made me think I should try as well.

**THE JAPANESE PLAYERS THAT FOLLOWED AOKI’S LEAD IN THE U.S. WERE SIGNIFICANT…**

**FROM A RENOWNED TRIO OF BROTHERS…**

ANNC: Jumbo Ozaki

**WHO HAD A PRESENCE IN THE BIRTH OF THE PRESIDENTS CUP.**

**TO ANOTHER WHO ROSE TO PROMINANCE IN THE INTERNATIONAL TEAMS FIRST VICTORY.**

ANNC: Shigeki Maruyama, he charmed them all and beat them all.

SHIGEKI MARUYAMA: At the time, I didn't have a TOUR card and my fellow teammates kept on telling me “You gotta come play on TOUR!” That made my desire to compete on the PGA TOUR grow even stronger.

MARUYAMA WIN ANNC: Shigeki Maruyama – wins for the first time on the PGA TOUR.

SHIGEKI MARUYAMA: Nobody before me had won a PGA title in the mainland, but after I did, more players started winning tournaments in the U.S. I was glad to see that.

**STILL, THE MAJOR TITLES REMAINED ELUSIVE.**

**AT LEAST FOR THE MEN…**

**AS JAPAN SAW ITS FIRST MAJOR CHAMPION, A FEMALE COMPETITOR, HISAKO HIGUCHI IN 1977.**

ANNC: Pride takes over - The prestigious 1977 LPGA Championship.

**YET THE PRESSURE STILL MOUNTED FOR OVER 40 YEARS.**

HINAKO SHIBUNO: The reaction from people around me was pretty significant. It wasn't pressure, but I did feel something, something indescribable. Sooner or later, I was expecting somebody from Japan to win a men's major, and Hideki winning that title was no surprise to me.

HIDEKI MATSUYAMA: I’ve come close in the past, but I haven’t really been in contention for the last few of years. So knowing that, I questioned whether or not I may never get a major title.

RYO ISHIKAWA: Hideki and I are the same age, and we've competed against each other since we were juniors. When we were competing together on the PGA TOUR, there was a period during which we were the only Japanese players. There was pressure, but we embraced that as good pressure, not a bad pressure.

**RYO ISHIKAWA’S UNIQUE FLARE & GAME DREW THE ATTENTION OF MANY AS HE MADE HIS DEBUT IN AMERICA AT THE 2009 MASTERS…**

**JUST TWO YEARS PRIOR TO MATSUYAMA’S DEBUT – WHEN HE BECAME THE FIRST FROM JAPAN TO WIN LOW AMATEUR HONORS.**

DOUG FERGUSON: Ishikawa had a lot of the qualities in terms of what we would call rock star status But Hideki even though he wasn't flashy like Ishikawa, his performance was great and that's what got everybody's attention.

RYO ISHIKAWA: I turned pro when I was in high school, but Hideki chose to go to college. He made significant progress as a collegiate golfer.

ANNC: Matsuyama, makes the Memorial, his maiden voyage to victory.

JACK NICKLAUS: When he won, I said, he's got to win a lot of golf tournaments and he's going win some majors. He's gonna make Japan forget about Aoki. I don't mean that nasty cuz Aoki was a good friend and a good player, but Hideki was just too good of a player.

ANNC: Masterful performance by Matsuyama. A star shines brightly over Japan.

RYO ISHIKAWA: During the 4 years I spent in the U.S., I was a bit overwhelmed by the number of great golfers around me. I’d see the unique skills from one golfer to the next and wanted to try and absorb all that in and try and replicate all those different strengths, so mentally I was quite exhausted. Hideki on the other hand succeeded because of his strong commitment to stick to his own game.

DOUG FERGUSON: The PGA Championship at Quail Hollow, it was his first really good chance in a major. Someone else played better and that happens, but you got to sense that it was really devastating for Hideki and that almost began his slide the other direction.

HIDEKI MATSUYAMA: I just tried to stay patient because certain aspects of my game were improving little by little, and I was expecting that everything would eventually fall into place.

ISAO AOKI: It’s been 85 years since the first Japanese player appeared in the Masters, but when the history books are written about Japanese athletes in the Masters, a new era has begun with Hideki’s win, and I’m sure there will be many more behind him who'd like to follow in Matsuyama's steps.

PM AWARD NAT: We hereby honor you and your achievement that has greatly contributed to the promotion of sports in Japan, conveys the importance of perseverance to our people, and provides dreams and hopes that are truly remarkable.

HIDEKI MATSUYAMA: It's a very honorable award and I'm humbled to received it. I need to continue working hard to live up to it.

PM AWARD NAT: If me winning the Masters would inspire little children to think that they too can now win the Masters, then that makes me extremely happy.

SHIGEKI MARUYAMA: Because of him, golf courses in Japan are crowded, driving ranges are packed, and golf shops can barely keep products on their shelves. Japan's experiencing a golf boom right now thanks to Hideki's win, and it's only going to continue to get bigger.

YOUNG BOY: It was amazing. I want to be like him.

YOUNG GIRL: He's so cool. It's amazing how he hits the ball so far.

YOUNG GUY: Seeing a Japanese player win, even comparing that to other sports, is such an unbelievable achievement. I was very moved. It was very courageous.

FATHER: I have been teaching my children to golf and seeing Matsuyama win the Masters is only going to help them. Their dreams are no longer just dreams, but are dreams that actually have a chance of coming true in the very near future.

HIDEKI MATSUYAMA: Watching that brings me great joy, I’m really happy and it makes it worthwhile that I won the Masters – all I can do now is try my best to be a good example.

**MATSUYAMA NOW LOOKS TO INSPIRE EVEN FURTHER AS HE CARRIES HIS GREEN JACKET BACK HOME FOR THE OLYMPIC GAMES AT KASUMIGASEKI COUNTRY CLUB.**

SHIGEKI MARUYAMA: Everybody in Japan will continue to have high expectations for Hideki, although that's a big load for him.

**HE CAN FIND COMFORT IN WHAT WILL BE A TRULY FULL CIRCLE MOMENT…**

**AS IT’S THE SITE WHERE HE QUALIFIED FOR HIS FIRST MASTERS.**

SHIGEKI MARUYAMA: The fact that he won that title as well as Japan Junior means the course matches Hideki's play style. That should be an advantage.

ISAO AOKI: I want him to get a gold medal. I expect him to do his best and we’re all here to support him.

**WIN OR LOSE IN TOKYO, THE STATE OF JAPANESE GOLF CONTINUES TO BE IN GOOD HANDS…**

**AS AN ENTIRE COUNTRY – NO MATTER HOW BIG A ROLE, OR EVEN A POTENTIAL ONE TO COME – REMAINS APPRECIATIVE TO A MAN CARRYING THE TORCH FOR ALL.**

ISAO AOKI: I want each younger generation to establish their own era. I want to see multiple great players working hard together to grow the game.

SHIGEKI MARUYAMA: History will continue getting better and rewritten over time which is why younger generations can dream bigger and realize those dreams.

RYO ISHIKAWA: I’d like to say that I’ll be the one following behind Hideki. But it could be some other Japanese golfer that follows in Hideki path and becomes one of the world's top players, which would only encourage further growth of the game.

**MATSUYAMA WILL CONTINUE TO *ASPIRE* FOR THE GAME’S BIGGEST TITLES – TO *INSPIRE* EVEN MORE.**

HIDEKI MATSUYAMA: I'm after all of them. I want to work hard and keep up my performance so that I can take my mind off the past.

HIDEKI MATSUYAMA / 2021 MASTERS CHAMPION

2021 MASTERS

COLLIN MORIKAWA / 2021 THE OPEN CHAMPION

JIM NANTZ / CBS SPORTS

JORDAN SPIETH / 2015 MASTERS CHAMPION

HITOSHI IWAMOTO / DIRECTOR, EHIME SHIMBUN SPORTS DIVISION

HIROFUMI TAKATA / DIRECTOR, EHIME SHIMBUN SPORTS DIVISION

RYUJI URUKI / PRESIDENT, URUKI SOY SAUCE FACTORY

1983 SONY OPEN IN HAWAII

1998 PRESIDENTS CUP

2001 U.S. BANK CHAMPIONSHIP IN MILWAUKEE

1977 LPGA CHAMPIONSHIP

DOUG FERGUSON / GOLF WRITER, ASSOCIATED PRESS

2014 THE MEMORIAL TOURNAMENT PRESENTED BY NATIONWIDE

JACK NICKLAUS / HOST, THE MEMORIAL TOURNAMENT

SHIGEKI MARUYAMA / 2021 OLYMPIC GOLF TEAM HEAD COACH