

Q. First off, just how do you approach this? Is this almost like a hometown kind of event or home state at least event for you?

TOM WATSON: Well, it's great being a three-hour drive from home and being out in an area that you love. This is a special place here. With the lake here, the facility that we have here, playing a par-3 course, nobody ever does that in professional golf. It's unique and special.

But again, it goes back to I think 1978 was the first Legends tournament and it was the first senior tour tournament; I would call it the PGA TOUR Champions. It brings together all the older players that don't get a chance to play golf anymore. That's the beauty of this tournament. That's the most special thing about this tournament is to be able to see the old guys, let them have a chance to compete again and get their juices flowing. At least think about it, think about the memories that they used to have when they competed and maybe get some of those memories back in real form this week. To see them out there on the golf course is really special.

Q. How long did it take you to fall in love with this area?

TOM WATSON: Well, this area's a -- you know, the topography of the area will leave you speechless. I love the rocks, I love the contours. The area's a beautiful, beautiful area to me.

Q. Right behind you is where your practice area was and it got swallowed up by a sinkhole. Any plans to do anything else that's maybe not near that sinkholes?

TOM WATSON: No plans yet. Have they gotten down to the cave yet?

Q. Yes.

TOM WATSON: Good, good, because they were thinking a connection of the caves here that could really be something special.

Q. A lot of attention this week on the new Tiger Woods course over there, and of course the Coore-Crenshaw course is under construction. Where do you see this fitting in with one of the budding great golf destinations?

TOM WATSON: Well, with the names involved with the golf course designs here from Jack Nicklaus here at Top of the Rock to Coore and Crenshaw, maybe the premier golf designers, and then bring Tiger Woods into the mix, you've got some great names in golf to attract golfers here to this area. It's already been very attractive to a lot of golfers, there's no

question, but I think this is only going to enhance that.

Q. Pretty high ceiling as to what it could be 10, 20 years down the line?

TOM WATSON: Don't know. It's not predictable right now. The one thing I know is if Mr. Morris is involved, it's going to be first class.

Q. What's something about the game of golf -- one of the messages we've heard is it's great professionally but the youth today, trying to get them more involved. What's something maybe we can do in the media or just to get the game of golf, people thinking about it more?

TOM WATSON: Well, actually, the youth of America are getting more involved with golf. In the last couple years there's been a good uptick in the participation of younger players in the game. A lot of it has to do with golf's efforts to do that, from The First Tee programs to The PGA of America programs with their Junior League programs to the Youth On Course program which allows you to play golf on designated golf courses for a maximum of five bucks. That's really a good program.

So we've got the right programs in place. All we need are the parents. All we need are the parents to start the kids in the game. That's how I started and that's how I guarantee 95 percent of all these players right here got started, with their parents involved in the game.

Q. The driving range I understand was designed by Arnold Palmer. For the younger generation, they hear about The King, what's a quick story or something that comes to mind just when you're asked about him?

TOM WATSON: Well, I had a chance when I was 15 years old to play with Arnold Palmer at an exhibition in Kansas City, Brookridge Country Club. You can just imagine, he was in his heyday, 1965. Jack Nicklaus was the villain. I didn't like Jack because he was beating Arnie, my hero.

But I had a chance to play with Arnie. He couldn't have been any nicer to me and treated me with respect as a golfer. I think that gave me the dream of becoming a professional golfer because I had a chance to be with Arnold Palmer and play with him. Actually, I tied him on the front nine, then he got me by six shots on the back. Just to be around Arnie and the way he treated people and the way he loved the game. Arnie would rather do -- he wouldn't -- he loved the game so much, it's probably his number one thing in life is to play the golf game. I remember he said that about the Masters, it was the most exciting time in my life to win the Masters. I said at his funeral there's never been a greater friend of golf than Arnold Palmer and I think that's true.