

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
June 20, 2018



DAVIS LOVE III

DAVIS LOVE III: I run a PGA TOUR event in Sea Island so I know what it means to them, I know what it means to the community. American Family's been such a great partner with Steve for so long, so I'm happy to finally make it here to play and glad the schedule worked out. I've heard great things about the golf course from the players and from the caddies, the guys that have been here before, so I'm excited to see it.

Q. Davis, what did get you to the Madison area for the first time? Is it Steve, is it scheduling, did it just all fall together?

DAVIS LOVE III: Well, I've been trying to get here for Steve. The schedule just hasn't worked out. I've been mostly concentrating on the regular tour obviously the last few years; the regular tour and therapy. Seems like a lot of injuries have piled up on me and I keep trying to get back on the regular tour.

My son's trying to make it as a professional, so been playing a lot of tournaments out there when he's been playing, so I've been kind of lingering on the regular tour maybe a little too long. But now I'm excited to get a chance to play and help Steve out, and also, as I said, the reviews have been so great, I'm glad to finally be here.

Q. Davis, Steve's in the same boat, he doesn't know where to play. He's mentioned that several times. For you, what's been the balancing act? You haven't played much out here, but when backs and hips start telling you some things, do you see yourself ever playing out here more than you have been?

DAVIS LOVE III: Oh, definitely. I see myself playing somewhere. They're going to run us -- Steve and Vijay and myself, they're going to run us off the regular tour eventually. Luckily, I don't have to finish in the 125 to be able to play in a few events on the regular tour.

My son's in the John Deere and in the Barbasol coming up. I would like to take a couple shots at making it into the British Open, so playing a tournament like John Deere that has a spot, same with Steve. We love the John Deere tournament, so it's hard not to go there.

Those kind of things, Heritage at Hilton Head, obviously Charlotte the last time I played. There's some tournaments I just don't want to give up on on the regular tour, a little bit give up the dream of still making it into the Playoffs as I did just in 2015. Last year I was really kind of healthy all year, I did win on the regular tour and got in the Playoffs. So I'm torn like Steve, don't know which way to go, but they'll eventually send us out here.

Q. Knowing what you know now, what advice would you give your 18-year-old self?

DAVIS LOVE III: Give who?

Q. Your 18-year-old self.

DAVIS LOVE III: Work harder in the gym. That's a great question.

My son, who's a little bit older, he's 24, that's what I keep pushing him on is a lifetime on the PGA TOUR is a grind, you know, and your body tends to be what holds you back. So when I was 18, my dad was actually trying to get me not to play basketball or other sports because they were working out so hard and he didn't think that that would be good for my body to get bigger or bulkier to work out.

Now, it's completely the opposite. We know how to work out for golf, we know how to train, we know how to protect our bodies. I would certainly put a lot more time in in the gym on the physical side, which I have to do now. I arrived at 7:00 at the airport and at the hotel at 8:00 and a light dinner and was in the gym last night trying to get loose from traveling. Things like that, I had no idea I needed to do that when I was 18 years old, so I would focus more on that.

Q. I see you're in Stricker's grouping for Friday. How do you like that?

DAVIS LOVE III: Well, I just got that. At least I'll have somebody who knows his way around the golf course, that's for sure. And it's always fun to play with Steve. My last Champions Tour event was the Bass Pro and Steve Stricker and Scott Verplank and I stayed together in a house.

Obviously, being with Steve on so many Presidents Cup, Ryder Cup teams, with him captain last year, it will be a lot of fun. We'll have a lot to talk about, Ryder Cup and deer hunting and all the other important subjects for this fall.

Q. Davis, I know, as you mentioned, you've worked with Steve on some of these teams and I know Steve's -- a lot of people think he might be the guy for 2020 at Whistling Straits. If he is, what qualities would he bring as a Ryder Cup captain? How much difference is there Ryder Cup, Presidents Cup to what you're doing, trying to organize a group of talent like that?

DAVIS LOVE III: I think the biggest difference -- Ryder Cup Presidents Cup -- will be for Nicki, not really for Steve. It's a lot more responsibility. It's obviously the biggest maybe tournament in the world, especially a home game. There will be a lot of responsibilities time-wise for Steve and Nicki.

But leadership-wise, the players at the Presidents Cup were just so thrilled to be on Steve's team. All of us assistant captains, we loved working with him. Guys look up to him. He

seems like a quiet leader, but he's not really. He's inspiring to a lot of players.

I know my son got to play with him when we were leading into the 2012 Ryder Cup, we played a practice round up in Chicago and Dru got to play, I don't know, nine or 12 holes with Steve and he was just like so impressed with his golf game and with his demeanor and the way he carried himself.

I think that's what the Tour players see is they just look up to him not only as a golfer, but as a family man and as a person, as somebody who you can really model your whole golf career after.

So it was amazing to see that the guys -- you know, I didn't really know how Steve would be in the team room or he would be out on the golf course. It was great, and it certainly set the stage for him down the road. If he was going to be Ryder Cup captain, I think the guys would be 1,000 percent behind him.

Q. I know you said this is the first time you're playing this event, but having played at Whistling Straits and maybe earlier in your career at the GMO, I'm guessing, what have your experiences been like in Wisconsin?

DAVIS LOVE III: Well, they've been great. I've only played at Whistling Straits, but the fans, they love golf up here. Obviously a short season, so when it's golf season, they're excited, ready to go. Obviously with this facility, see how important golf is up here. I know it will be -- that's one of the biggest things I heard was the crowds were great here for a first-time event and for the first few years. So obviously excited to play in front of fans that appreciate golf.

Q. What impresses you most about the golfers of Dru's era right now that are coming out? It seems like every major championship we're introduced to a new 20-, 21-year-old that's not just the three amigos or whatever that have been dominating.

DAVIS LOVE III: Well, they're ready to play. When you see a training facility like this, this is what college -- amateur players are not just coming out of the caddie ranks and playing with a beat up set of clubs and making it to the PGA TOUR.

My golf fitness trainer, Randy Myers at Sea Island, is training kids under 10 years old. They're getting started with learning about fitness and training for golf, and when they come out they've been watching, playing, they've been working with TrackMan. There's a generation now that will never know that there wasn't a TrackMan, you know? To me, it's still like new-fangled technology.

So these kids are just so well prepared when they hit the tour. Sports psychology, all those things that they've been doing, they're coming out not wanting to -- you know, Rickie Fowler, Jordan Spieth, they weren't coming out to see if they could make the top 125, they were coming out to be the No. 1 player in the world. And they had played so much golf. Bryson

had played so much PGA TOUR golf by the time they got there that they're ready to go. It's obviously a different world.

But because of Fred Couples and Greg Norman and Tiger Woods, it's cool to be a golfer now and there's big money in being a golfer now. So these kids are coming out with, I think, a completely different attitude and they're way more prepared. I grew up watching my son -- I mean, my son grew up on the Tour and I grew up watching -- I watched him hit all these balls and still on the driving range I'm impressed. When I watch Bryson hit it or Justin Thomas or Dru Love, I'm amazed at how far they hit it, how high they hit it, how powerful they are and they're just so well trained now. It's a completely different generation.

Distance is an issue, but it's an issue not because of equipment, it's because of everything combined. It's like the condition of this golf course is modern technology has led us where greens are faster, courses are better, the players are just better because they have a TrackMan, they have a trainer and it's just amazing to watch them play, and fun. That's why I'm going to end up out here on the Champions Tour pretty soon. There's a lot of them.

Q. To that end, I think when this tournament first started, the Tour gave us some stats like most of the people that went out here are 51 to 53. Do you see that changing to where you might be able to win at 60 because everyone that comes out has taken care of their bodies maybe a better way, a different way?

DAVIS LOVE III: Definitely. When you look at Vijay or Steve Stricker, these guys are in great shape, can play on the regular tour, can compete in any tournament. Bernhard Langer, I played three rounds with him at the Bass Pro, he looks like he's 30, no different than when I played with him when I was a rookie.

Yeah, guys are -- and again, there's a lot of money out here on the Champions Tour, too. There's a reason to, when you're 40, 45 and 50, to keep working out, keep staying fit because you can stay competitive. You see a lot of guys -- Jay Haas -- a lot of guys that have been out here for a while are still very competitive.

Yeah, I think barring big injuries -- again, like Freddie -- that hold you back, guys are going to play, I think, longer and better as they get older.

Q. And one more just about current events stuff, Phil issued an apology today about the situation last weekend. You've seen him in a lot of different settings. What are we to learn about what happened last week end involving him?

DAVIS LOVE III: Don't get frustrated when you're playing bad. You know, it's unfortunate, we've seen that in a lot of U.S. Opens, just strange things happen with the rules because the ball's rolling. They're always on the edge of fair or too hard, so you see weird things happen. It's unfortunate. Phil obviously got frustrated.

I just sat with Bill Clemmer, our rules official, at lunch and tried to get him to explain to me

what happened because I didn't watch it, or what did he do. Turns out he should have just taken an unplayable and then it would have only cost him one stroke.

So we all learn a little bit more about the rules, but I'm not one to discuss why and what happened. One time when Drew Dru was in I think it was a high school match, he called me on the phone and he said, "This happened on this hole, what do we do?" The coach in the background says, "Who are you talking to, Dru?" He said, "My dad." He said, "Don't ask your dad, he'd just call for an official," and he's right. I don't know the rules well enough to explain to you what Phil did, but he got a big penalty and it could have been worse.

You know, the U.S. Open, unfortunately things like that happen when you're skating on the edge, you know? I think his frustration got him, but we've seen Phil in that role before, having to issue an apology. That's why we love him, never know what he's going to do.

JACKIE SERVAIS: Are there any other questions for Davis? Okay. Thank you. Good luck this weekend.

DAVIS LOVE III: Thank you.