

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
April 25, 2019

SCOTT McCARRON



Q. Scott, fresh off a win last week, right?

SCOTT McCARRON: Yeah.

Q. And, you know, you're here Top of the Rock Legends of Golf, but two nights ago you were shooting for something else other than a golf title; you were with John Paul Morris bow fishing. Tell us about that experience.

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, it was an incredible experience. My wife, our anniversary was on Tuesday so she was trying to do something special for me on my anniversary and called JP and arranged a bow fishing trip. We had never been bow fishing before. I'm a bow hunter, but I've never been bow fishing.

I got to play with JP last year in the pro-am and we talked about bow fishing the whole time, and I just moved to a lake in Morrisville, North Carolina, called Lake Norman and they bow fish on that lake. So I thought this would be kind of fun to get into it.

So on Tuesday we went down to Arkansas and we had an absolute blast. It was so much fun and so addicting. Now, after watching my wife bow fishing, I'm not sure if she got that for me or for her as a present because she liked it as much as I did. And JP was just fantastic. First of all, he's a great shot.

Q. He is.

SCOTT McCARRON: And he took us around. And his girlfriend, Kelly, did a tremendous job, too. She's also a really good bow fisher person. We just had an absolute blast. I'm definitely going to go buy some bow fishing bows now and see if we can go kill some stuff at Lake Norman.

Q. How about that rig, for sure? I mean, it is unbelievable what JP has built just for bow fishing.

SCOTT McCARRON: It really is. He's kind of really started this thing and really got it going. He's holding tournaments now. The boat, you get on the water, it looks like a UFO coming across the water, lights up everything. I was really amazed at everything that went into bow fishing. It's totally new for me and I thought if you hadn't been bow fishing, go try it because it's an absolute blast.

Q. You mentioned your wife. Two years ago, married right here at the chapel, Top of

the Rock. Tell us what it means to you and your wife to come back here, you know, this event, a place where you two tied the knot. It's got to be special.

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, it's very special. It was actually three years ago. I can't remember that -- I always have to remember that date three years ago on Tuesday, April 23rd, was our anniversary.

So to be able to come back here, it's just a very special place to us. When we first walked on property, we had talked about getting married, where we wanted to get married, and we saw that church and we said, "Well, if we ever do get married, that's where we want to get married."

Johnny was so gracious enough to open up the church for us on that Saturday and we had about 50 Champions Tour guys and we planned the whole wedding in about 24 hours and everybody did just a wonderful job to get everything done. We had a bagpipe player and a harpist and they shot off the cannon after we said our I do's. Kirk Elmquist officiated the wedding and he said, "By the power vested in me and the PGA TOUR and Bass Pro Shops, I pronounce you man and wife." I don't know if that's ever been said before getting married.

Again, I just can't thank Johnny Morris enough for everything that he's done for us. To be able to get married here and to be able to come back year in and year out is really something special.

Q. What kind of strategy are you looking at for the next two days or for the weekend tournament? You know, beautiful courses.

SCOTT McCARRON: Yes.

Q. I think the weather's going to be great. Tell us about your plan.

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, I'm playing with Brandt Jobe, who's one of my best friends. We were college roommates, fraternity brothers at UCLA. So to be able to come to a tournament and play with one of your best buddies is really neat. We don't get to do that ever really as far as playing in team competition, so it's a lot of fun for us.

The new golf course up there at the Ozarks is fantastic. The Crenshaw-Coore designed course is just absolutely beautiful.

It's a big golf course, so it's an advantage to drive it far, and Brandt and I both drive it far, so we're pretty happy about that golf course.

Then you've got to come here to the Top of the Rock and you've got to be able to control your spin. It's tough to get the ball close on a lot of these greens because you're spinning the ball. But this golf course is so pretty and it lends itself to a lot of birdies and a lot of fun. Hopefully we'll go low and have a chance to win.

Q. You've played with Brandt a couple years now. You had a T-9 finish last year. What has worked in the past with him and what will change this year?

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, Brandt and I teamed up pretty well last year even though I didn't play my best, but we ham-and-egged it pretty well. We kind of had a chance coming down the stretch and ended up bogeying the last hole, which was a little bitter taste left in our mouth to finish the tournament that way.

But Brandt's a great player and a great friend and we read the putts very similar, we know each other's games very well. I can club off him because we've been playing so much golf together. So to be able to play with someone -- I've known Brandt since 1983, so that's a long time to know a guy and play a lot of golf with. We've been through a lot together. So it's just been a lot of fun and hopefully we'll have a chance to win when it comes down to Sunday.

Q. A lot of people want to know how to get into golf. You didn't play at UCLA as I understand it. It was what, four years afterwards that you really took it on as a challenge?

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, actually, I was heavily recruited to go to UCLA and I played at UCLA, but I did not play in the NAAs in 1988, which we won. Brandt was on that team. I unfortunately didn't make the top-5 to get on that team. We had a good team.

But then I quit golf for about four years after. Didn't play at all. My dad and I started a golf apparel company, then we started -- figured we would lose more money manufacturing headwear. We did that, had about 40 employees selling hats in the back warehouse and selling them, and we had a national sales force. Wasn't really playing golf much at all except for trying to sell charities shirts and hats and helping a lot of charities run tournaments. Then I would go play scramble events. That's really all I did for about four years.

Then it was actually a Champions Tour event that was at my home course, the Raley's Senior Gold Rush at Rancho Murieta, I saw about four or five guys putt with a long putter. I had never seen one before. That night I went home, made my own putter and, lo and behold I started practicing with it and I putted pretty good. Almost won the U.S. Mid Amateur at 25, you know.

At that point I thought I want to go pursue this again and I turned professional and started playing. It's amazing for -- which is very different for a professional golfer to quit for that long, not play and then not really turn professional until 25, 26, to make it and have a career as long as I did on the PGA TOUR for 20 years and now playing on the PGA TOUR Champions.

Q. What kind of advice would you give young golfers wanting to make the PGA

TOUR? You've been there, you've lived it. Give us some thoughts.

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, one, it's a lot of work. You've got to treat this as a business. This isn't just fly by night, go hit a few balls, play a few events and go do it. This is eight, nine, 10-hour days that I was putting in to get this done. I really, having the business background, I tried to treat it as a business. I'm going to go practice, these are my goals for the day, what I'm going to do. I'm going to accomplish that and then we'll go home, think about it and start all over again the next day. Again, it took a lot of hard work.

Then, once you start getting good enough, you've got to play tournaments. Tournament golf is the only way to get better. I was playing mini tours, the Golden State Tour, the California Tour, the Hooters Tour, anywhere I could play in a tournament. It didn't matter what the purse was, it didn't matter to me, I was just trying to gain experience. I was very fortunate that we had some good tours -- and I played the Canadian tour as well -- that we had some good tours to get me ready.

A lot of these young kids coming up, college, they do such a great job with their college golf tournaments. The amateur ranks have such good tournaments, but you've got to play tournament golf if you want to play on the PGA TOUR.

Q. Scott, you're coming off another win here this week. How much does that help your vibe coming into this and how much does it help Brandt?

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, it helps a lot. I mean, I'm obviously playing well. Played well last week. Hopefully I don't forget what I'm doing. Let's see, I dived with sharks on Monday, went bow fishing Tuesday, I'm going fly fishing today. So in between all the outdoor activities, I've got to remember there is a golf tournament.

And it's very important for me. I want to win this tournament, I want to win it with one of my best friends, Brandt Jobe. But I definitely have a good vibe coming in after the win.

Q. Just talk about golfing in this area, how it's different from other courses, how you adjust.

SCOTT McCARRON: I'll tell you what, one thing that's different about this area is Johnny Morris is making this a golf destination. When you have one or two courses that are pretty good, that's great, but he's building all these golf courses now, with Crenshaw-Coore, with Buffalo Ridge, Fazio, with the Tiger Woods coming. This is turning into a golf destination. I can't think of anyplace better in this country for golf, fishing, hunting. You know, there's no place better. This place is so special.

So to be able to come here, you've just got beautiful golf courses, you've got beautiful views. Someone coming up to play this par 3, I don't think they've ever seen a par 3 like this before. Again, if you haven't been here, you've got to come.