

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
August 23, 2020



DAVIS LOVE III

Q. Davis, welcome to the Charles Schwab Series here at Ozarks National. Just some thoughts on the course. You had a chance to play it today.

DAVIS LOVE: The course is fabulous. One of the main reasons I came is because I love Ben Crenshaw golf courses. I knew about it for the last few years playing in the tournament up here, watched the Crenshaw crew work on it for years, so I was excited to see it and get to play it. Johnny always does a great job and hospitality up here's great, so I'm excited to be here.

Q. Davis, as well, just wanted to get your thoughts. It's good to have you back here in Ozark mountain country. Talk about witnessing the development of the course by Coore and Crenshaw and really putting their architectural expertise to this. Being back here in Ozarks, what's that like for you?

DAVIS LOVE: Well, I love coming up here. We've had a great time. Even the year that it rained every day, Scott Verplank and Steve Stricker and I stayed together and we had a great time just being up here. It's just a different kind of country, especially from somebody from the southeast.

The golf course is just great. I talked to the Crenshaw crew while they were building it, came out here and walked around a few holes when it was rock and then when it had some dirt and then when it had some grass. I followed a group of turkeys around a couple holes and watched them while they were building it. Just been excited to see it open. I told Tiger the same thing about his course. I've watched it for years being built.

It takes so long here because of the terrain, but the routing that Ben and Bill put on this golf course and obviously with Johnny's vision, it's just incredible. Every hole's beautiful and I love this style of architecture. I texted Ben after about 10 or 11 holes, I said it's in my top-10 already and I'm not even finished yet. I love it, I think it's great. We're lucky to be playing here.

Q. If I can also ask you as well, 2020 has just changed so much, COVID-19 obviously has had a major effect on sports in general as a whole. Being out here and playing on these courses and playing on the Champions Tour, not having fans present, do you consider that a benefit for you personally and what is that like? Does it take some of the pressure off or do you miss those fans?

DAVIS LOVE: Well, not having the fans is definitely no benefit. It's more fun to play, more fun to make birdies and hear cheers. But as somebody who runs a PGA TOUR event, it's

not good for business, you know. That's where our charity dollars come from are from pro-ams and obviously from fans coming out and watching. The whole Tour is built on giving back to charity and if we can't give back to charity, then it's disappointing not to have the fans excited to watch.

We literally have seen them outside the fence watching through the fence or through the backyards or from a distance. I was in the grocery store last nice and people are recognizing me and knowing that the tournament's here, but knowing that they can't come. It's disappointing.

The Tour, which is -- you know, the commissioners of the regular Tour, the Champions Tour are doing an unbelievable job for us to be actually playing golf. I played the PGA in San Francisco. To be able to go there, to be able to go to Detroit, to be able to go to Flint, Michigan, and all these places we've been where COVID is so bad and to pull it off is amazing. The fans at home are getting to watch and we're still doing what we can for charity and we're still continuing on and showing people that, hey, we can come out and play and travel and stay healthy and I think that's a big statement.

Q. Playing today, how do you feel about how the wind will affect you over the next few days?

DAVIS LOVE: I played up here on the Gary Player course where it was just howling on a short course you couldn't even get the ball to do what you wanted it to do. So I would love to see the forecast, it keeps saying light and variable. Caddies hate light and variable, we like light. Caddies like to know which way it's going.

No, as long as it doesn't blow too hard. Ben's courses, generous off the tee. Because of the terrain here, the greens are very large. He explained to me the way he did Kapalua that we enjoyed for so many years on the Tour, such big views and big scenes down hills because you can't have small greens. The greens are big enough where if it does blow, you'll be able to get the ball on the fairway and on the green.

You're going to have to -- any golf course you have to putt well to win, so you're going to have to putt well and obviously proximity to the hole's going to be important on big greens. Weatherman's being nice so far, he's not predicting big wind.

Q. Obviously the big news this week is Phil's debut. Can you just talk a little bit about what he brings to our tour out here?

DAVIS LOVE: Well, anywhere Phil or any of the big guys go is exciting. It's great to see him out. I have not been out enough, so hopefully I'll be out and competing again with Phil. I've run up against him for a long, long time, since he was a little kid on Tour. Now he's a little kid again, so we'll have to fight him off. You know, we saw it last week, so many guys playing so well. I know Jim Furyk came out and won his first week, but his reaction was, "Man, it's hard to win out there." It's going to be tougher with Phil now, so excited to have him.

Q. What do you think about the tour overall, because Ernie joined this year as did Furyk and some of these other people. This tour just seems to be getting better every year with these players making the commitment to play.

DAVIS LOVE: This is an unbelievable crop. I said that when I walked out on the range today, I was like, holy cow, that is a great field. There's a lot of new guys and a big year. Obviously guys like me and Furyk and Stricker are trying to figure out which tour we should play and what our schedule is, but I think it's been a long time since we've seen this kind of an influx of new big names. It's exciting to play out here. Hopefully the fans can come see us soon.

Q. Early on in the year obviously some big news headlines for you on a personal note. Just wanted to check in with you. Obviously we're here at the end of summer. How are you and Robin both doing? Obviously with the fire at your home, just so, so incredibly thankful that you both are safe. How are things settling for you as far as your house?

DAVIS LOVE: It's still hard. Until you go through something like that, I've had two close personal friends go through it, and then remember way back Raymond Floyd and Steve Lowery, other guys on our tour that have gone through it. It's like nothing you can ever imagine.

Coming here and seeing a bunch of guys that I haven't seen in a long time, it brings it right back up. I hate leaving my wife at home, but she's got three little granddaughters to entertain her. We've very blessed it our life. We've had a lot of tragedy in our lives over the last 20 years, but we've also had a lot of blessings and we're moving forward. I'm out here doing what I love doing, playing golf and can't get much better than that.

Q. You also had that opportunity, a really big decision for you and I imagine it was a very tough decision as well to move from the CBS commentary, talking the game and talking about golf, and really kind of shifting things for yourself and being able to focus back on the game. Can you tell us a little bit about that decision?

DAVIS LOVE: Yeah, it was a big one to go try it. It was a big one to say that I wasn't very good at it and I was getting frustrated, but as you said earlier, this is a crazy year. We've had so many things happen this year, I've had so many things happen personally, it was just tough to break into something new.

CBS and I both agreed that it just wasn't working for me this year. We didn't say it's a closed door, but I needed to get some stability, normalcy back in my life. My wife is pushing me, "Go play golf, that's what you do. You'll be happy playing golf and I'll be happy with you out of my hair."

So I think for all of us, I hope it was the right decision for CBS, I know it was right for me. I've

been part of the CBS family for 30 years, they've been great to me. Our trial and then me deciding not to do it all went like family, so hopefully I can continue to support them and get on their air some.

Q. Just curious, we talked to Phil, we talked to Bernhard and you've obviously gone through your debut out here, what do you sense are some of the challenges that maybe Phil kind of goes through figuring out new golf courses, three rounds, the guys, kind of all that?

DAVIS LOVE: Yeah, new golf course I think is for a lot of us this week, but for Phil, just everything's new. I saw him riding in the cart coming over the hill and I go, he's getting used to the practice rounds and the way things go out here.

But what Jim Furyk said is, hey, it's a shootout, these guys make tons of birdies. And I said it when I turned 50, if I putt well enough to win out here, I can win on the regular tour. That's the same thing with Phil. If Phil putts well enough to win a golf tournament out here, he would still be competitive on the regular tour because you have to make a lot of putts to win. Obviously it's three days, you feel like if you make a couple pars you're getting behind, but it's still, you have to shoot 4, 5, 6 under par every day to keep pace on most courses. Phil's going to find out that he's going to have to putt really well to win out here. He's not just going to come out here and be the long hitter and all of a sudden win.