



# The Senior Open Presented by Rolex

## Preview Quotes

### Bernhard Langer

#### Press conference

I'm very excited. We truly missed it last year. It was a horrible year for so many people and we were more fortunate than many other sports. I'm glad to be back and The Senior Open Presented by Rolex is always a wonderful event. It's one of the highlights of the season and to get to come back here to Sunningdale where many of us have played tournaments, me personally, for over 40 years now, it's just a gem. It's a true test of golf and a beautiful golf course.

Whatever happened some years ago doesn't really matter now, it depends where your game is at, at this point in time, but the golf course hasn't changed. The key around here is to avoid the bunkers and the heather and keep it on the short grass off the tee and that should give you opportunities to attack certain flags. The greens are very tricky. Some of them are quite slopey and others have a lot of little movement; they look straight but the ball just veers off here and veers off there. Speed-wise as well, uphill into the grain they're on the slow side and downhill with the grain they can get sneaky fast. Having said all that, you've got to hit quality shots, take your chances when you can and hopefully go low, because somebody will.

**[On distance in golf]** The R&A and the USGA are making our rules, we try to play by their rules and so far they haven't done anything really of any great impact to bring the ball back or any of that. They've obviously put restrictions on the trampolining effect on the driver but people are hitting the ball incredibly far, the young folks. It's a fascinating part of the game, so it's a difficult decision and I do get it, because people come out and watch Bryson DeChambeau, right? Because he is the longest guy on Tour right now, or one of the longest, and it's fascinating to watch.

People came out to watch John Daly because he could hit it really far and if you take that away, then you make the game maybe less attractive. But at the same time, you're making some golf courses obsolete in terms of the distances that they're hitting it and golf becomes a little more expensive because you used to have 7,000 yards of golf, now you need 8,000 yards. You need an extra 1,000 yards, more or less that you need to take care of, maintain, rent, buy or whatever you want to call it, water it. It's just more expensive to do an extra 1,000 yards than not, it's just common sense.

The game evolves, it changes, the players are more athletic. In America, we say the game of golf has come a very long way. It used to be the national games were baseball and American football, and the top athletes would go to those two sports. Now, they realise that you can make a good living in golf and you can have a longer career and we get a lot more of the best athletes coming to golf and fewer and fewer maybe to baseball and football.

**[On Marcel Siem]** I thought it was terrific to see a guy who was basically gone off the charts and off the scene for two or three years to be fighting his way back and playing really good golf for the last two or three weeks. I think to be on the Major scene, tough golf course, tough venue, to be on the leaderboard pretty much all week was phenomenal. He's got a lot of talent and a lot of fight in him and I'm very proud to see him make it through this lull in his career and hopefully he'll get his tour card back and go from strength to strength.

**[On Collin Morikawa's advice to Matthias Schmid]** We all get caught up in the day-to-day scene of golf and sometimes it feels like life and death, and it's not. There's a bigger picture. It's great advice, to just enjoy the process, because it is a process, it doesn't happen overnight and many of us are too serious in the moment, rather than just enjoying the process the way we should. Collin handled it, or maybe he learned it, I don't know, either way he's doing very well and it's a great effort by him.

**[On Team Europe's chances in the Ryder Cup]** With Pádraig at the helm, I have great respect for him. I think he's a person that won't have left any stone unturned to be a great captain and to do whatever it takes to help his team to give the best effort possible. I think he'll be a great captain and I think we have a very strong team. It's always harder to play away than at home, no doubt about it. The Americans are very patriotic, but so are the Europeans, so I wish them all good luck. I don't know what the outcome will be, I hope it's in our favour and I hope it's a close one, but I hope the Europeans come out on top.

#### **Additional quotes – Bernhard Langer**

It's fantastic to be back. We were very fortunate on the PGA TOUR Champions in America, we got back pretty quickly and been playing full-time ever since. It's wonderful to be here again and it feels weird to be defending a title when it was two years ago but it just shows what a crazy year-and-a-half we've been through.

It's one of the best accolades you can have. I'm very happy and proud of that achievement. I've won on some wonderful golf courses as well. I'm really thrilled; I've never won The Open Championship, which was always my dream as a European player, everybody wants to win the only Major we have, The Open. I came close, but I never did that, but I was able to win this Championship four times and hopefully there's one or two more left in me.

They were great memories [in 2019]. I've always loved the golf course; Royal Lytham & St Anne's is a true test and the weather was decent at first, but then got really foul on Sunday. We had rain forecast all day and strong winds, so we were all huddling under the umbrella and playing more so the elements than the golf course. I got off to a good start and played really solid all day. I hit two beautiful shots on 18. I hit a wonderful two hybrid off the tee and then a perfect two hybrid into the green to make sure I don't make bogey or double bogey and let anybody else in. I had my wife there and a bunch of friends and it's always more fun when you can celebrate with some of your loved ones.

It's one of the greatest courses you have in this country. It's withstood the test of time. I was paired with Gary Player today in the Pro-Am and he's telling me stories of this place from 60 years ago and I've been coming here 40 years ago and the place hasn't changed dramatically. This tree we're stood under, he remembered it being here 65 years ago, he saw the tree for the first time and it's all in full juice and doing well. The clubhouse hasn't changed dramatically, the golf course hasn't changed at all and it's been good through all these years and it's still good. I played today and yesterday and I'm hitting a lot of four, five, six irons into these par fours, so it's by no means a chip and putt golf course.

That's the great thing about the Champions Tour and the Legends Tour, we've all known each other for sometimes 30, 40, 50 years and competed against each other through all that time. You become friends not only with each other but with the whole families. Some of us are grandpas now so there's some wonderful stories and we've been involved in this fantastic game of golf for a long time. To have rookies sounds strange but they're rookies on this tour and they're very, very good. I'm 64 soon and they hit it a tonne further than I do so it's a challenge for me to try and keep up with them and try and be more precise and make up for the lack of distance that I have compared to them. It's a real challenge but I like challenges and it's great to be out with them and compare my game to them.