

Steve Stricker pre-tournament press conference

What do you like about this tournament and this golf course?

I don't know what really trips my trigger about going around here. I do enjoy it - they put on a great event here. The people come out to support it. It's a little bit old-school golf you know reminds me of home a little bit you know, we're not far from there, it's a great spot, it's a great town to keep going back to each and every year, and we enjoy our time here for sure.

How do you think you can win without your wife on the bag this week?

I know, it's going to be hard. She is an important part of the puzzle, and yes she's she stepping away from it - you know, just like I feel like I have been a little bit lately too, and you know we're getting older and enjoying doing other things and that's where she's at right now too, doing other things and working on her golf game trying to compete in some U.S. amateur events for women on the older side of things just like we are out here, so she she's working at it and she enjoys her time at home with the kids and everything else so it's getting harder and harder for me to grab her to bring her out here.

How cool is it that your whole family is into what you do and what you love?

The thing is we never forced them down that road you know, and even our youngest one who now is a freshman at Wisconsin on the golf team, she was like 'Aw, I'm not going to play,' and it's like it's the game of golf, and you get that bug, and it consumes you, and it's great, it's a great game - you have to work toward something, and it keeps her on a good path, and yes it's really cool we have a lot of fun with it, and they play a lot of golf. I know when I'm done here playing tournaments, I usually go home and play more golf because they're all playing, which is fun for me, and it keeps me involved and active in their lives.

Coming in as the two-time defending champion, how much confidence do you feel entering this course? You've done pretty well here recently.

Yeah, I obviously have great memories, great feelings, good vibes, all that stuff going around here. And you know I understand the course, where my opportunities come and you know, conditions can be tough at times. We're going to have windy conditions today (Thursday), so we'll get to see how that plays and give us a feel for what potentially could happen the next three days. But yeah, I feel good going around here. I haven't played my best this year and that's alright. I just keep trying to get a W. You know, I've got a tournament or two left before I'm done this year, and we'll see if I can get a W.

Have you figured out the putter yet?

Yeah, you know, I'm going to putt with the same putter that I putted with last week. You know, it's a slight variation of what I tried earlier this year in the summertime, this counter-balanced Odyssey putter. And I actually rolled the ball really nicely last week, made some putts on Sunday, it could have been even lower. I hit the hole a lot, the direction part is really good. But yeah, I'm going to stick with it and see what happens this week with it again.

Steve, you mentioned old school courses – this course is definitely that. Is that something that most players on the Champions TOUR would prefer to play?

Yeah, I think even on the regular tour. Guys really enjoy playing an old-style golf course like Riviera, you know is one of the favorites out on tour, and that's old school, just a great old-time course, and like here, too, we enjoy courses like this where the greens are a little bit different, you know I mean the way they were built back in the day, and I don't know if there's been any renovations here over the years, but it just has that good old school feel and guys like that, they enjoy that.

I know you mentioned you feel like you haven't played your best golf – why do you feel now is the time to turn it around?

Why not, right? We're in a good spot. I've had some good success here. I feel good coming here, so why not me again is what I'm thinking.

What advice would you give to someone like Ryan Jansa, who is here on a sponsor's exemption, and trying to make the tour?

My brother-in-law was kind of in the same boat - he may be a little bit further along than this guy, but my brother-in-law played one year out on tour, and now is getting kind of a second lease on the game really. He went to work for a living for a while and now is coming out, and taking advantage of it, and working at it hard and trying to have one last go around in the game, and for all of us, and so my advice would be to go out and have fun with that and try to take advantage of it, and you continue to work hard at it, and you never know. I mean if he stays in shape and continues to improve, there's great opportunities for him out here in the future.

And there's guys out here who weren't exactly PGA TOUR players?

Exactly, there's quite a few, and that's the great part about this tour – it gives you an opportunity to take advantage of these last years of playing the game competitively, and we've got a great opportunity here, and it's a wonderful opportunity for us to do that so why not try to take advantage of it?