

2025 SANFORD INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION RETIEF GOOSEN

PRESS CONFERENCE – SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2025

Retief, congratulations on your victory here at the Sanford International. Just tell us how special is this victory for you?

It's great. I've come here every year since I turned 50 and it's been a wonderful event. We've been well-looked after and the sponsors and the crowd have been amazing. The food's good here. I mean, I've been eating in a steakhouse every night and I must say, I'm going to do that again tonight. The steaks is probably what got me going this week.

I'm guessing those steaks will taste a little better tonight too, right?

Oh yes. I think I'm going to have a big 12-ounce one tonight and maybe a bottle of wine.

You said you've been here every year. Aside from Steve Stricker not being here, what was the difference this year that got you over the top?

Well, I think greens were regular for me this week. I only missed five greens all week. So, to hit these firm greens out of the rough, it wasn't easy. My putting was better. Last week, I putted so bad, or a couple of weeks ago. I got myself a new putter this week and suddenly I'm making some putts again, so's it's amazing how this game can sometimes, just seeing something different, start making some putts.

How much did it feel like match play, truly between Bo Van Pelt and you over the last nine holes?

Yeah, definitely. I mean, Bo made some monster putts, especially the one on ten. It must've been a 60-foot putt he made there for birdie to get within one. And then, made another great one for par on 12, so he hung in there. You know, coming down the stretch, it seemed to just get more and more windy. And then on 16, he missed it left, I missed it right, I was able to run it past the water and at least have a lot easier 3rd shot than he did. So, it was great to get it up and down and at least give myself a one-shot advantage going into the last two.

Is it more fun when you know it's just between the two of you like that?

It is in a way, yeah, like you said, it becomes a bit of a match play. But you know, it's stroke play, you got to get the ball in the hole. But it's great to know that you just got to try and stay ahead of this guy and see what he does. I honestly thought we were probably going to be in a playoff with the way he was playing and I was playing.

I thought we were probably going to be 13 under or something like that each coming down 18. But, you know, it turned around on 16 and 17 for me. Next time, it's somebody else's turn.

So many players have said over the years that they feel like, with the great crowd support here, it's almost like playing in one of your majors. Would you kind of agree with that?

Well, definitely. I mean, the people support the event great here and the money they raise for charity during the week too is amazing. You know, that's the whole thing about the PGA Tour is charity. And the golf course this week, it played like a major: the greens were firm, the fairways were firm, and the rough was tricky. It felt, at times out there, like you're playing a U.S. Open course.

What were the keys to your victory this week?

I would say my iron play this week. I hit a lot of greens, only missed five greens, chipped in once, got it up and down a few times today too. So, if you can avoid the bogeys and make the birdies, you can creep up the top.

Isn't this kind of almost a perfect type of course, the old-fashioned, not quite as long, more thinking man's course for the Champions Tour?

Definitely. I mean downwind, you figure 'okay, it's easier,' but it was so windy you can't stop the ball. I was hitting six irons 270 yards downwind and into the wind, you're hitting your six iron 160 yards, so it was tricky. Into the wind, you could stop the ball. But downwind, you couldn't stop the ball. And you could see it on the scoring, it was tricky out there today.