

ROUND 3 INTERVIEW: BERNHARD LANGER
Saturday, November 7, 2015



BERNHARD LANGER: I'll say it in English, okay? So the question was what goes on in my mind when I'm six behind after 11 holes. Nothing in particular really, just trying to get my game together and finish strong. Obviously I'm in a unique situation this week where I'm sort of keeping one eye on what's happening there with Monty and Maggert and I'm trying to win the tournament at the same time. There's the hole location where I might not play as aggressive as I would otherwise. But I'm in a good situation and I was sort of the underdog going into the week, I was third, but I was close enough if I do better than the other two that I could pull it off. So right now it's looking good and it's still a shootout for the title as well. Michael played phenomenal on the front and wheels came off a little bit in the middle there, early back nine, and then he pulled himself together again. It's still anybody's ballgame at this point, the tournament.

MICHAEL BALIKER: Bernhard, real quickly, that finish 17, 18, birdies on those final two holes really closed the gap there. Just talk about how crucial that was.

BERNHARD LANGER: It was huge, it was huge for me because I made two stupid bogeys there on 10, 11. I was in a great position on 10 and just didn't make a full turn because I was trying to hit a baby 8 instead of a normal 8 and made bogey there. Then I hit it a little fat on the next and made another bogey out of nowhere after hitting beautiful shots up until that point. That shakes you up a little bit and then you've got to shrug it off. To finish the way I did was a real thrill for me, and I think Mike felt great too birdieing 17, that's a pretty tough hole. Obviously he would have rather -- or would have liked to do a little better on 15 and 18 but it is what it is.

Q. Bernhard, when you first saw your shot going in the rocks on 18, what was your immediate reaction?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, I looked at my caddie and I said, How could that go that far? Because I didn't think I could hit a 4-iron that far. I was trying to fade it a bit and I didn't, but I didn't even know -- did it hit the green or not? Did it land on the green? Did anybody see it land?

Q. It hit the rocks and rolled down into the sand trap.

BERNHARD LANGER: I know most of the time when you go over the green and hits the rocks and then it comes back into the sand, but I had no idea. I told him as we're walking along, I should have hit 5-iron instead of 4-iron because I should be playing to the front left, not the front right. So that was a bad mistake thinking-wise, really a rookie mistake for two senior guys, not very smart. But we were trying to play aggressive actually. We're trying to hit a little fade in there, perfect shot 4-iron and hopefully make eagle or birdie and it didn't fade, and then it goes further and it could have been trouble.

Q. Was the volatility today due to the conditions, the wind in particular? How much did that change?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, the wind always makes it hard, no question about it. I mean, there were some -- I hit a 3-wood into No. 4 after killing my drive.

Q. That was a good shot.

BERNHARD LANGER: It was. And there were a couple of -- 12 is a really tough tee shot into the wind because you can't go over the humps, you've got to keep it left, and left everything kicks in the rough. So I hit it in the rough and I had to hit a hybrid out of the rough into a green that's elevated. That might have been the best shot of the week for me to get that ball on the edge of the green, because if I mis-hit it a little bit I'm in that waste area and the rocks and who knows where. The wind makes it hard. It just throws you off. Even putting, you just don't feel as still and as stable as you would when it's calm. I think that the scores in general would reflect that. I haven't seen the scores but I imagine they weren't as good as yesterday.

Q. (No microphone.)

BERNHARD LANGER: Yeah, we shot 68 and 69, that's not bad.

Q. You said on 10 that shot didn't come off because you didn't make a full turn and that you hit it fat on 11. Do you know why you hit it fat on 11?

BERNHARD LANGER: No, not totally sure. Might have been released it a little bit early or maybe I stood too close. There's lots of reasons that can happen. Might have dipped a little bit. I just hit it -- actually didn't really hit it fat. I hit it high on the clubface, which to me is sort of fat, but it's just two grooves too high and the ball goes nowhere, that's the way the golf clubs are made.

Q. What about that bunker shot on 18, that was downhill all the way to the hole?

BERNHARD LANGER: It was, yeah. Played that nicely, just basically the way I wanted to. I was surprised I left it short. I didn't think I could leave it short so came out really nice. I had a good lie in the bunker and was just trying to play it as good as I can and hopefully hit it within a four-foot circle of the hole somewhere.

Q. Earlier you said there were two things going on, the cup and the tournament. You may have been thinking about both of them at the same time. Now that you've got a pretty substantial cushion, do you just think about one thing tomorrow, winning the tournament?

BERNHARD LANGER: Yeah, we'll see what I think about tomorrow, but for me there's two

tournaments within one. Yeah, I should probably just think about the one, the tournament, and not the overall but we'll see what happens. Hopefully I get off to a good start and then I can forget about the overall thing and just focus on winning the tournament.

Q. During the course of the round did you find yourself having to hit conservative shots because of the wind as opposed to going for it?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, at first I actually played really good on the front and hit a lot of good shots, just didn't make a lot of putts. Couldn't really play conservative because the wind was very demanding and there were not any easy shots in there really. I'm not sure. There's just a couple of times, you know, where you might go for the pin, like 15. 15 was a very defensive third shot. That was rubbish really. I would expect to hit that ball within 15 feet of the hole every time I pull the trigger basically and I was 30 feet away or 35 feet. That was just a poor shot just trying to keep it away from all the trouble from left and from long where there's water and rocks. I was caught between clubs again so that's sometimes my tendency; instead of releasing, I kind of slide into it to make sure it doesn't go very far.

Q. So it was really circumstantial, it wasn't a mindset that prevailed all day long?

BERNHARD LANGER: Right. It was just I wasn't swinging really well there for a stretch of time and then I got it back towards the end.

Q. Do you remember what that yardage was into 4 with that 3-wood?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, I think I had about 220, almost 216 to the front, so my hybrid goes 220 and it wouldn't have cleared the whatever you call it, the ravine or the hill. The wash, yes. So I pretty much had to go to the 3-wood and played a really nice baby fade.

Q. It was better than a little nice baby fade.

BERNHARD LANGER: No, it was a baby fade and that's what I needed because if I hit a rock solid 3-wood, draw it, it's going to go over the green or left and then I have not much left. It's a demanding golf course. There are some holes that are really demanding and others fairly straightforward and pretty simple. So you take your chances on some and you have to play a little more conservative on others.

MICHAEL BALIKER: Take us through your birdies starting with No. 3 there.

BERNHARD LANGER: 3 I hit a really good drive and what was that? Could that have been a 6-iron? I'm not sure, I can't remember, sorry. It might have been less because it was downwind today, wasn't it. It had to be less. I think it was a 9-iron to about 12 feet. I had a real good chance on No. 2, I hit a beautiful 7-iron to about 10 feet and missed. Had a chance on 1, which I missed. What else?

MICHAEL BALIKER: No. 8, par 5.

BERNHARD LANGER: You're not interested in my misses, I can tell. Oh, yeah, par 5. I hit a huge drive, it must have hit the back of the bunker and ran, I don't know, way down there in the rough. I didn't think I could hit it that far. Then an 8-iron out of the rough, beautiful shot, landed about this much onto the green and still rolled over the green down the hill a bit but I could putt it from there. It was pin high. Two putts from about 18 feet. Then 10 I told you, I think, right?

MICHAEL BALIKER: Just 17 and 18 there.

BERNHARD LANGER: 17 was a nice 4-iron to about eight feet. Then driver, 4-iron, bunker shot to about three feet.