

**ROUND 1 INTERVIEW: GENE SAUERS**  
**May 19, 2016**



**Q. Okay, Gene, 6-under 66 today. Can you just talk about your day? Pretty good start.**

**GENE SAUERS:** It was a great start. I've got to thank Brian Claar for my tee time. He told me, he said, You played good, Gene, you've got to thank me because, you know, I played late in the pro-am yesterday, not supposed to be early first off. So anyway, but it worked out. Greens were great. I hit the ball really good, hit it solid, hit a lot of fairways, hit a lot of greens, gave myself a lot of good opportunities and took advantage of them. I made some putts where before, you know, I wasn't making the putts and now I'm really rolling it better and I'm kind of going cross-handed, left-hand low. This is my second week for it, so I should have done it 20 years ago. Just had a lot of great looks and I took advantage of them. Hit the ball really solid today.

**Q. You played well in the last round last week.**

**GENE SAUERS:** At Houston, yeah.

**Q. Just getting a little more accustomed to the putting style change?**

**GENE SAUERS:** Yeah, as I said, that was the first week for it. I only played like two days at home with that and it felt great. I'm still getting used to it but it feels a heck of a lot better than the conventional way.

**Q. I'm sorry, what exactly are you doing?**

**GENE SAUERS:** Well, normally you putt like this. I putted cross-handed, left-hand low instead of the normal way.

**Q. And it's feeling good now?**

**GENE SAUERS:** It's feeling great. The ball's rolling end over end, it's not -- you know, don't have no side spin on it, going right in the hole right where it's supposed to be.

**Q. I know it's only the first round, but obviously it's got to feel good for the rest --**

**GENE SAUERS:** Oh, it feels great. We had last week off and I played a couple days and hit the ball really good. Every time -- just now we're starting to get into week after week after week, playing weekly. Before we had a month off, two weeks off and I couldn't get a rhythm going. Now I'm starting to get a rhythm going so it felt good, it felt good over the ball.

**Q. I'm not going to go into the situation you had a couple years ago with your health**

**issue because that's been written about. What I'm more interested in is just since then getting back into this role and now you've been second several times, the challenge I guess of coming from where you were to where you are now and trying to make that one last step so to speak?**

**GENE SAUERS:** Yeah, I'm shocked myself with how well I'm doing, how well I healed from all my wounds and all that kind of stuff. I never thought I'd play golf again. I took seven years off and didn't touch a golf club, and coming back and playing with these guys right here and doing as good as I'm doing is phenomenal. Lord gave me a second chance. Like I say, I've been playing great. I've been playing a lot more -- I guess I recharged my batteries after those seven years not playing and I'm thinking more clearly. Things are happening, really, really good. I'm just trying to stay within myself and not trying to think ahead and just play golf and try and enjoy it.

**Q. Obviously coming out here and finished second, third, top 10 in a tournament is a great thing.**

**GENE SAUERS:** T's awesome, yeah.

**Q. But to get that win, can you even think about what that would mean?**

**GENE SAUERS:** It would mean a lot. Like I say, we're all competitors. Once we step on that first tee we're all business, and coming off 18th green we're more relaxed. But, you know, it's just, it's something that -- something I didn't think I would ever do again. It's going to be a great feeling when I do.

**Q. Do you want to talk about the holes?**

**GENE SAUERS:** No. 2, I hit 3-iron in the fairway and it rolled way up, had a chance to go in that water and stayed up on the first cut and made a good two-putt from probably 60 feet. And what was my other birdie?

**Q. 4.**

**GENE SAUERS:** 4 was the par 3, hit 8-iron in there, about three feet. Bogeyed the par 5. I was trying to play smart. Stupid. Hit 3-wood off the tee and hit it left, hit it in the rough. It was down in the rough deep. Tried to hit a 5-iron out, didn't go probably about 180 yards. And then I had a hybrid into the green and hit it a little thin and into the right water. I got up and down there for bogey.

**Q. No. 8?**

**GENE SAUERS:** No. 8, which one was that? Par 4. I hit a driver, 9-iron probably 12, 15 feet, birdie there.

**Q. Then the par 5, No. 13?**

**GENE SAUERS:** 13 I hit a 3-wood just left of the green on those mounds right there and got up and down. Had probably a four-, five-footer for birdie there. And then the par 3 I birdied. I hit a little 5-iron, actually hit a little left and it bounced off those hills to the left onto the green and I probably had a 15-, 18-footer there for birdie. Then 18 --

**Q. 16 .**

**GENE SAUERS:** 16, okay. I hit a driver, 6-iron, that was probably six feet. And then 18 I hit driver, hybrid right of the green, just short of that bunker and got up and down from there. Made about a 10-footer there.

**Q. There's only 11 guys in this field who played the last time the Champions Tour was here, so for most of y'all this is the first time you played. What are you seeing from the course, what are you thinking about it, anything that stood out at all?**

**GENE SAUERS:** Well, you've got to be careful on some of these like the par 5s, if you try to get one in there kind of hot or whatever and it's going towards that water, it's going to roll right into that water. So I noticed that a few times. And the par 3 in the pro-am, the one I birdied, No. 4, I hit it on the green, bounced until it stopped right by the water, so you've got to be careful. Other than that it's pretty what you see is what you get, but it's a great golf course. I think it's perfect for us.