

**ROUND 1 INTERVIEW**  
**June 23, 2017**



**Steve Stricker (-6)**

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**Q. It doesn't get much better than this, right?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Yeah, it was a good round. I threw a couple opportunities away on the way in. I had maybe a six-footer at 15 that I didn't convert on, and then three-putted No. 16 for par. So it could have been a shot maybe, maybe two better, but all in all, good start. No bogeys today, which I'm always proud of when I do something like that, so it was a good start.

**Q. Was it fun? Was it fun out there to be and playing?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Yeah, it was a lot of fun, yeah. Running on a lot of adrenaline. These last couple weeks have been really special and really cool, and this week for the obvious reasons of being a part of this and raising money for all these good causes that we support. So yeah, it's really cool.

We had great crowds out there following our group, and Jerry's right ahead of us and we've got the European group right behind us. So a lot of nice things going on, a lot of people coming out there to support the event, which is nice to see.

**Q. Fred said he thinks this is going to be your high round of the wee, you're going to go even lower the next two days.**

**STEVE STRICKER:** I mean, the potential is there. You know, the course, there's five par 5s. Some of them are reachable, some are not, but I had some opportunities. I played okay. I didn't play my best, but I played pretty good. I made some nice putts. I was trying to get through the opening few holes, you know. I always feel a little nervous at the start of an event and probably a little bit more so here and just trying to get off to a good start today, and I did a fairly good job of that and then started to play a little bit better.

**Q. Besides 9, what par 5s are reachable for you?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** The second hole you can reach. I can't reach the sixth hole. That played back into the wind a little bit today, or right-to-left wind, that's 600 yards. And then I didn't hit a very good drive at 11 but ended up making birdie there. And then you can reach No. 16. Yeah, I hit a 6-iron on the green there and hit a pretty good shot in there and it just rolled away. Left my first putt really far short, didn't convert on that.

But yeah, there's a lot of opportunities out there, some short holes. That's why the scores are good, there's just a lot of opportunities. And that's fun, it makes for a fun event and fun

for people to see birdies going in, so it's all good.

**Q. Did you learn anything being in contention your first start, and I mean being on the PGA TOUR Champions, 54 holes versus 72, about how to attack, how to be there in the end?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Yeah, it's hard for me. I'm not a very aggressive player by nature, but out here you need to get off to good starts. You can't fall too far behind because it is only 54 holes and I was cognizant of that today when I came out. I knew that we've got to get a good score this first round and stay up near the lead. Fortunately, I've done that so far, but it's going to take a couple more of those or even better. The course is playing great and it's in great shape and there's a lot of birdie opportunities.

**Q. How big an adjustment was it, the green speeds, to go from the U.S. Open to the speeds here?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Yeah, I worked on it the last few days. It wasn't so good right away when I started putting here, but it doesn't take long. Once you put some time in on the putting greens and I played two pro-ams here, you get pretty used to it pretty quick.

**Q. Steve, what do you do tonight?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Darius Rucker. Yeah, Darius Rucker. I'm excited to go see that. We'll get out of here probably and maybe go practice over at Cherokee or something, then see Darius Rucker perform.

**Q. Steve, did you miss the planning meeting when they named 17 green Club Strick, and if I went to order a Stricker, what would that drink be?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Yeah, I have no idea. I knew it was Club Strick, but is there actually a drink?

**Q. There should be. Can you make one? What would it be?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** What would it be? It would be probably a Bud Light is what it would be.

**Q. Steve, you've had a lot of ovations over the last couple weeks at Erin Hills and here. What's it been like for you to see the support over the past 14 days or so?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Yeah, it's been pretty surreal. I'm usually not in a position to get those kind of -- you know, the support and the standing ovations like last week. It was unbelievable. It's been crazy. It's been draining, too, mentally and physically. I put a lot of effort into these, especially last week. So I've got hopefully a couple more good rounds in me and then get away from the game probably for a couple weeks and recharge.

**Q. Jerry said the crowds amp him up a little bit. Do they amp you up?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Oh, yeah, you want to perform and perform well. It's fun to play here in front of everybody, and when you make a birdie, it's just that much more special. So yeah, great support all day all the way around again here today. It's been a treat these last two weeks, that's for sure.

**Q. I saw you sign some lady's T-shirt over there?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Yeah.

**Q. Has there been anything else of an interesting nature?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** A couple shirts here and there, but that's been about it. It's the normal stuff. Just a lot of people fired up that golf is here in our state, which is really cool. We had a major tournament last week in the U.S. Open and then we have the PGA TOUR Champions. When would we ever get Freddie Couples to come here and play? I think that's really cool. We've got a great field. We've got Nick Faldo coming here and Jimenez and Woosnam. We've got a lot of talent here this year and that's really neat to see.

**Q. What did you see in Freddie's game today?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** You know, he hasn't played for a while, so I thought he played pretty darn good. He played better on the back side and got some birdies to go in. But he's always impressive. You know, he doesn't stray too far from the fairway and very consistent. He holed a couple of nice putts. Yeah, it's impressive that he can come out after not playing for seven weeks and shoot 5 under.