



THOMAS PIETERS

Q. (No microphone.)

THOMAS PIETERS: Good, I'm well rested. I took four weeks off out of five weeks. Like I said, I'm rested and ready for a good end of the season.

Q. Tell us, how did you start golf?

THOMAS PIETERS: I started when I was five years old with my mom and dad, played a bit in South Africa on vacation. Came back and then took the whole family and loved it ever since. So started at a local golf course, 13 golf holes, very -- not normal I would say. You know, it's not an obvious sport to play in Belgium but I liked it that much and it was a bit different than everything else. I was playing football and basketball at the time as well. Thought I had some talent in golf and kept going with it.

Q. Who was your inspiration during your growing-up years?

THOMAS PIETERS: Tiger. I think as any kid that was born around my years or even before or after, I think Tiger had a huge impact in what we do, what we play for, where we play in the world.

Q. (Inaudible) How much confidence booster that was?

THOMAS PIETERS: Yeah, it went pretty quick. My rookie season in Europe, I had a couple chances to win and the next year I won two times. So it's been going quite good. I didn't expect to play on the PGA Tour after my fourth season, so happy with it obviously, but it's a learning process. Playing both tours is not going to be easy, but I look forward to it.

Q. As you just said that this is your fourth year on the Tour, what has changed since your debut?

THOMAS PIETERS: I've just become a more well rounded player. Working with my coach Pete Cowan, working on the swing, ball flight. You know, just kind of improve on all the small things over the years.

Q. You just mentioned about Pete Cowan, who said that you are one to watch out for. Tell us about your association with Cowan.

THOMAS PIETERS: I met him when I was 13 years old and I've done his drills ever since. And he told me -- I used to see him two or three times a year up until I was 18 and I went to

the States. But he used to tell me, if you ever get on Tour, then I'll be your coach. Got on Tour and then it's the first thing I did, I went to go see Pete and I think he's a huge influence in how decent of a player I am now.

Q. There was an instant when I think he said that you probably won't make it, something like that happened, right, initially when you met him?

THOMAS PIETERS: Sorry, say again?

Q. There was an incident where he said that you probably won't do as well, there's something that you said in one of the interviews. Can you tell us about that?

THOMAS PIETERS: I don't recall that, but Pete's very straightforward. If you're not doing his drills or you're not working hard enough, he'll just drop you. Maybe not to that extreme, but he's very tough on you sometimes.

Q. You're 6-6. Is that an advantage or a disadvantage on a golf course?

THOMAS PIETERS: I'm 6-4. I think 6-6 is a bit high for me. But I think it's an advantage. I've got a wide arc so I can hit it longer than average I would say. Some people, maybe shorter people can putt better, I don't know. It's all about feel and how you hit the ball.

Q. You honed your game in the U.S. as an amateur. Was that always your plan to come back to play on the European Tour?

THOMAS PIETERS: Yes, yes. I love being home, I love supporting my Tour. I'll never leave the European Tour. Also, with Ryder Cups we've got going on, played one and I will never want to miss one again. Yeah, I will play the PGA Tour, but my heart will always be in Europe.

Q. What's the difference between the PGA Tour and the European Tour?

THOMAS PIETERS: It feels more like home. I'm not going to give all the pros and cons, but for me it's about being home, to be able to fly home on a Sunday and leave on a Tuesday, be with my family for two days.

Q. Thomas, your first start in this event, what are your first impressions of the golf course and the property and being here in Malaysia?

THOMAS PIETERS: I've been here twice, I played the Malaysian Ned Bank Open. Loved this course from the start. This is what kind of kickstarted my first, my rookie season. Got an invite and finished 16th, got some belief and then I had a runner-up two weeks later. So ever since then I've played very good, I would say, on the European Tour. I was kind of bummed that you guys took our course away, but happy to be here on the PGA Tour then. I love the course, the town's great, the food's great. So I look forward to this tournament and

this week every year.

Q. This is a kickoff to your season on the PGA Tour. Do you have goals that you've set for the year?

THOMAS PIETERS: Just going to take it easy. You know, it's not going to be easy playing both tours, so I'll just take every week as it comes. Not too many expectations, we'll just see. I did that this year and it worked out fine.

Q. You said you're a big fan of the golf course. Any changes around here since the last time you were here?

THOMAS PIETERS: Yeah, I think they took out a lot of trees and some bushes. It looks very clean, it looks great. The greens are really good and, as I said, it looks good.

Q. Game in pretty good shape heading into the new season?

THOMAS PIETERS: Yeah, I would say so. I'd like to hit a couple more fairways. Got my driver straightened out so hopefully that works.

Q. You come to these events, obviously playing on the European Tour you've gone a lot of traveling and you've seen some cool countries and just things of that nature. Just talking to Mike about the ride in with the motorcade. Is there anything specific about being in Malaysia that you find different, interesting?

THOMAS PIETERS: Yeah, we do travel a lot more on the European Tour and we see more cultures, but like I said, I really like Kuala Lumpur. The food is great, people are so nice. Traffic's bad, but the escort helps a lot. Yeah, I mean the golf course, it's unbelievable how they can maintain it like this and get the course ready for us.