

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
November 18, 2020



HUDSON SWAFFORD

DOUG MILNE: Hudson, thanks for joining us for a few minutes prior to your eighth start here at the RSM Classic. Some pretty good success, top-15 finish back in 2014. I know obviously the area here and the tournament is special to you, so just a few comments on the week and being back here for the 2020 RSM Classic.

HUDSON SWAFFORD: It's always nice kind of staying in your own bed. Home game, live two miles from the golf course, home golf course.

It's good and bad, though. Everybody asks me, "Is it real easy to play your home tournament," and I'm not going to say there's more pressure, but there's just a lot more going on per se than a normal week of on the road and kind of out of your normal routine. But it's good. I'm not complaining. Home for three weeks in a row, mix in a PGA TOUR event on a home golf course, so it's good.

DOUG MILNE: It's obviously a little bit different in the world we're living in these days, but this tournament is one that really has become one that players don't want to miss for a lot of reasons. Like you, a lot of people live here now, but if you could just comment on Davis Love and him as the tournament host and how special he's really added as far as the value and the appreciation for the tournament.

HUDSON SWAFFORD: I mean, Davis is one of the best human beings that I know. I kind of grew up -- before the whole Tiger era, grew up kind of idolizing Davis, obviously being both from the southeast, kind of wanted to model yourself after him.

Getting to know him personally over the last 10 or 15 years, he's just what you see is what you get, just an unbelievable person. And he's done -- you know, he's gone miles for this community and put St. Simons, Sea Island, Glynn County on the map. Just an all-around great person, great family.

And it's fun to help them out and just see this tournament and kind of grow with the tournament obviously. Watch how the local charities benefit from it. Yeah, they've done an unbelievable job, I think.

DOUG MILNE: Well, I've got one more question and then we'll open it up to a few of the guys online. You come into the week in good form having collected your second Tour win in Puntacana a while back. How special, A, was that win, and B, the fall series of events, you look at a guy like Brendon Todd obviously, who you're near and dear to, what he did in the fall last year, how gratifying and special was that win at Puntacana and how it kind of sets you up through the fall.

HUDSON SWAFFORD: It's huge. Personally, I like most of the events in the fall. There's definitely some throughout the season that have moved to the fall that I've really liked, but I like getting off to a good start in the fall. There's a lot of bermudagrass, kind of what I grew up on and know, so I play a fair amount in the fall, get to take a little bit more off on the west coast.

So getting off to a good start is awesome. Kind of, I'm not going to say frees you up, but it kind of opens your schedule for the rest of the year. You don't have to chase a tournament that you don't really want to play, or if you're not -- your body isn't feeling great, you don't have to go, you can rest that week. It's nice to get off to a great start.

And winning, it's special, it's fun. It takes a lot out of you, but it is the best thing in our sport. There's a few guys that make it look a lot easier than it really is. No, it's very gratifying, specially on a medical, fulfilling a medical, getting my second Tour win, setting myself up to have success and get back to where I know that I can play before a couple of my injuries.

Q. Hey, Hud. You and Harris had some tough years, he was not playing great for a couple years and you had injuries. Did y'all, that relationship, you know, support each other or help each other through those times or give each other advice? What did that relationship mean during those times?

HUDSON SWAFFORD: Yeah, a little bit. Definitely kind of talked about it and kind of talked about it after the fact, too. Kind of what's been going on, kind of what happened and kind of helped each -- I was kind of helping him while he was struggling early on and, you know, the way I was doing things because I was -- that was right in 2017, kind of right when he was struggling a little bit and that was the year I won and had a really nice year. So yeah, I definitely was trying to help him out and the things that I had success doing. Really it just came down to him digging deep and not bouncing around and trying to get back to the basics. He's done a great job of it.

Obviously me being injured, having doubt, we would definitely text each other off and on and, you know, he'd just say when I was struggling, he's like it's golf, man, you're too good not to, you know, be at the top. He goes, just keep grinding. He's like, you're going to get out of this hole and it's going to be fine, but you've got to look at the big picture as opposed day by day and the results right here in front of you. Just keep getting better doing the little things, small victories and then just, you know, getting a little bit more confidence each and every day.

Q. And what do you remember about the first time you met him?

HUDSON SWAFFORD: It was actually a Southeastern Junior Golf Tour event. I think I was 10 and maybe he had just turned 9 or he was still like 8 years old. We always joke about it, but I guess they were over a hill and I hit a driver. I didn't see the group in front of me, I hit a driver over them and into their group and that's probably about the first time I met him when

we were young on the Southeastern Junior Golf Tour, me hitting the ball into their group over their heads.

But we've been close friends ever since, college roommates. We grew up with the same teacher, Bill Connelly at Glen Arven, and then went to Georgia and roomed together and now both on the PGA TOUR together. It's kind of a surreal story.

Q. Just bouncing off of what Sean just said there, do you have a story, do you remember the first time you heard of or met Dustin Johnson?

HUDSON SWAFFORD: Yeah, I mean, it was probably amateur golf. I mean, I was a senior in high school and played a lot of golf that summer on the amateur circuit as opposed to the junior circuit. I thought it would prepare me a little better for college golf. Ran into him a number of times. Obviously you're kind of on your own, you can have a good time. This guy was just uber talented. I mean, nothing phased him, it didn't matter what was going on. It was just very impressive.

I remember the Northeast Amateur, I was rooming with Colt Knost actually at our host family and guys were just -- I mean, we're gambling, just hanging out, playing cards every night and just watching this guy dissect this golf course that's on 90 acres. He's known for his power and ends up winning by like 3 or 4 I think that week. It was just impressive. I mean, he could win anywhere. That was kind of my first encounter when I was a senior in high school just watching the guy go about, didn't matter what golf course you were on, he didn't really care, he was just shooting low numbers every week.

Q. Doug mentioned you had a bit of a long stretch between victories and the next guy coming in for the media center went more than nine years, Stewart Cink. What do you make of him getting back in the winner's circle and also doing it in his late 40s?

HUDSON SWAFFORD: Oh, it's unbelievable. Stuart's one of the -- he's a great dude. He's one of the nicest guys out here, most upbeat person out here, positive.

You could kind of see it coming honestly. I played a fair amount of golf with Stewart over the last few years and obviously he was on a medical before, I think a minor medical, but we had kind of been in the same category and we had been playing.

Man, he hits it plenty far and his short game's gotten tight again. It's been really impressive to watch. We both were in France last year together. It was my first rehab start back after foot surgery and went over there and bad weather and we both had pretty good weeks. I think he finished maybe like 4th or 5th the week before in Houston, so he was playing good golf.

It's great to see. I mean, I was so happy for Stewart and Lisa, and to have his son on the bag. It doesn't come as a shock. The guy hits it as far as anybody really on Tour other than maybe Bryson and there's like maybe like three, but he can get it out there with anybody, so

that wasn't an issue. It's really nice to see him playing good again.

Q. As a resident of this area, what are some of the restaurants that you recommend? How do you describe the golf seen here to people?

HUDSON SWAFFORD: Oh, this is an amazing place. You know, the community welcomes the golfers with open arms. Some of my favorite restaurants are Halyards, Delaney's, Crabdaddy's, Mellow Mushroom to catch some games. That's probably the best place to watch some football games on the weekend. And then a new place, Fiddlers, a little seafood, kind of open air right on the marsh, it's a great place. We enjoy going to those spots. There's a few others, but those are kind of our main go-to.

DOUG MILNE: All right. Well, Hudson, I think that's what we've got. I've got my dinner reservations lined up for tonight based on what you just said. Thank you for your time, have a great week and I'll be sure to look out for you.

HUDSON SWAFFORD: All right, sounds good.