

**AMERICAN FAMILY INSURANCE
CHAMPIONSHIP NEWS CONFERENCE**
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JACK SALZWEDEL
JIM BUCHHEIM
STEVE STRICKER
MILLER BRADY

JACK SALZWEDEL: It's great to see you again. I'm Jack Salzwedel, chairman and CEO OF American Family and after a one-year hiatus it's great to be back at University Ridge and playing the American Family Championship.

I have Steve Stricker to my left, and we have our friends from the PGA, Miller Brady, here also. We're going to be having a little press conference talking about a number of things, but we wanted to start out with an announcement today that American Family has been negotiating with the PGA to extend the length of the tournament and we have agreed to extend the American Family Championship through the year 2027. So we're very excited about that.

(Applause.)

JACK SALZWEDEL: Then it gets to the venue, and we've had great success here at University Ridge and we've agreed to an extension with the university as well to play the tournament here at University Ridge through 2027 as well, so thank you for that.

So it's been an unbelievable year for all of us. This is really the first major sporting event that is back in Dane County. We weren't sure earlier how the county would react to fans being here. That was something that was really important for us not only as an organization as American Family, but also as a tournament. So we've been able to get fans back at the level of 7,500 fans, so we're very excited about that.

We have a field that is absolutely second to none thanks to the folks at the PGA and our player-host Steve Stricker as well. We have a great purse, I think it's the highest purse outside of the majors in the Champions Tour and all that leads to I think a great tournament.

And we have great weather. It's not like it was a few weeks ago where it was 50 and rain, we have hot, steamy weather. And it looks like we're going to have a great course here as well. So with that, it's really great to be here and I'll turn it over to Jim Buchheim. He will be the emcee of today's press conference.

JIM BUCHHEIM: Again, I'm Jim Buchheim, community and social impact officer at American Family Insurance. It's my pleasure to extend a welcome to all of you as well for this afternoon's news conference.

You've already met Jack, Steve and Miller. I do want to make two other introductions. Steve, in addition to being the player-host, also serves as the chair of the board of the Steve Stricker American Family Insurance Foundation.

We have two other members of the board here with us today, Bill Westrate, who's American Family president and CEO-elect, and also Dan Kelly, who's American Family's chief financial officer.

I know I speak for the entire Stricker board as well as the entire tournament team when I say that we're thrilled to have this tournament extended through 2027. It's really grown into something more than just an elite golf tournament. It's really become a community event and in normal years also includes a great downtown concert and a 5k run as well.

So for this little news opportunity here, I'm going to ask a couple of questions of our three folks. We'll open it up to questions from you about the tournament extension, and then once we've gotten through all the tournament extension questions, we'll excuse Miller and Jack and you can pepper Steve with some additional questions after that.

So Jack, I'm going -- you had some great opening remarks, I'm going to come back to you. First, Steve, let me just toss it to you and share your comments about the extension the American Family Insurance Championship through 2027.

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, very exciting news, and thanks to Jack and your team to make that happen.

This was a dream of mine and yours quite a few years ago and it came to fruition. We've been blessed to have unbelievable support from the community, the fans, the sponsors, obviously a great organization in AmFam and the sponsorship that we need to make it work, so thank you.

Takes me to my 60th birthday. Hopefully I'm playing still by then. Yeah, very exciting. And the players, the players love coming here. I've already gotten a number -- I got a gift in my locker this week, a bottle of wine. Somebody gave me a bottle of wine for putting on a tournament. The players are ecstatic of being here, they can't say enough good things about the city of Madison. They stay downtown, some of them.

The course condition this year is immaculate, and the weather, we've got a lot of good things going for us this year. But the extension is unbelievable. Something I wouldn't have thought when I sat in Jack's office I don't know how many years ago, but it's a special day for us and extremely proud to be a part of it.

JIM BUCHHEIM: Miller, I'm going to go to you next. First, I want to reference, because I distinctly meeting with you, Miller, in this clubhouse more than six years ago as we talked about this tournament, when we would start it. You've been such a great partner to us as

well as the entire PGA TOUR Champions team. So can you just share your comments as the president of the Tour about this extension?

MILLER BRADY: Yeah, Jim, thank you very much. I'll first tell a quick story because we had a meeting with AmFam leadership I think when Steve was probably 46 years old with the idea and the thought of bringing a tournament to Madison and having AmFam be our title sponsor. Things just didn't align quite perfectly at the time. I think Steve wanted to wait until he was a little bit closer to being able to play out here on this tour. So we waited a few years, and lo and behold when he came back and had the conversations I think just before Steve turned 49 was when we played the first tournament here. He wasn't able to compete that first year but he played in the pro-am. It's amazing.

And when you think about the ability for us to announce this renewal today, a long-term extension for us through 2027 raising over \$10 million for charity since the inception of this event, it's just the perfect ingredients. When you have a hometown title sponsor in AmFam, you have a hometown host in Steve Stricker, long-time player on the PGA TOUR, now the Champions Tour, University Ridge, it's the ingredients that bring this together and it works and it makes it really easy for Nate and his team to help sell the tournament. You have a great community. The players love staying downtown as you referenced. It's a great foodie city. It feels great. Our players enjoy coming here. Didn't realize you would get a bottle of wine from somebody, so that's pretty good. As I said, the ingredients align and it just makes for a special event for our players, for our Tour and for our organization as a whole. So thank you very much for that. Jack, thank you.

JIM BUCHHEIM: Thanks, Miller.

Jack, come back to you with one more question. Maybe take us back to the start and the vision that you had around this tournament and how that vision has unfolded and led to this extension that we're announcing here this afternoon.

JACK SALZWEDEL: I remember going back, we were involved with the American Family Children's Hospital and I was chair of the advisory board and I think, Steve, you had won some money in a Presidents Cup or something and you decided to donate it to a charity and so you came in with a very nice check for the children's hospital. That was the first time I think that we had ever spoken, met.

In the course of that conversation we talked a little bit about the GMO. I had spent over 10 years down in Milwaukee and just absolutely loved the Greater Milwaukee Open and the big tour event down there. We just started talking about, well, what if we could bring something to Madison, what if we could do something on a big scale in the Dane County area.

Those conversations continued over a number of years talking about the big tour, the Champions Tour, and I think as we got into the last six, seven years we started realizing we could do a really great Champions Tour event here and that University Ridge would be a great course to do it at, and American Family. Then we got into the whole creating a

foundation between the Strickers and American Family.

So the stars kind of aligned, and I'd say really the key to the whole thing has been the involvement of the Stricker family. We've got a couple kids over here. Nicki isn't here, but her involvement in helping with charities and where we look to give the money.

So really, to Miller's point, all the things really have aligned well, but it's really, at the end of the day, it's having someone like the Stricker family behind this, pushing it, always talking it up with players and that just goes a huge way to helping to draw the people here and get the dollars for charity that we've been able to get.

JIM BUCHHEIM: Thank you, Jack. Before we open up to questions from the media, Miller, I want to toss it to you for one more announcement.

MILLER BRADY: Sure. Bear with me one second here.

Jack, I know you've been such a great supporter for this event, for our tour, so I wanted to -- hopefully you'll play a lot of golf in retirement, but on behalf of PGA TOUR Champions, here's a golf bag that has your initials and PGA TOUR Champions on there.

JACK SALZWEDEL: Thank you very much, Miller. Appreciate it.

MILLER BRADY: We know you'll never be far and come back and play in the pro-am hopefully every year. We appreciate everything you've done for us.

JIM BUCHHEIM: Now we'll take questions from the media. Again, we would ask that you first direct your questions about the contract extension. As soon as we run out of those, we'll keep Steve up here and you can ask questions of Steve before tournament play. So questions about the extension.

Q. I want to ask a question of Steve before Jack does leave. This is Jack's last year as CEO. He'll still be chairman of the board at AmFam, but I just want to know about your relationship with Jack, what his friendship's means to you.

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, it's meant everything. He's been there, he's been an unbelievable supporter of the event, someone that when I come and float an idea by, he's all in.

JACK SALZWEDEL: I think --

STEVE STRICKER: He's a good friend.

JACK SALZWEDEL: I mentioned this earlier, this started out more as friendship as opposed to the partnership. When you start as friends talking about things, dreaming together and then you get into a foundation together, you get into player-host of a

tournament together, you get into a true partnership together. The fact that it's based on friendship and respect to begin with just allows you to really -- Bill Westrate says "positive intent" all the time. We have positive intent on what we're trying to do. So when Steve comes with an idea, I know it's coming from his heart and it's coming from a really good place, and I think he knows that that's the same way that American Family is with him. So I think the friendship side of it is the baseline for the partnership as well.

STEVE STRICKER: Just what he said.

Q. Steve, what does the future of this tournament look like now that it's extended to 2027? What do you hope for?

STEVE STRICKER: I think much the same, to continue to grow. You know, we still strive to be the best Champions Tour event on a yearly basis, and Nate and his team have won that award before and we continue to try to elevate, to try to get better.

It's always little things that players notice the most, so we try to bring that to these guys and show them a good time. But we have a wonderful backdrop. Madison, downtown, this course here, a wonderful sponsor, like I keep saying.

I just saw Lee Janzen in there and he's like, you know, the attitude here is so good. That's because of all the AmFam team and Nate's team and what they're doing and how they're putting it on. So that means a lot to us, you know, that guys recognize that we're trying hard and we just try to continue.

And Nate's got his work cut out for him because he's already starting at a high level, so to try to improve and keep that going is a big challenge for him, but that's what we're trying to do.

Q. Steve, I don't think this question will make you break up. How involved were you with the negotiations for the extension?

STEVE STRICKER: At the very start?

Q. No, for the extension.

STEVE STRICKER: Oh, it's up to these two gentlemen right over here, and Jim and Bill and their whole team, and Nate. Obviously I want to keep it around as long as we can and we've had discussions keeping it around until I turn 60, I know, and blowing it out of the water because I think isn't it your guys' anniversary as well?

MILLER BRADY: Yes, 100th anniversary.

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, so that was the goal and that was the intentions, but it's all up to these guys over here. Obviously I'm all in, but these guys -- he's got the deep pockets right there. This guy is paying for it all.

MILLER BRADY: For the record, our goal is way beyond when you're 60, just so you know.

Q. Jack, for you, after you retire, this remain part of your legacy starting this. What will it mean to you to have that continue once you're no longer CEO?

JACK SALZWEDEL: That's really important, and I had that conversation with Jim Buchheim. Bill's coming in at the end of this year, he'll be CEO, he'll be running this in the years to come, but it's really important to me that we keep it here and that we have it at a place that's affiliated with the University of Wisconsin. We have deep ties with the university in a lot of different areas. There's always been talk about Milwaukee, there's been talk about other areas. I think we just felt that it would be a good time to try to extend this and I was very happy that it could get done while I'm still here. And Bill's going to take it to a whole new level as well. Very excited about that.

Q. When did the negotiations for the extension start and what was that process like Jim?

JIM BUCHHEIM: Yeah, actually I would say they date back two years ago. For the most part we were wrapped up about a year ago, but unfortunately we didn't have a tournament and so it really didn't make sense to do any kind of announcement at that time. We felt like during tournament week would be the time to announce the extension, so we've had this wrapped up for a while now. Anything else you would add to that?

MILLER BRADY: No, I think that's right. I remember having several meetings with your team, we were in Tucson having some conversations. The overall extension we knew felt right for all parties and it was just a matter of timing before we came to agreement.

JIM BUCHHEIM: And some of that goes into -- some of the other changes that you've seen this week, Jack referenced the increased purse, that was a commitment to try and continue to attract the best player field that week.

Then we also tweaked some things to have an invitational format so we as a title sponsor had a little bit more opportunity to extend sponsor exemptions to build out a field. It allows us to have folks like Mario Tiziani, a local player, Andy North. We just had a few more exemptions to be able to use with that type of invitational format, so that's been really meaningful for us.

Q. When was the original agreement supposed to end? How many years is this adding to it?

JIM BUCHHEIM: This would have been the last year of the original agreement, so it's extending through its initial life through at least again 2027. It's probably not going to be that long before we again start talking about time beyond that.

Any other questions about tournament and tournament extension? Thank you for that. Jack and Miller, I'll let you head off.

Steve, are you ready to take a few more?

STEVE STRICKER: I'm ready.

JIM BUCHHEIM: Questions for Steve?

Q. Besides this tournament, rumor has it you're involved with the Ryder Cup in some sort of form or another. How has that been going? How is that keeping you busy as well?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, unfortunately and fortunately, we've had extra time to deal with all the things that need to go on with that. So we took care of a lot of the little things, you know, the bags, the clothes, rooms, all the little stuff you need to take care of last year and this year it's been pretty much just watching players and doing some other things, little things here and there.

A lot of the work was done last year, and now part of the reason why I still continue to play on the regular tour is so I get out there and see some of these guys, some of these young kids that I haven't even met before, like Will Zalatoris, I played a practice round with him at the PGA. Collin Morikawa, there's just a number of players. Phil again, you know? Just a number of guys that potentially could make the team. So it's about just being around, staying pertinent out there and being around enough out there that I still feel like I'm a part of that group out there as well.

Q. Steve, Padraig Harrington said a couple years that he didn't think a lot of things could be done to Whistling Straits to favor you guys. I know you're not giving away the company secrets, but do you think there are tweaks you can make to the course that favor your team?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, for sure. Whistling Straits is a big golf course, it's a long-hitter's course. Even the past champions there, the guys that have been in contention there predominantly have hit it a long ways for the most part. A few exceptions here and there, but kind of lends itself to a lot of length.

Yeah, there's some small little tweaks that I've been able to do over the last year and even this last spring. It won't be any shock to them what we're doing, I'm sure, but it's something that I feel like I'm just trying to make it play like what we play on a normal basis and try not to add another dimension that our team isn't accustomed to or used to playing.

Q. Faster greens than you saw in Paris?

STEVE STRICKER: Oh, yeah, they'll be faster than Paris, for sure. I think they slowed

those down every day over there, but yeah, there will be faster greens, but typical speeds of what we play here. It won't be anything crazy, I don't think. A lot of that isn't even up to me come tournament time. I can do some things to the golf course now prior to the couple of weeks ahead of the tournament and then I'm out of it. It's done by committee, a committee made up of European team members and U.S. Ryder Cup side team members, too. So they take care of it from that point on.

Q. Steve, the fact that we're back here kind of means we're closer to some sort of normal like it used to be. When you're playing events, do you feel like sports is returning to normal?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, slowly, I think. I saw a Tweet or something that Phil Mickelson got rid of the pandemic, right? When he won there at South Carolina and the crowd rushed down the middle of the fairway, nobody's wearing masks, they were all, you know, elbow to elbow and tightly together. It seemed like that was normal, right? So it seems like a lot of that has -- everyplace we go, it's a little bit different everyplace we go, but for the most part it seems like it's moving forward. The Brewers opening up full capacity I think on the 25th of June bodes well for the Ryder Cup in September. Yeah, I think slowly we see some things returning.

Q. Can you speak to what it means to have fans as opposed to some of the events you played where there was just nobody?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, it's a huge difference. Any amount of fans is better than nothing. When we came back after that hiatus last year and we played in front of no fans, it's difficult. Even players expressed the difficulties in trying to play. There's no energy. Somehow you had to try to create that on your own. But when you play in front of fans, there's that automatic energy and you can feed off the fans, especially if you play here in front of your hometown fans and friends and family and stuff like that.

Yeah, it's great to see that we're going to have fans out here and hopefully they come out and support it. It's going to be hot, a lot of beer and water I'm sure will be drank, but all good stuff.

Q. How do you balance everything this week with it being in your backyard, all the hats you have to wear, spending time with family but also getting ready to play?

STEVE STRICKER: I enjoy being busy. You can ask my kids, my wife, I'm busy all the time. I would rather have it that way than sitting at home on the couch, I don't do well doing that. So it's something I enjoy and I've been able to hopefully compartmentalize when I get out on the golf course and I can just get into my own little zone when I get out there and leave all this other stuff behind. But there's a number of people who take care of a lot of things for me behind the scenes that enables me to go out and play and just concentrate on playing.

Q. After a year off, how does it feel to be back here?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, it feels great to be back here. I think the main thing is just missing the tournament and the people and soon-to-be fans in general. AmFam was still able to, and our foundation was still able to donate a bunch of money last year even though we didn't put on the tournament, so thanks to them and their team.

So I think the underlying reason we're all here is for charity. The American Family Children's Hospital and the 70 or 80 other charities that we support, that's the main reason we're here. And then secondary is we get to play a little golf and try to show off for the people that come out here and watch and hopefully put on a good show.

Yeah, it's just the whole thing, wrap it all together and it means a lot to be playing again here this year.

Q. You mentioned course conditions earlier. Ernie Els mentioned the same thing, the course is in good shape. What is it about how it is right now and how you've been able to play it the last couple days that kind of stuck out to you?

STEVE STRICKER: I think just the overall shape in general is the best I've seen. The group here at U Ridge, Mike and Phil, have really gotten on board. They've really committed to the tournament. Phil, the greens superintendent, I feel like has gotten better each and every year. The Tour comes in with their agronomy team and helps out, but they're committed, too. They want to put on a good tournament and have the players say positive things about their course.

I can honestly say it's gotten better each and every year. They redid the bunkers a year or two ago and those are better. Everything about it has improved since we've been here. Thanks to them, thanks to AmFam to make that happen as well. We've committed some monies to them to try to help grow the experience when somebody comes here to play as well. It's all been good.

JIM BUCHHEIM: All right? Well, thank you so much for attending. Transcription of today's news conference will be available as are all media sessions. It will be posted to the For Media page on the championship website. Thanks again for being here.