

**PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
NOVEMBER 10, 2021**



ERNIE ELS

ERNIE ELS: The superintendent, he's doing an unbelievable job. So good to be back and got a really great field. I'm looking forward to playing. It's gorgeous, the golf course is in really gorgeous shape.

Q. You're No. 4 heading into this week in the Schwab standings. Can you just talk a little bit about what it's going to take to pull off the win?

ERNIE ELS: Well, I need to win and then I need Bernhard Langer I see to finish outside the top-7, so that's at least what needs to happen for me.

Bernhard's had an unbelievable two years in the one season, wraparound, and some other really great play from a lot of players. I'm just fortunate enough to have an outside chance at winning the whole thing, but I need to have things go my way. Hopefully I can have a good week. As I said, it's going to take I think quite a low number because the course is in such great shape, guys are going to shoot low scores, so hopefully I can do that.

Q. How's Langer still doing it after all these years?

ERNIE ELS: He's just dedicated and ironman, you know? He loves what he does obviously and he does it very well, and he just sticks with what he does and that's hitting it in the fairways and getting it on the greens and doing what he's supposed to do. Really, hats off to Bernhard, he's been an inspiration to a lot of players.

Q. What are some things you're doing different with your swing and your game to stay at this level that you maybe didn't do 10 years ago?

ERNIE ELS: Well, I'm still doing much of the same, but out here I could compete with the guys. And my equipment is obviously good, so I've just got to keep working on my game, doing what I can do. I've been experimenting a lot this year with putters and drivers, driver shafts and so forth. I think I've found where I need to be, so now I need to work on that and hopefully next year I can do even better.

Q. Your thoughts on your first year and a half out here?

ERNIE ELS: Yeah, it's been amazing. I mean, just to be able to play, especially last year in the pandemic. We had a couple of months off, but then the Tour got going again and we've been nonstop since. It's been fantastic. Our sponsors have stuck with us.

In my two years out here, I'm not the rookie anymore per se, there's been quite a few new

guys coming in and really enjoying it out here. I feel the Tour's really growing and it's growing in my little time I've been out here. I think we're in good hands and I think people are excited to see us come to town. We've been all over America and it's been a wonderful experience playing places I haven't been to, so it's been a really wonderful experience the last 18 months.

Q. Do you think Phil will have an impact on the future health of the Champions Tour? Do you feel that things are in pretty good shape and this just adds to it?

ERNIE ELS: Well, we're in good shape, but a guy like Phil, to play full time out here would be an unbelievable boost. He attracts a lot of attention wherever he goes. He's been a fantastic player throughout his career. We've been playing, you know, together since we were 14 years of age.

But he's such a draw card everywhere he goes. He will be an absolute asset to the Tour, there's no doubt. He'll be the biggest name out here. If he decides to play it full time, it will be really great for our Tour.

Q. With your year coming to an end, is it everything you thought it would be out here when you first came out?

ERNIE ELS: Yeah, I knew it was going to be competitive, but I'm still surprised how the guys are still working on their games, really staying sharp. The guys enjoy it, but they're here to really compete week in and week out. I'm not really surprised, but I am a little bit because these guys are really, really good and you've got to show up. Nothing's been given to you out on this tour, you've got to go out and earn it, so it's a good place to play.