

**STEVE STRICKER**

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**STEVE STRICKER:** One time when it snowed in Tucson, I was here for the Match Play event up at Dove Mountain and now this year. Has it been the only two times it snowed in Tucson, too, that I've been there for?

It's pretty, very pretty. Holy cow, the mountains look beautiful. It doesn't look so good on the golf course when you're trying to play. But at least we're getting out there today, we'll see some of it somehow, either par 3, scramble or play nine holes. Yeah, it was something different to wake up to, for sure.

**Q. And obviously you're playing well this year. What do you make of just kind of your level of play?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Yeah, it's been good. Played twice and won one and had another opportunity to win the other one. It's good. I'm excited where my game is at and excited for this week. I've won here before, I enjoy being here in Tucson and playing Tucson National here. So I'm excited, I'm excited to be here. I haven't been out on the course at all, I just flew in yesterday so I haven't seen it yet. Looking to get out there today and check it out a little bit.

**Q. And so when you were dealing with your illness, what kind of challenges were presented to you and how did you kind of overcome all these?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** After the illness?

**Q. After the illness.**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Really it was all about weight and strength. I lost 25, 30 pounds going through that for those three months or so, three or four months. Then really it was -- it's been about getting my strength back. It is back, I'm feeling great.

But that was the challenges, just trying to get ready and prepare. You don't realize how many muscles you use in your body until you lose a lot of your body weight and muscles. That's been an ongoing process, but I kind of used it as a reset. Hey, all right, I lost 25 pounds, let's get after it and work out. I've been doing that a little bit more, trying to eat better and work out more and build that strength back.

**Q. So do you feel like you have strength?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Oh, yeah. I feel like I'm stronger than I was going into the illness.

Yeah, I feel like my body's better, I feel like I'm moving better than prior to that. Yeah, I feel like I'm in better condition than I was going into it.

**Q. You're playing in honor of --**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Steve.

**Q. -- Steve DiMeglio. Can you talk about your relationship with Steve?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Yeah, yeah. When I learned of his prognosis back last year, I've been in contact with him probably on a monthly basis just checking in with him and seeing how he's been doing. So this is nothing new for me to play for somebody -- it's new for me to play for somebody, but Steve, I've been kind of in his corner since I found out and been seeing how he's been doing, how he's been feeling. We've been talking back and forth.

So it's kind of, it's, I don't know how to say it, but it's a nice surprise that I get to play for him this week because he's a friend and we've gone back to the days when I first came on tour that I've known Steve. And he's been always very good to me and fair to me. I've (indiscernible) him and hopefully he can say the same.

Yeah, it's a cool situation that I get to think about him a little bit more this week and wear a ribbon with his name on it. Yeah, it's a pretty cool thing.

**Q. And uplifted his spirits, Twitter and his post, he's pretty pumped that you're playing for him.**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Yeah, we texted back and forth after I found out that I was playing for him, texted back and forth a little bit. So I'll send him out another probably thing before we get going.

Yeah, I just hope and pray that he's on the mend and getting going in the right direction. It's a tough thing. I know he's stage IV, which is pretty far along, so he's still got an uphill battle.

I don't know if he tells me everything. He keeps telling me that he's fighting it. All I keep saying is keep plugging and keep kicking butt and you can do it and all that kind of stuff.

Yeah, hopefully he's going to beat it and make it through.

**Q. So Langer's trying to go for the record. What do you make of that storyline and just the overall success he's had?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Yeah, it's amazing, isn't it? We're all trying to beat him. He's such an amazing guy and keeps his body in good shape, his game in good shape and he's just persevered through so many things throughout his career and continues to do so. Now he's got this number to keep shooting for, that keeps him motivated, keeps him going.

Yeah, at some point I'm sure he's going to do it, he's just that good and he continues to show us how good he is. I think he's 66, right?

**Q. Sixty-five.**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Shooting his age already a bunch of times, it's cool to see. But yet we're trying to stop that, too, or at least I am, to stop him from winning. That's a challenge because he's really good. And he's a great guy. Gotten to know him a little bit more over the years being out here. He's just a nice guy, nice to me, nice to my family, he's a nice family man it seems like. It's cool to see, but yet we're trying to do the same, we're trying to win, too.

**Q. Is that something you think about, the record?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** No. I haven't played enough out here really, I think I've only played 49 or 50 times and I'm 56 already, so I'd have a long ways to go.

It's fun out here trying to win, and you get in contention a lot out here if you're playing well and that's makes it fun. But no, I'm just not at that level.

**Q. That one year where he won like seven or eight tournaments in a year, what kind of level do you have to be at in order to accomplish something like that?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Yeah, that's what I'm saying, he's just a remarkable golfer. I think he's so strong mentally. He's one of those guys that has overcome the yips in not only his putting and his chipping, you know, he missed that putt at the Ryder Cup one year that would have won them the Ryder Cup and he goes I think and wins the next week. That takes a guy with a strong mental capability and belief in what he's doing.

Yeah, so it doesn't surprise me whatever he does out here just because of the type of player he is and the strong mental game that he has.

**Q. And then coming up here at the end of this month LIV is going to be at Dove Mountain. What do you make of how they're trying to be a part of the golf scene and kind of rival the PGA and what's been the chatter amongst the players?**

**STEVE STRICKER:** Oh, there's a lot of chatter, there's a lot of chatter everywhere about it. I'm kind of the guy, I'm on -- I'm a PGA TOUR guy. I've grown up wanting to be on the PGA TOUR, strived and set goals to be a PGA TOUR player and I achieved those goals.

Yeah, I wish -- you know, I don't have anything against the guys that left. It's kind of the back and forth, the talking back and forth, then suing the players and suing our tour that kind of rubs me the wrong way.

Because a lot of those guys who left, they got a name on the PGA TOUR, they developed their games on the PGA TOUR and you know, it's the greatest place to play in the world when they were there. That's the part that I'm having a hard time with is the back and forth.

They can do their thing, they made their bed and they chose to go that way and I'm fine with that. Just why backstab the Tour?