

STEWART CINK

Q. All right, Stewart, thank you for joining us here at the Cologuard Classic by Exact Sciences. Just to start, how does it feel to be here this week?

STEWART CINK: It feels great. I love playing in the desert. I just have always enjoyed being in the desert and playing golf is just an extra bonus.

It's been a long time since I was in Tucson. I played in a lot of the match plays that were here up at Dove Mountain and I played a tournament at this course when I was about 16 or 17 years old. a long, long time ago, like another life it feels like. But it's always been a good town and, like I said, desert golf is just a fun way to play.

Q. Have you played here since that time when you were 16 or 17?

STEWART CINK: I have not been here since that time. Naturally didn't remember a lot about the course when I went out there, it's a new course for me.

Q. I was going to ask you about I don't know how much -- you're still spending some time on the PGA TOUR. How much are you following the day-to-day with the negotiations with the Tour, the future of that league and whether there's a merger and all this? Do you find yourself paying attention or maybe not so much?

STEWART CINK: Yeah, paying attention, but I'm not following it day by day or anything like that. It's hard to follow for one thing. You just have to ask the people that are involved directly and I'm not doing that, they've got a lot going on.

I'll wait for the information to come out. We usually get a little bit of a head start on seeing it, the players do. That's about it.

Of course I'm very interested in what happens. I hope that we can get back together as like one sport in golf, but it's a complex situation.

Q. Would you let the LIV guys just come back or do you think there needs to be --

STEWART CINK: No, I wouldn't let the LIV guys come right back, I don't think. I think there needs to be some way of, you know, just another way to say thanks for the guys that didn't leave and just kind of abandon our standards and rules.

I think there needs to be some form of like delayed -- I don't know if it's delaying some of their performance bonuses or if it's some kind of a suspension that maintains itself, I don't

know exactly, but something.

Q. What's the biggest difference between when you play this tour and when you go back and play a regular PGA TOUR event? Going into it, what do you have to do differently?

STEWART CINK: Well, I'd say the biggest thing competitively is the course setup. The courses on the PGA TOUR are just set up much more demanding, longer, more rough, tighter pins. It matches the more clubhead speed and higher ball flights, it just matches all the different skill sets. Those guys aren't 50 mostly and these guys out here are 50, 100 percent are 50.

So it makes sense and that's the biggest thing I've seen since I've played now, this is my sixth one.

The camaraderie out here is great, I love it because I know everybody out here. On the PGA TOUR I have less and less peers every year.

Q. Is there anything that the PGA can take away from LIV?

STEWART CINK: Well, you don't need me to answer that question because we're already seeing it. We're going to smaller fields, we're going to less cuts, we're going to \$20 million a tournament. I think that's a pretty obvious answer that that's what golfers like. If any of us in this group right here play golf, that's what we would want. I would want to be playing for that, too.

I don't think it's a sustainable thing for a true business to operate that way.

Q. How was it like being out there golfing at La Paloma? How would you describe the experiences, like the course and all that?

STEWART CINK: Oh, I think this is a great experience here. I'm not playing today, I played yesterday and the day before just to get my feet on the ground here and see it.

It's a lot of fun. There's some cool shots, it's beautiful scenery. I know there's a lot of really good golf courses in Tucson that are just like this. It's just a really fun place to play golf.

Q. What comes at a premium in a round? What's the one thing you need to do here to score low?

STEWART CINK: Keep it out of the desert is the main thing. The fairways here are not -- not just the fairways but the corridors between the deserts are not that wide. You have to be really smart off the tee.

It's like one of the early target golf designs going back to, I don't know when this was built,

but back when target golf was becoming a real thing, that's what this is. It's like playing a par-3 on every hole where you have to hit your tee shot to a certain distance and within a certain width, like you're trying to hit a green and you're trying to hit another green. It doesn't -- it's not the kind of course where you can just tee up a driver on every hole and just swing for the fences at all.

Q. In your estimation, putting-wise, is it more challenging to putt on a course like this where you have the mountain slope affecting every roll or a parkland course where you have to read different types of slopes?

STEWART CINK: It's more difficult to play in a place like this when you've got a general slope. Like that mountain over there is pretty powerful and so is that valley. What I find is that you have to read some of that into the putts, but over time -- it doesn't take that long to adjust, but you start to just naturally sort of assimilate that information when you're looking at it. So it's easy to overplay the breaks.

This course here has some difficult, certainly some difficult greens because a lot of the hole locations are going to be placed on little knobs because the greens are just built that way. You're going to face putts that have a lot of different variable slopes within the putt, even short ones.

Q. One of the unique things about this tournament this year is with the tight course, the tight quarters, it will be sort of a thinner rope and stake, so you're kind of going to have the fans on top of you a lot. Does that make things a little bit more fun when you have people sort of lining the tee box and you've got that narrow window?

STEWART CINK: It does. Playing in front of the fans is really a basic, like it's one of the things that draws us to competitive golf. Even at a young age we kind of dream about that. Most of us out here have been doing this for a long time, so we're accustomed to it, but it still just brings the energy level up when you have a lot of fans out here supporting. They want to see good play and they want to see some of the players they've known for a long time. It's exciting to see the kind of support you get and it feels really good.