

STEVE STRICKER

Q. Steve, thank you for joining us here at the Cologuard Classic by Exact Sciences. How does it feel to be here this week?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, it feels great. Always fun to come back to the Tucson area, special memories from winning here a few years ago. A Madison-based company, so you see some familiar faces. Jerry Kelly being the ambassador for this event makes it even more special.

And we're at a great spot this week. Course is in great shape. It's a new course for us, so we're learning about it and we're excited to be here.

Q. What's different about this course as opposed to the other one?

STEVE STRICKER: The terrain. I mean, it's up and down, a lot of elevated tee shots, where Omni was pretty much flat all the way around. It's completely different. We have a desert course here where if you miss a fairway, you're usually going to be in the desert. Probably not a very good lie in there, either, it's pretty thick. And then the Omni was kind of, you know, kind of a normal golf course, parkland golf course, trees and some rough. Yeah, so totally two different golf courses.

Q. Do you feel like you picked up from last season at all where you left off? You had one of the best seasons --

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, thanks. A little slow so far. The game and your body really is a work in progress. At our age you've got a lot of aches and pains that you've got to try to manage through. That hasn't been very good for me lately, but I'm working at it.

My game is pretty good. We'll see. Like I said, different golf course, learning it. I played the pro-am yesterday and then I'll hopefully get to go around this afternoon to see it again because there's a lot of differences here that we're not quite used to.

Q. Do you feel like maybe the Schwab playoff format should change just a little bit? Odd last year, you won the whole thing without having to play any of those. Do you think they should tweak it so guys like you can show up at the end there? I know you had stuff going on, I don't mean that.

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, I was supposed to be there. I wish I would have been there instead of the other thing that happened.

Yeah, I think I see it both ways. If you play well enough and you build a big enough lead, why do you have to play? But again, as far as the culmination of the event, having the champion there, and I was supposed to be there, but yeah, you probably should have to be there.

Q. I don't mean disrespect.

STEVE STRICKER: No, no, I didn't take it that way.

Q. Changing gears, did you really ask Tiger to play with you at Zurich?

STEVE STRICKER: I haven't, no.

Q. Is it just something you thought about?

STEVE STRICKER: We had some great times being teammates on some of those teams over the years. I guess I blurted it out loud when I was on a podcast with somebody, I said wouldn't it be cool to get the band together one more time.

Yeah, for him and I to play again. I don't think that will happen, he's got other issues than playing with me, but it would be fun and it's fun thinking about it.

Q. Maybe if you formally asked him, he might accept.

STEVE STRICKER: You know, I'll see him next week at THE PLAYERS, hopefully he'll be there and I'll be there, hopefully play a practice round with him. Yeah, I'll ask him.

Q. You've been here a lot of years. How do you reflect on just all the tournaments, events you've played in Tucson?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, I've been here a lot of years all the way back to I think I qualified for this event even before I got on Tour in a Monday qualifier, played Starr Pass and didn't make the cut. So seen the whole gamut of golf courses.

I've had relatives here over the years, still have relatives here so I'll see some of them this week.

Yeah, it's just a nice spot. We started my career kind of out here. Fond memories of playing out here, Nicki caddying and now we're ending out here, too. It's a lot of fun to come back.

Q. Last one about all the fracture with the PGA TOUR and the LIV golf. Since you're on this tour, do you find yourself maybe not paying as much attention to that or are you still in tune with what's going on?

STEVE STRICKER: On the LIV tour?

Q. No, on the PGA TOUR, the future of the PGA TOUR.

STEVE STRICKER: A little bit, probably not as much as I should be just because I feel like it doesn't affect us that much out here, but I'm still interested in what's going on and what's going to happen going forward.

Ultimately, I hope someday we all can play nice together again and have the best players in the world playing and competing against one another. I think that day will come and I think there will be some circumstances, you know, where those guys that left are going to have to do something, I don't know, a penalty of some sort, I don't know what that means. Yeah, I hope some day it all comes back together and the guys are playing all together again.

Q. So much has changed in the last couple years, but 10 years from now, how do you see the sport of golf standing?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, I think we're all playing together in 10 years' time, for sure. I'm not meaning me, I'm saying the best players in the world playing together. That's a long time, 10 years. I think they'll hash it out by then.

I know the guys, some of them on the LIV tour want to come back and play out on the regular Tour, I know that for a fact, and so it's kind of a wait and see game, especially for us out here. It doesn't impact us very much, but I'm still interested in the happenings and what's going to happen and what's going to come for us.

Q. What would you like to see out of your game this week that can carry over to next week at TPC Sawgrass?

STEVE STRICKER: I think getting my putting game going a little bit. I haven't really made a lot of putts the first couple of tournaments. Been working hard at that, so hopefully get that going and feel a little bit better about that on the greens. The greens here are perfect, they're in great shape and it's a good place to practice and get it going.

Q. And Jerry Kelly having the record for oldest to make the cut there, how much of a motivation is that for you?

STEVE STRICKER: You know, it's a motivation, but ultimately I want to play well, that's my motivation. If I play well, I'll take care of his record. It will be hard. I haven't played against the young guys in quite a while. Excited to go there and play and make the weekend.

Q. You touched base on Zurich earlier. With how busy your schedule's going to be in April and May, are you planning on going to that or still to be determined?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, it's to be determined. I played in it last year with Zach. I think I have another opportunity to play in it this year if I want to, and I may do that. It's a fun event,

to get out there and play a team event is always a lot of fun. Yeah, it's up in the air.

Q. So 18th hole at Omni was a widely disliked hole.

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, I hated it.

Q. Is there one out there that is very challenging?

STEVE STRICKER: They're all really challenging. There's some holes out there where you really have to pay attention. You can bite off as much as you want on some of the holes, cut the corners, but you could pay the price by hitting it in the desert, too.

It's about taking care of your ball this week, keeping it in play. Greens are small, they can tuck the pins in some tough spots, so you're going to have to pay attention to that. Yeah, it's new for everybody, so it will be a challenge, I think.