

PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE
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DAVID TOMS

MODERATOR: We are now joined by the defending champion here at the Galleri Classic presented by Spotlight 29 Casino, David Toms. Thank you for joining us. To start, how does it feel to be back here?

DAVID TOMS: It feels great. Always coming back to a place where you've had success no matter the tournament, but a special place here in Palm Springs. This place is built around golf and it's a beautiful club here. It's been here for quite a while so there's a lot of history here for tournament golf. And obviously for us coming here for the first time, we didn't know what to expect last year, but the golf course held up really well, great condition.

I was fortunate to play really well and come out on top, but I'm sure there are a lot of guys this year that after seeing the golf course for all of last year and so far this week, I think there will be guys ready to play well.

MODERATOR: And speaking of last year, you went wire to wire here. What do you remember about that week specifically?

DAVID TOMS: I just remember everything working pretty well, getting the ball in the fairway, taking chances with irons when I had felt like the yardage was good, and then I felt good on the greens all week. So overall, just a solid performance every part of the game.

You just never know. We show up each week hoping to perform our best. Sometimes it all comes together, other times it doesn't. Last year for me it all came together.

Q. Have you had a chance to go down and see your name on the bridge?

DAVID TOMS: You know, I didn't really pay attention to that. I played a practice round Tuesday with Chris DeMarco, Scott Verplank and a couple of old friends. We were just talking about everything but golf and just kind of going through the motions and preparing the best we could. Somebody said something about it earlier today in the locker room about that. I didn't even see it, honestly.

Q. You have to take a look at it.

DAVID TOMS: All right. No, it is an honor to have won here as far as it being our first event here on this golf course. Like I said, there's a lot of history here before, a lot of great champions that have played well here and won. So to be a part of that list, whether it was male or female or whatever it might be, I think it's a great venue and I'm honored to be a part of it.



Q. What do you suppose you and your fellow players did learn about this golf course last year that you can put into action this year? I know you said you drove the ball very well last year and that was the key.

DAVID TOMS: I think first of all, you know, having played the J.C. Penney Classic way back when, having grown up with female golfers that played, whether it was the junior tour or whether it was college, you knew that they had -- that they had the ability to play great golf. You would see them play, watch this tournament on television, the Dinah Shore, and see how they played the golf course.

You never really knew that much about the -- you knew where they played from. There's plenty of length out there to test us, especially as senior players, so it's a really good test of golf. I think not knowing what to expect and getting here and playing here last year, I know a couple times early in the morning if you had an earlier tee time, the wind was up and then it seemed to die as the day went on. So maybe the fact that I played well from the beginning, maybe I had a little bit of an advantage playing later in the morning, even though most of the tee times were pretty early anyway, it just seemed to die down a little bit so I caught a break with that.

Not knowing what's going to happen this week. Everybody's talking about the weather is going to get bad and it's kind of following our tour around right now, but there's not a whole lot we can do about it, you've got to just play what's in front of you.

So we'll see. Obviously I know I can play the golf course well. Right now my game has not been very sharp honestly the last three tournaments I guess. I feel like it's all about scoring, it's not that I'm doing anything necessarily bad. It's just I'm not putting solid rounds together, recovering well from a bad shot, making that putt after you hit a good shot to get a round going, I'm just not doing that right now. It's all about scoring and I'm hoping maybe I'll find a little lightning in a bottle appeared get going here quickly.

Q. Throughout your career on both tours when you've come to a tournament as defending champion, is there something different about the experience when you arrive? Do you treat it differently? What's that experience like?

DAVID TOMS: I think first of all you have to be ready for some maybe obligations that you wouldn't otherwise have. So a lot of time it's about time management. I mean, even this morning I had to get here at a certain time to be able to do this and still go through my warm up for the pro-am day. But that's a good thing, it's always a good thing to have more obligations. That means you've either played well, you're playing well, you're a defending champion, people want to talk to you, whatever it might be. It's something over my career that I've learned to deal with.

And that's why I've always said that Tiger Woods is the most amazing golfer ever because he's had to deal with the circus from the get-go. To be able to play and win that many



tournaments with that going on every single week whether he's defending champion or not is very impressive. So for me it's just all about setting your schedule and making sure that you continue to put in the time that you need to to prepare that week.

Q. First of all, congrats on being the 2023 champion. I would like to ask, you had a four shot lead, you shot 16 under in last year's tournament, but there's always room for improvement, room for improvement in golf. What improvements do you need to make to make your performance better and repeat as the champion?

DAVID TOMS: Well, I mean, what you're hoping is that, like what happened last year, everything was working pretty well. For me if you go into this week thinking how can I improve on 16 under par, you're probably going to be let down because if the weather forecast holds, it will make it difficult to shoot that low again. But somebody might do it and if somebody does, I hope it's me. It's just all about going in with confidence, a good attitude, being committed on every shot. Sometimes you get ahead of yourself, especially if you've had success, you kind of look to what is the outcome going to be at the end rather than going through the process shot by shot. You hear that a lot but it is true, that's the way golf has to be played. You have certain expectations and an expectation level of what you might -- what your game might produce, but for me you've just got to be there on every shot. I go out today, play the pro-am, enjoy my pro-am partners and continue to prepare on the golf course. To me, the rough's up a little bit this week, got to be in the fairway, but the greens are rolling fantastic, so if you have opportunities and you're putting well, you'll be able to make some birdies.

Q. If you were to fortunate to win this year's tournament, would you bring back the LPGA tradition of taking a dunk in the pond?

DAVID TOMS: Absolutely not. If I was going to do that, I would have done it last year. I had some guys, some of my fellow competitors heckling me on the last hole wanting me to do it and I said we'll leave that to the girls because that was always a big thing for them at this tournament. I think it was kind of a thing to -- plus, as senior players, we are older. You never know when they might have to throw the life preserver out there or whatever. To me it was one of those things that we didn't need to continue. But you never know, the guy that does it this year if it's not me, he might be willing to jump in that water, I'm not really sure. But there are some carp out there about the size of me so I'm not sure I'd want to be in there anyway.

Q. Obviously winning, let's go back to last year a little bit, winning last year was actually your fourth PGA TOUR Champions I should say trophy. So necessarily it's your fourth one. How does it necessarily feel to hold up that trophy and would it be exciting to hold up a fifth?

DAVID TOMS: I'm sure. I mean, I've got a room upstairs in my house and it's got -- it's a big game room and there's pockets for all the trophies that I've won over the years. I have this spot, one of the walls is a blank wall, but behind that I could take the boards off and there's



another place for a trophy. So I have room to expand. Even though my house is on the market right now, I'm not sure what the next owner will do with that room, but for me there's a spot for now for more trophies and I'm hungry to do that.

That's why I'm out here preparing every week, going through everything I can to be ready to do it again. It's just a matter of playing my best golf and then you can't control the fact that somebody might just play better. I mean, that's why they call it PGA TOUR Champions, we've all won tournaments, we've won majors, we've won big events. Everyone out here knows how to do it so it's not like you're playing golf against a bunch of rookies that are 20 years old. You're talking about playing against guys that have had tons of experience, some have won more than me, some have won less, but we've all won tournaments out here. So guys are hard to beat, you have to be on your best.

MODERATOR: Thanks for the time, David.

DAVID TOMS: You got it.

