

ROUND 2 QUICK QUOTES
March 30, 2024



STEVEN ALKER (-10)
RETIEF GOOSEN (-10)

Q. Thanks for joining us, gentlemen. Great birdie putts on 18 to put you in contention for tomorrow, kind of playing off each other today. Taking it back to the World Champions Cup, you guys were on the same team just having kind of that dynamic out there, what's it like, Round 2 takeaways?

RETIEF GOOSEN: Yeah, I mean it's great playing with Stevie, I played with you last week, too. Playing a lot of golf together lately. Yeah, I mean, it's nice to play with somebody you've played with in the last few months. You know you have to be playing for yourself.

For me today it was a little up and down, especially on the front nine, and then on the back nine for a change I got it going. It was nice to have a good finish and be in the final group again for tomorrow.

STEVEN ALKER: My sentiments exactly. Playing with Retief, enjoy playing with -- it's hard not to watch him sometimes, he hits the ball so well and hits some amazing shots. Yeah, we have been playing a lot together. As he said, just try to do your stuff out there. I found today I was expecting the weather to be worse, to be honest. I thought there was going to be no talking in the group, I thought it was just going to be head down and battle forward, but it wasn't too bad. I think we got lucky.

So yeah, just the ball wasn't quite traveling as far, just had to adjust for that really.

Q. How much of an adjustment was that for you with the ball not flying as far?

RETIEF GOOSEN: It was similar to last week, you know, on the weekend when it got so cold. You just add on a club for the cold and then you go from there. It was tough at times to hit so much club for such a short distance. It's sometimes not easy to trust it because you know if you just kill it it's going to go right through it and go over the back. So it's not easy. Some of the flags are pretty tricky out there to get close to.

STEVEN ALKER: Yeah, just had to club up, but I found that the greens are still bouncing, too. We didn't have the rain, the greens weren't soft, you couldn't throw it at it. So you're adjusting for the wind and the bounce. So yeah, there were some adjustments today, but felt like it was -- he had an amazing finish, I was kind of struggling there in the middle and then come back and made nice putts at the end so just going to make dinner taste a little bit better, which is nice.

Q. Did either of you see a 63 out there today that Ricardo shot?



STEVEN ALKER: What course was he playing?

RETIEF GOOSEN: I think he was first off, wasn't he? Second group off, so he got lucky with the weather, yeah. He finished really before it even rained I think almost.

No, it's a great round. Ricardo, I've known him for a long time, since the '90s playing golf together in Europe. He's always been a good ball-striker and putting was always a little suspect, but he seemed to find his game and find his comfort out here. He's playing really good golf.

STEVEN ALKER: Yeah, he can play. I played with him for the first time last week in Newport in the second round. He might have shot 63 that day, too. I don't know what he shot second round, but it was impressive. The way he strikes it and he obviously got his putter going.

Q. Would it impress you if you knew that he's never used any kind of TrackMan equipment? He said that just growing up obviously that was just not -- the resources weren't there for him, so everything has just been his own sight?

STEVEN ALKER: Yeah, I can see it. He's just that type of golfer, that natural, just got amazing hands, just plays with a little bit of flare and imagination. It's pretty cool.

RETIEF GOOSEN: Yeah, TrackMan, I think all the guys they sort of know when you hit the ball that it's flying the right way, you don't really need a TrackMan. When you hit it, you know that it's too much spin, too little spin or something. Yeah, he's very much a get down and go guy. He sees the shot and goes, he doesn't really hang around too much.

Q. Retief, you played your best golf today on the holes that should have been the toughest, particularly in this weather conditions. How did you shoot 31 on the back nine?

RETIEF GOOSEN: Well, you know, I made a very good up and down on No. 11. I didn't have a nice lie in the bunker there, wasn't an easy bunker shot and managed to get that up and down. Then I just told myself it's not going to be easy coming in, just trying to hang in there. Even four shots off the lead going in tomorrow, anything can happen. Yeah, suddenly I made -- I got lucky on 15, I blocked it right and I hit a gap through the trees there and hit it to about five feet and made the putt, so that was a bit of a break. Yeah, 16, 17 we both hit good shots, he just landed too far, went a little further past than me. And I saw the break pretty clearly on that putt, it was just a question of making good contact coming off the side of that cut. It was nice to see the last two go in and yeah, only one behind now, but better than I was expecting.

Q. Steven, what did you see on 17? I know -- on 17, what did you see after that because your emotions were just like what just happened?



STEVEN ALKER: Yeah, yeah, I haven't had one of those for a while. I think it was like 400 degrees, like finished over here somewhere. I hit a good putt. You can't beat yourself up for hitting a good putt and not going in. The speed obviously wasn't quite right, but I had a beautiful shot in there and just went five, six yards too far. Had a nice pitch. That happens in golf sometimes. Knew there was a par-5 coming up, birdie chance and just knuckled down and tried to get one closer to the lead.

Q. For Mr. Alker, you finished last year in second and you're tied for second now. What necessarily is the main push heading into day 3 to take the lead? Like what is kind of the main thing you're focusing on?

STEVEN ALKER: I mean, you know, old adage, just kind of process. I'm playing with two guys who can hit it nicely. I'm just going to focus on my game. I've been hitting lots of fairways this week, the iron game feels pretty solid. Just focus on the things that I can control, that's kind of all I can do. Just be excited about being in the hunt to try and win a golf tournament, that's fun.

Q. Both of you, you mentioned how the colder than expected weather sort of is challenging as far as choosing which club, but does the coldness hamper you in any other ways out there?

RETIEF GOOSEN: No, not really. Like I said, it wasn't as bad as we thought it was going to be. Trying to keep your hands a little warmer. We got a bit lucky, we expected worse as Stevie said. I've played in much colder weather than this before, so tomorrow looks like it's going to be a little warmer so it's going to be a nice day.

STEVEN ALKER: And Retief's got some more muscle and meat on his body than me. I was putting a jacket on like the last three, four holes. He was in short sleeves.

RETIEF GOOSEN: I've got a T-shirt on.

STEVEN ALKER: Yeah, it was just getting cold and we had the rain and the wind, then it died down and come back up, so we had a bit of everything today.

