

U.S. Senior Open Championship

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Stevens Point, Wisconsin, USA
SentryWorld

Bernhard Langer

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome to the interview area at the 43rd U.S. Senior Open. We are joined by our 2010 champion Bernhard Langer. How does it feel to be back here?

BERNHARD LANGER: It feels wonderful. Fantastic venue. Really great here at SentryWorld. Excited to play this week.

THE MODERATOR: When did you get into town, and are you excited to play?

BERNHARD LANGER: Yeah, I got into town Sunday night and walked the course yesterday and actually played nine holes. I like what I see. It's quite long for seniors, but we'll do the best we can.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up to questions.

Q. What does it feel like to be in the Golf Hall of Fame?

BERNHARD LANGER: It's a wonderful thing because not many people achieve that. It's just the recognition of what you have done in your life, how successful you have been, and it's a great institution celebrating the greatest players in our game, which is golf.

So I'm very honored and thrilled to be a part of that. Growing up in Germany, where I come from, we don't have many great golfers, and it's quite an amazing thing to make the Golf Hall of Fame in America.

Q. You're shooting for 46 wins in the Champions Tour and 12 wins in the majors tour. Are you confident about winning another major?

BERNHARD LANGER: I am working on it. That's the idea. When I came out here I wanted to win majors and tournaments, and I've been very fortunate to do a number of those. But there's always room for more.



I love the golf course. I think it does suit longer hitters. They're going to hit driver/9-iron. I'm hitting driver/3-iron, which makes it hard to compete when you do that 72 times.

I know I have to play at my highest level to have any hope to win, but I know I'm capable of doing that.

Q. Are you battling anybody to win this major?

BERNHARD LANGER: Yeah, there's about 100 other guys, I think (laughter), who have a chance out of 156.

Q. So what did it feel like back in the day to be the first No. 1 golfer?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, it felt pretty cool actually. I think a lot of professionals' dream and goal is to become World No. 1.

I was fortunate enough to be the very first one. That means you're having a great stretch of victories and wonderful, you know, several months of great golf. I did that, so it was a milestone in my career.

Q. What does your prep look like this week? How many holes will you play today and tomorrow leading into this major?

BERNHARD LANGER: Like I said, I played nine holes yesterday and playing 18 today and hopefully the other nine again tomorrow. So I'll have a good look twice at the golf course. Hopefully that's enough to understand where to go, where not to go.

Then obviously spend a lot of time out here on the driving range and putting green and chipping areas to get used to the grass, to the speed of the greens, the sand in the bunkers, the whole thing.

Q. A lot has been made about the rough already here and how thick it is. Your first impressions of the rough and how players will try to get out of it and whether they can go for greens if they're not finding fairways.

BERNHARD LANGER: It's easy to get out of it with a pitching wedge. That's about it. I think you're not going to get very far out of this rough. You can't control the ball or



the spin.

Yeah, the idea is to hit it straight, but it's easier said than done. It's very, very punishing. It's the most rough I've seen in years.

Q. Steve Stricker is having a great year, kind of like some of the years you've had in the past. What have you been mostly impressed with Steve, the way he's played this year and his chanced to win this week?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, Steve doesn't make many mistakes. He's extremely impressive in all departments of his game. He's still long. He's one of the best putters and he hits the ball very controlled. Great wedge player. He sinks very well. He doesn't make mental errors. So he's the all-around package.

It's difficult -- when Steve is on with his game, it's hard to beat him. Even when he plays his B game it seems like he's in contention.

That's what he's shown this whole season. He's either winning or in the top five whenever he tees it up.

Q. Bernhard, you've been very keen on fitness your whole career. Can you talk about the differences you've seen over maybe the last 20 years on how golfers are taking care of themselves?

BERNHARD LANGER: It's unbelievable. When I was in my 20s or 30s, there were very few of us actually focusing on fitness, and I think when -- you know, Gary Player really started it -- and propoganda did, whatever you want to call it.

Then Tiger Woods came along, and he was dominating the game of golf, and they thought, well how do I get better? How do I get longer?

Every one or two percent you can improve shows in the score. So a lot of people needed to work on their fitness. Now we have personal trainers. We have fitness trucks following us every week, which is phenomenal. We can get treatment. We have workouts, weights and bands and ropes, and it's all right there next to the driving range every week we play. So there's no excuse not to workout anymore.

And the players are taking advantage of it. I would guess 95 percent of all pros are playing great attention to being in physical condition, to get stronger, faster, have more endurance, and it shows by how far they hit it, how mentally tough they are, and their endurance.

Q. Speaking of the mental part, compare playing in a regular event and then maybe how you have to sharpen yourself mentally for a major.

BERNHARD LANGER: Out here, you mean? Three rounds to four rounds?

Q. And also --

BERNHARD LANGER: Oh, the setup and all that.

Q. The mental toughness of playing in a senior major.

BERNHARD LANGER: I think the three or four rounds really doesn't matter. We pretty much play six days a week anyways, if not seven. Whenever you play a major, especially U.S. Open tournaments, the -- (video feed lost.)

I have higher, I imagine, just because of the change making it into a par 4. The then the rough we have out here, we don't usually see that anywhere during the year. Even the pin positions at times can be slightly more severe than we see on a regular basis.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks for your time. Good luck this week.

BERNHARD LANGER: You're welcome. Thank you.

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