

American Century Championship

Sunday, July 13, 2025

Lake Tahoe, Nevada, USA

Edgewood Tahoe

John Smoltz

Quick Quotes

Q. Give us your impressions after another really good finish. You came back really strong after a couple of years' hiatus out here.

JOHN SMOLTZ: I needed to play a clean round. It wouldn't have mattered anyways the way Joe played and finished. I was hoping to put heat on anybody, the top three. I was just trying to climb as many people as I could.

Literally, I was a couple putts away from maybe creating more pressure for him on 18. But he had no pressure with the last three holes. He's such a good player.

But to finish second from where I started, with only three birdies the first two days -- I just made too many pars. I've got to figure out a way to get it closer, make more putts, get on a roll. And I think 59 might be my year next year, winning at 59.

Q. You came pretty close at 58. Was it the Shock Force system that helped you out there?

JOHN SMOLTZ: Shock Force has been a huge part of my game. It's strengthened my shoulder. When you wait a lot in golf, that's what's hurt me the most in this tournament. I know it sounds like an excuse, but I don't have the freedom.

I'm getting stronger in my upper body. No matter how long I wait, I can fire the club now. So training on that when I'm home, it's changed my golf game.

Q. I think this was your 16th appearance and 13 top-10s, your third time in second place. You've been here every time. You just mentioned that sometimes you want to figure out how to really excel under pressure because it was no problem for you in baseball, and golf you're still working on it. Do you still feel nerves coming down the stretch a little bit?

JOHN SMOLTZ: I do. 18 is not -- it's the best round I've



hit probably in 16 years because it's not shaped -- it's not a good shape for me.

But I got off to two slow starts. The year I could have won, I got off to a really good start, then Vinny beat me in the playoff. But to me, I've got to ride the momentum early instead of always fighting my way back.

I can make 15 pars a day, but that gets you nothing. So you've got to make four to five to six birdies. And at least I made five today to get back in the hunt.

Q. You played a lot with Joe over the years. You guys have a pretty good relationship -- all you guys get along pretty well. Honestly you've got to be happy for him, sad for you in a way. But he's a good guy.

JOHN SMOLTZ: He is. And there's a lot of big golf ahead of him. He hits it so good. He doesn't make many mistakes. Hockey players and pitchers, Mardy Fish, we feel like the advantage our sport had helps you in golf.

Especially hockey, if you've got the right slap shot or the right shot on ice, he's got a lot of power, and he should have won a couple already. So it's good for him to get one out of the way.

Q. I think he had three second-place finishes. You've had three. Next year is yours?

JOHN SMOLTZ: Next year is mine. I'll be the oldest winner. I promise at some point I will be the oldest winner ever.

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