

# Sony Open in Hawaii

Friday, January 15, 2021

Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Waialae Country Club

## Stewart Coml

### Quick Quotes

**Q. Blemish-free 63, and the wind was fairly docile. Did you take advantage of everything today?**

STEWART CINK: Yeah, today was a dream day for playing here at Waialae. It was almost no wind. There was a little bit of moisture on the ground from last night, and it was just a day where you could really dial it in and play -- you could really hit your spots instead of having to do the usual here which is trying to figure out how much wind is going to help or hurt the ball and crosswinds and all that.

Today there was nothing out there.

**Q. We hear this all the time from players on the PGA TOUR; they want to play with freedom. At the age of 47, are you at that stage?**

STEWART CINK: I'm working on it.

**Q. Looked like it today?**

STEWART CINK: That's one of the biggest challenges of being out on the PGA TOUR is to learn how to free yourself up. It doesn't matter if you're 47 or 27 or 17. You still have to figure out a way to do that. And I don't think it's something anybody has completely mastered. There are times when I feel super freed up and there's times when I feel super locked down.

But it is always part of the challenge every day and that's why we prepare. It's more than just hitting balls and doing your practice routines. It's a lot more than just that. It's preparing your mind for those situations when you don't feel so freed up and how do you get yourself -- make those stretches limited and increase the amount of time when you feel like you are freed up and when you're freed nicely, you know, you get some good yardages and the wind is down and you hit the ball close a few times and suddenly the hole looks big and you make a few 25-footers and end up with a day like I had today.

**Q. I would figure someone that has won The Open**



**Championship would love wind and fast conditions, but no wind today and I just overheard you saying you were happy there was no wind and you took advantage of it?**

STEWART CINK: Well, I don't mean to say I'm happy there isn't wind because I like when there's a challenge like that, too, because it does separate experienced players and if you feel like you have control over your ball. But when there's not wind, do you feel like you can take advantage and shoot a low score. Now that also means other players are going to shoot low but today was a really calm day. The course was set up beautifully.

I like playing Waialae. I think it's a fun place to play. I had a good sort of feeling going out today and it turned into some putts going in early and then we were kind of off to the races.

**Q. Keep talking about how different the finishing holes look, 17, 18 and this year unfortunately we don't have grandstands, fans here and how different it plays with the wind off the ocean in 17 in particular?**

STEWART CINK: The biggest difference is really, obviously it looks a little different but when you're zoned in on your target like the hole or whatever, you're not really thinking too much about the grandstands. But the 17th hole the grand stand used to be on the back of the green so you could bail into the wall and you would get a drop and have basically a putt from four or five yards off the green. Now that's not the case because there's rough behind the green and it's a little more tight back there. That's really the only competitive campaigning.

The other thing is that 17th hole has always been a rowdy, raucous crowd and so if you left a putt short, you're going to hear about it. If you flubbed a bunker shot or hit a poor shot anywhere, missed a short one, you're going to hear about it. That kind of gets into your mind a little bit when you have that three- or five-foot putt or when you're looking over a difficult chip. And that's not there now. There's nothing like that out there.

That part of playing out here on the PGA TOUR is kind one



thing we miss. It's a little challenge that a lot of people may not understand exists but it's there and it's real and when the fans come back, we'll learn to deal with that again.

**Q. I didn't realize how eventful 2020 was for you and your family. We all know about the win, which is great, some engagements and COVID was also in play for your family in 2020. Pretty eventful year?**

STEWART CINK: It was. Both of our sons got engaged, so that was nice, within about a month last summer, and they are getting married in '21. We also made a big change with my caddie situation, my younger son, Reagan, caddying. That's great. We're having fun. My wife and I both passed through COVID early on and we didn't even know it was COVID early on. There was no testing, back around PLAYERS week. We came through it.

My wife is in a pretty significant medical situation herself and for her to have gone through it and come out the other end feeling okay, we're pleased. Now she's got the antibodies and we hope she's safe.

**Q. How do you explain a guy that goes ten years without a win, you had plenty of them, plenty of good seasons along the way and have a chance for a second one in your last eight starts?**

STEWART CINK: Well, everybody out there has that in them. You know, sometimes the stuff comes out that you need to win or be in contention and sometimes it just kind of stays hidden. It's hard to know exactly what it takes to unlock it. Sometimes you feel like you're doing the right things and your results just aren't as good. Then other times, it pops out.

So part of my job is to figure out how that make that pop out a little more often. We made some changes that hopefully enable that to happen; my good stuff is getting a little bit better and there's going to be bad stuff just like everybody. Maybe I'll have a chance to be up there in contention a little bit more often this year.

**Q. What does Reagan bring, you talked about him, obviously, when you won, kind of inspiring you, if you will. What does he bring as a caddie?**

STEWART CINK: It's an intangible thing. He and I have a really super close relationship and he understands golf really well, and I think he doesn't have maybe the expectation level that a lot of caddies have out here, the veteran caddies and it's just the nature of being in this job a long time. I have it, too. So having him there to sort of be a little bit fresher and look at things in a little bit more of a fresh way I think is the main thing he brings to me.

That, plus our relationship is so comfortable that I just don't ever find myself getting too high or low around him.

**Q. The first three tournaments you played here, you missed the cut. Was there any thought at that time about not coming back?**

STEWART CINK: I honestly don't remember missing the cut. Did I really miss the first three cuts I played here? I do not remember. I know I've missed the cut here but I don't remember missing my first three. I just remember coming here and loving it right away. But part of loving a place doesn't always -- it's not 100 percent how you may. This is a pretty hard place not to like.

**Q. What appeals to you? Is it the style?**

STEWART CINK: I think it's more coming out to where basically it's summertime and we're in the middle of winter at home. It feels so good to come out to sun and warmth. This golf course is really not my style. This more favors probably a shorter, straighter hitter and I've never been that way.

It's not bad. I think just more the environment around this whole area is something I enjoy.

**Q. The first time that you came out, was it just because it was there?**

STEWART CINK: Honestly I do not remember why -- and we're talking like 20-something years ago here.

**Q. 1999.**

STEWART CINK: I think when I first got on TOUR the first couple years, the calendar had this tournament in the middle of the West Coast Swing and so you would had to play a few tournaments, come here and go back and I chose to not come because of that.

Then when they moved this tournament to the first or second of the calendar year, that's when I started playing here.

**Q. You said had a good feeling today; anything in particular?**

STEWART CINK: Not in particular, other than I feel like I've been reading the greens pretty well and my speed has been pretty good on the longer putts. So I've felt really good on the greens. Any time you feel good on the greens, it bleeds into the rest of your game.

I haven't driven it exceptionally or hit my irons exceptionally well, but I've putt well and when you putt well, it just kind of helps to sort of raise the level the rest of your game.

**Q. Just got up this morning and said this is a good day?**

STEWART CINK: I didn't feel like it was going to be that windy and the course was going to be out there. It's a little bit damp. So it was going to be easy to control the ball if you're playing well and making good decisions. Me and Reagan, my son who is caddying for me, we are pretty good on the decision-making. That's not going to be something that really brings us down, ever, and so there's just a lot of factors that sort of led towards today felt like it was going to be a good day.

**Q. How old is he?**

STEWART CINK: He's 23.

**Q. And how did you decide on him caddying?**

STEWART CINK: He's caddied for me a few times when he was in high school. Last year -- he works for Delta Air Lines, and COVID affected his job so he was transitioning between jobs at delta and got a little gap, and so he said, "While I'm off I would love to caddie for you sometime again."

And we play golf tons at home so he knows my game really well and I know his game and we think alike. I said, "Why not start at Safeway? Caddie for me at Safeway."

My caddie at the time, I gave him the week off and we ended up winning. So we won there and had a good finish at Sanderson Farms and we had another top five finish at Bermuda and his job was still kind of in flux. We said, well, you know, maybe we should extend this and left you go the rest of the season. He talked to his team at Delta and said push it back next year and he's basically out here for the season and whenever the season ends for us, he'll go back to working there I guess.

**Q. What does he do?**

STEWART CINK: He works in a division called flight ops, which sounds like it's all about flying airplanes, but it's more about optimization of the way pilots move about between the aircraft and changing planes and information gathering and all that stuff.

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