

The American Express

Thursday, January 19, 2023

La Quinta, California, USA

PGA WEST Pete Dye Stadium Course

Dean Burmester

Quick Quotes

Q. Nice day. 65. Statistically, the irons were on point. You missed some fairways. Were you just missing it in the right spot today?

DEAN BURMESTER: Yeah, I think so. The Nicklaus Course offers a little bit of leniency off the tee compared to the Stadium Course. So going into that tomorrow I would like to tighten that up off the tee. I've actually got a broken left toe and I haven't played much golf. So it's nice just to play some golf and get out there. Obviously I might be nursing it a little bit on the driver, so I have to just commit and play through the pain tomorrow.

Q. May I ask how you did it? It's on the left side, right? With the driver, a little tentative and not getting onto that front leg?

DEAN BURMESTER: Yeah, that's right. I have a history of actually hanging back on my golf swing. My coach knows that. And to now have the injury on the left side is kind of hard, making that a little worse.

Q. Let us in on how it was done.

DEAN BURMESTER: We have a thing back home in South Africa, it's called load shedding. Which is like when the power goes off for like two or three hours at a time. The government puts the power out so they can do maintenance and repairs and hopefully pull up the system again because it's a bit behind. But that happened. I had solar power on the house and our solar power kind of tripped. I was on my way to fix it. My wife was in the shower. I was on my way trying to be the valiant knight, I was trying to be the man to the rescue. And I ran into a chair and broke my baby toe. So it's a pit of a shame. But it's okay.

Q. No good deed goes unpunished. Before we let you go, you mentioned the injury. We haven't seen you since the RSM Classic. So were you able to work on anything over the off-season or was it just stay off the foot.

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DEAN BURMESTER: Yeah, that happened Christmas eve, so it's pretty fresh. I went back after RSM and played three tournaments back in South Africa and did pretty decently in those. That was nice. I got a little sharp there.

But then hung the clubs up pretty much for the time I was at home because of the injury. Managed to get out here -- I didn't go to Hawaii because of that. I gave myself an extra week and practiced last week in Florida. Then got out here and here we are. Decent round of golf. I'm glad I could walk 18 holes. Go and rest up.

Q. On the broken toe, when you did it, what sort of treatment did the doctor give you? Just some drugs and say, Hey, stay off it? Or did he give you any instruction on when to come back?

DEAN BURMESTER: They say RICE, which is rest, ice, compression and elevate. That's what they pretty much said to me. They said, If you're feeling pain, take a few pain killers and man up, basically. My dad always says, Have a teaspoon of cement and harden up and carry on. So they didn't make us soft and we are here. Luckily it was a baby toe. I think if it was another one I would probably be out. But lucky from that aspect for sure.

Q. You played a little bit in the fall as a PGA TOUR rookie this season. What's it like being a rookie that's a little bit older? You played around the world. You've had success in a number of tournaments. Won a lot around the world. What's it like being a slightly older rookie?

DEAN BURMESTER: Yeah, long in the tooth, or longer in the tooth. It's fine, actually. I get to play -- going through the Korn Ferry finals I got to play with some really, really good guys. The guys are -- you don't hear of a lot of the guys in other places outside of America. Then you get here and you realize how good the guys are. It's pretty awesome. Week in week out I'm getting drawn with a lot of young guys that have shown a lot of talent. Like I say, being the old guy I got my work cut out, but we'll keep working and hopefully stick with 'em.

Q. You're starting to become more well known in the United States as you get on leaderboards. Can you tell us something about Dean Burmester that people over

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here, fans might not know that they can pay attention to you?

DEAN BURMESTER: Yeah, sure. I mean, probably -- look, I hit it a fair way I would say for a 43 year old. I don't hit it short. So if anyone wants to come and see me smash a few drivers it's always fun.

Outside of that, love my fishing. Love the game of golf. Big family man. Love my coffee. Which is important in America.

Q. Can you tell us a little bit about Rhinos for Birdies. I know you were involved in that and instigated that. You started that whole foundation. Can you tell us a little bit about that and what it does?

DEAN BURMESTER: Yeah, sure. It's an initiative, a great initiative I started with a friend of mine Justin Walters about six or seven years ago now. We basically -- well, he actually couldn't sleep one night and came to me the next morning with this proposition of wanting to start something.

Two hours later we designed the logo and the name. Birdies for Rhinos and yeah, there it is. It's basically for every birdie we make we donate a portion of our cash to saving the rhinos and the wildlife.

There's a plight back home. We're losing a crazy amount of rhinos. There's only 300 plus, 300, 350 black rhino left in the wild. About 5,000 white rhino. So by the year 2026 there's going to be nothing left if we carry on the way we're going. So we got to do something and this is our little part and our way to raise awareness and give a little bit back.

Q. Is it just the two of you or are there other players involved?

DEAN BURMESTER: Yeah, we've actually have about 25 players. Which is quite great. We raise a fair amount of money. A lot of exposure over at the ladies' tours, men's tours. Tommy Fleetwood actually has just come on board and him and his wife are a big driving force behind getting this going. A couple of corporates behind us. All our money goes to a conservation program called Connected Conservation. Which is great because they are really well connected. So we're able to connect with a lot of people that can help us out and show us a direction to go. Multiple European Tour winners and Sunshine Tour winners and ladies winners which is great to have the girls on board as well is awesome. So if anybody's interested it's really easy, look me up on Instagram or look up the page and we'll get it going.

Q. Shifting gears, three different courses here this week. Have you had much experience playing

tournaments? I know there's a number of them around the world, Dunhill, etcetera, that play multiple courses. How do you adjust for that scenario?

DEAN BURMESTER: I think preparation's probably key. I think before you tee off, knowing what your game plan is, where you're going.

In a place like this, Palm Springs where there's not much wind and not much is going to change it's pretty easy to figure it out. But when you go to Scotland and play the Dunhill Links it's a bit of a lottery. But it's also great fun. We have a tournament back home called the Dimension Data Pro-Am which is pretty similar. Played AT&T last year, which is similar. So you got have your wits about you and you got to have a good game plan.

Like tomorrow, I'm going to head out now and prep for the Stadium Course tomorrow and get myself ready. Because it's a lot less wedges and a lot more longer irons than this one, the Nicklaus, for sure.

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