

Chubb Classic presented by SERVPRO

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Naples, Florida, USA

Tiburón Golf Club

Bernhard Langer

Press Conference

Q. Bernhard, congratulations on your 45th victory, tying the all-time wins record. How special is that for you?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, it's extremely special because we've been talking about it for so long it seems now. When I first came out here, I thought, this is never going to happen.

When I heard Hale Irwin had won 45 times, I'm going, this is awesome and amazing, and it still is and always will be. Hale, if you're watching, congratulations. You're a great champion, and I'm honored to have tied your record. We need a toast for the glass of champagne or something.

But I'm thrilled to have gotten to the number 45, so now that talk is all hopefully a little less every day I show up or every week, and I can focus on other things.

Q. How aware were you of the stuff going on in front of you on the back nine? Did you know about the troubles your guys were having right on the spot?

BERNHARD LANGER: The troubles we're having? We didn't have any troubles. We were trying to make birdies, and we did.

I wasn't aware of every hole and every shot that happened, but I looked at the leaderboard every once in a while, and I knew I was thereabouts near the top, and I was just hoping nobody would run away by making eagles and a ton of birdies in a row.

When I got to 14, I saw Dicky Pride was in the lead, I think, briefly, and then I caught him. So I didn't know what happened to him until the very end. I guess he finished bogey-bogey or something like that. Steven Alker was on my heels constantly until he ran into a bogey on 16 I think it was, and then he hit the tee shot, hit the tree on 18, which was a very bad break.



So there were a lot of guys in the picture at a certain time, and we knew that setting out. We had a very strong leaderboard, and even the guys who weren't on the leaderboard, there were some very big champions right there within three, four, five shots which you can make up on any golf course.

Q. You had a lot of nice mid-range looks, burning edges, things like that. Did the putt at 12 kind of unlock something?

BERNHARD LANGER: Yeah, it probably did. I did have a couple of really good looks, especially I forgot the hole now, I think it was No. 10 or 11. I just misread it, and it's hard to do out here because the grain sometimes grabs the ball and other times it doesn't.

But then they started going in. The last five or six holes I started making some putts, and that enabled me to pull ahead.

Q. From the caddie yard in Germany and being a self-taught kid, do you find being a record holder now, is that kind of an improbable story?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, my whole life is an improbable story. When you dive deep a little bit where I came from and what has happened in my lifetime, where I should have died as a kid, was extremely high fever, the doctors gave up on me -- well, first of all, they told my mother not to have another child because when she got pregnant anyways, they told her to abort me, which she decided not to take the chance of killing herself and me, so we all survived.

A lot went on in my life so far, and it got even more so starting a career in golf. Nobody did that in Germany. They thought I was crazy.

To make it just to earn a living was an incredible story, but then to make it to No. 1 in the world and to become one of the best players for many years, and what happened on the Champions Tour, we all know that, but a lot of stuff has happened in those earlier years that some people have no clue, and they were pretty miraculous.



Maybe someday we can make a movie about it. It would be pretty cool.

Q. Your thoughts as you were walking up the 18th green?

BERNHARD LANGER: Yeah, it was a little overwhelming really to just -- I never thought I would win 45 times out here, as I said coming out, and then the reaction I got from Jerry Kelly and Steve Alker and Scott McCarron was waiting there and my good friend Bobby Clampett who invited me to my first Bible study, which made me become a believer in Jesus Christ, he was here to shake my hand. A lot of things have happened, and I've got to process it first.

Q. You're getting a little emotional.

BERNHARD LANGER: Yeah, absolutely.

Q. Has any of it sunk in?

BERNHARD LANGER: Not yet. It will in the next few hours and days. Just right now, I just feel relieved and grateful and thankful for everybody that's been on my team and helping me through these years.

Like we said, for a German kid from a village of 800 people and starting as a caddie to do what I've done, it takes a lot of people to do that, not just one.

Q. Now that you share the record, when do you start thinking about owning it?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, that will be in 10 days (laughter) when we play in Tucson. That's another golf course where I think I can still compete, and we'll find out. I've won there once before. But that doesn't mean it's going to happen.

I certainly am going to give it a shot. We'll see if it happens. If not, as I said, life goes on, whether you win one more or not or whether you have another record or not.

Q. I'm sure you would have liked to have won the first tournament in Hawai'i, but how fitting is it because you've had so much success here in Naples that you were able to tie the record here?

BERNHARD LANGER: Yeah, yeah, I agree with you. I love Hawai'i and I would have loved to win there, but this is just as special because it's close to home and I had my family with me, or part of my family, and a lot of friends.

Several friends traveled over from the East Coast; some came in from other parts, from Kansas City and walked around all day or three days with me, which is really cool because it's not an easy golf course to walk, as we know.

To have those special friends, I'm very blessed.

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