

# Chubb Classic presented by SERVPRO

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Naples, Florida, USA

Tiburón Golf Club

## Heath Slocum

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Heath, happy belated birthday, and welcome to PGA TOUR Champions. How does it feel to be out here.

HEATH SLOCUM: Honestly, the wait of it, it felt like it was taking forever, and then I look back, and all of a sudden it's just here. It's been great. It's the only sport I think you really look forward to turning 50. I'm just happy to be here. Seeing just the old faces, a lot of the friends that I had, and reuniting with them, it's been fun so far. I'm looking forward to the rest of the year.

**Q. Did you do any special preparation in lead-up to this?**

HEATH SLOCUM: This winter has been tough at home in Atlanta, but yeah, I've been trying to get some work in. You take two steps forward, one back. It's just been -- the last year was '15 on TOUR, so it's been a while since I've had consistent competition. But I'm hoping that it's like riding a bike a little bit, that you kind of roll back into some of the good golf I played.

**Q. How have you filled this gap? Where have you tried to play?**

HEATH SLOCUM: I played some of the Korn Ferry events in the 48-49 category. Not much success at all. But it was nice just to get back some rounds because that had been like six, seven years since I had really played in competition. You're just trying to slowly build and just see how crisp you can get your game.

Like my friend Boo says, these guys, you just look at their scores. There's just a lot of good golf being played. I know it's still in me. It's maybe just allowing it to come out.

**Q. When things are going really well for you, what do you see as your best strengths?**

HEATH SLOCUM: Historically I drove the ball pretty



straight and was always kind of a solid iron player. But anywhere out here, you've got to take care of the par-5s out here just like you did on TOUR, and you've got to get the -- the short game has got to be great.

You don't win on any level not putting it well. You have to have a very well-rounded game, I think, to compete at this level, TOUR, anywhere. If you're playing professional golf, you've got to be pretty well-rounded.

**Q. Have you always kind of had this in the back of your mind?**

HEATH SLOCUM: You know, yes and no because when I stopped playing full time, it seemed like forever. I didn't think it was ever going to get here. Then the last couple years, it's gone faster than I kind of expected. I've got younger kids, 16 and 14, so I was home watching them grow up, and before you know it, your birthday is creeping up, and you've got to start trying to get ready to play again.

Again, it's been new but familiar.

**Q. What kind of schedule are you expecting to take on?**

HEATH SLOCUM: I think honestly, I'm going to try to play every week I get in. It's really nice to have the schedule that's built in with weeks off. It wasn't like the TOUR where you had to kind of put your schedule to -- I never really wanted to play more than three in a row, and it's kind of built in this way.

There's quite a few tournaments I'm not in yet that I hope to either get an invite or qualify on my own. I would love to play them all.

**Q. What are your impressions of the course?**

HEATH SLOCUM: I'll tell you what, it was really nice. There's a couple tee balls you really have to be very demanding. Opportunities, though. I think just depending on how much wind -- I saw we had some rain predicted for Sunday. Just a matter of how the weather holds. It's a good test. I feel like you're going to have to make some



birdies out here. But there's plenty of opportunity.

**Q. How does it feel to be the rookie out here this year?**

HEATH SLOCUM: I feel young.

**Q. Has anybody bothered you, hassled you about it or anything yet?**

HEATH SLOCUM: Just this one guy named Boo.

**Q. We were asked Boo earlier some earlyish memories of meeting you. What do you remember about him?**

HEATH SLOCUM: Yeah, so I had just moved from Louisiana to Florida, DeFuniak Springs, Florida, and then the summer after my eighth grade year I knew I was going to be in Milton. I met one other guy that we were friends with, and I had already met him, and we were at the Future Masters, and he pointed over and said, hey, that guy right there, his name is Boo, and he'll be in a class with us, and Boo had on the old classic shoes, untied, no socks, and I watched him tee off -- I can't remember what hole, 1 or 10, and it just made a sound, the sound it makes today, and it's just -- then obviously we became like more brothers than friends. We just grew up together.

It's been amazing. It's been like you couldn't draw it up that we started out careers together. We started from juniors all the way through, every single level we've played together, and now we are here again. We're pretty lucky. Not many people have that good of a friend that they get to enjoy what they do for a living with.

**Q. You mix in Joe Durant --**

HEATH SLOCUM: Oh, yeah. You can just name a bunch. I don't even know how to describe it. I couldn't even tell you all the accolades and the wins and the Ryder Cups, majors from a town of 9,000 people. Then if you want to go surrounding area to Pensacola, you've got Joe Durant, Jerry Pate. It's a pretty cool -- we get to play golf year-round, and back at that time we played all the other sports. Golf was just our season. Boo would be the first to tell you, we played like four or five junior tournaments a summer, and that was it. The rest we just were teenagers. We had fun, and we were lucky enough to somehow, someway blossom on to the TOUR. It's been a journey, but man, I'll tell you what -- there was a lot of hard work, too. We definitely paid our dues in a lot of ways. We both got on TOUR a little later.

But we got there, and not only did we get there, but we played well enough to actually get on this TOUR because this is not an easy TOUR, as you know, to get on. I know

we're both looking forward to getting a whole full year of playing again together, going out to dinners, practice rounds, and hopefully cheering each other on at a victory down the road somewhere. That would be amazing.

**Q. What is it about this TOUR you look forward to the most? Is it getting back in the arena?**

HEATH SLOCUM: Yeah, the competition, honest to God. That's what I've missed the most is the actual competition of -- like we have an age limit or you have to be a certain age out here, but it is the best at that age. There's no better way to test yourself. That's how I felt when I played on TOUR. I just loved competing, and again, we're fortunate enough to get to do it against the very best. There's nothing worse than failing, but there is nothing better than when you actually succeed and are able to win those events. It just makes everything worth it.

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