

# KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship

PGA Frisco

Frisco, Texas, USA

Friday, May 26, 2023

## Steve Stricker

### Quick Quotes

**Q. 5-under today and 7-under for through the first two days. Are you pleased with your start here?**

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, it's a good start. Did some good things, did some bad things the first couple days. Kind of some sloppy play to start yesterday on my front nine, which was the back. But did enough good things to right the ship. I holed out today from the fairway at 14 which always helps.

Then birdied 15.

So three shots under par really quick there in those couple holes. So that's kind of what got me going back into the tournament. See what Pdraig does today and but, yeah, it was a good solid round.

**Q. When you have something like the hole-out like that, what kind of spark does that provide to get you going?**

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, it does a lot. Especially I could have gotten there and gone for it in two. Same with on 18. But the risk versus the reward here, it's just not there. It's too penal up around on the greens, there's really no place to miss it on some of these holes on the par-5s. So I feel confident enough in my wedge play just to kind of lay it back there and wedge it in there. I did that well. But to hole it out you don't expect to do that. But it sure got me going in the right direction. I go from 4-under to 6-under and only a couple back at that point. So you don't expect those to go in but it sure is a treat when they do.

**Q. How far was it?**

STEVE STRICKER: I had 88 to the hole. Kind of the reason why I laid up there today, not only because there's really nowhere to miss it up there or to keep it on the green for that matter, it's kind of where my ball ended up yesterday when I hit a shot. The pin was closer to the front yesterday and I thought I hit a pretty good shot and it



skipped out and rolled out basically where the pin was today. So I'm like, well, I have that shot in my mind. And it's a pin that you can access from the fairway. You can spin it enough to get it to stop. It kind of rolls out right to that spot. So that's another reason why I laid up.

**Q. Couple players have noted that Gil Hanse designed courses are often like tempting, like they try to tempt you on a lot of holes. But sounds like you're not necessarily tempted.**

STEVE STRICKER: Oh, no, I'm tempted. (Laughing.) Yeah, it's hard. I'm back there on 18 and I had 207 to the front and it was a 4-, 5-iron, somewhere in there, pin's on the front, the bunker's the bail out right behind the pin. But if you don't hit it in the bunker and it goes up in the tall grass or if you flare it, I mean there's not a lot of room there. But to hold it on that green, I wasn't going to hold it on that green with a 4- or 5-iron. Mark Hensby, he took on the pin with a 6-iron and he's 35, 40 feet past the hole there. So after I saw that I'm like, okay, I made a good decision. Then you feel kind of dumb laying up with a wedge. I had 122 to my layup spot. So I literally hit a wedge and then a lob wedge. But I made a 4. I mean, that was the goal. But it is, it's weird in a way that there's really no place to put it up there on some of these par-5s. It's pretty penal off the edges. If that's what he wanted to do, he's doing a good job of it, because it's, there's really no place to hit it on some of those holes.

**Q. On TV they showed a hole-out from a couple of years ago at the Senior PGA. I wondered, when you do something like that do you, does that occur to you at all? Do you remember shots like that?**

STEVE STRICKER: No, I didn't reflect back at the other PGA. Was it at Southern Hills?

**Q. I think so, yeah.**

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah.

**Q. 2021.**

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, well the outcome wasn't very



good. So hopefully that can be better and hopefully -- we're halfway there and I'm in a good spot. I need a couple good rounds yet. Pdraig could go out and shoot another 6-, 7-, 8-under round today and kind of distance himself. So he's playing well. I played with him a couple weeks ago and he's driving it well. So we'll just have to see what he does.

**Q. You're on quite a roll to start the year. Do you show up expecting a top 10?**

STEVE STRICKER: You know, I expect to play well. I don't know wherever that leads me it will lead me. But I expect to get up there and play well and I have confidence in my game and what I've been doing lately. I've been messing around with this putter grip that I changed at Regions Tradition and I've been holing a lot of nice 10- to 20-footers, something that I haven't been doing. So that's been kind of the difference the last couple of weeks. Not so good in that 5-, 4-, 6-foot, 7-, 8-foot range yet with it, but it feels pretty good.

**Q. First of all, why would you ever mess around with a putter grip?**

STEVE STRICKER: You can always be better, right? I mean, you can always -- you see a lot of those putter grips around, you see guys anchoring it basically on their wrist or their forearm. It's a form of anchoring. Really it is. I don't see how we get away with that part. But I'm really not anchoring it, I just like the bigness of it so far. And it's kind of taken some of my hand play out of it. So it's something that I've tried in years past, I've actually played a couple years ago with one the same way and did well with it. So I tried it again a couple weeks ago and did well with it.

**Q. Has more length to it?**

STEVE STRICKER: It's a little bit longer. It's just fatter. You could anchor it really in your wrist area there. I really don't pay attention to it, it's just I can barely feel it, but I'm not trying to keep it there. So it's more about, I think the bigness of it kind of takes the hand play out of it and kind of does something that I've always tried to do in my putting stroke over the years.

**Q. We watched a guy last week win the PGA who doubted if he was going to get to that level again here with his knee. And you captained him, right. With you and what you went through, what was the element of doubt in there as far as what level you would climb back to?**

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, I mean, totally different deal, right. I'm 20 years older than him or more. And, yeah, you

just don't know. From his standpoint I know he went through a lot of difficult times wondering if he was ever going to play and compete at a high level again. Same with me. When I'm sitting there not feeling very good you're just wondering if you're going to get back to even playing. I guess we all have that driving force. You want to play, you want to compete, that's what we've done our entire lives. So I think that's what helps us to try to get better, to work hard to get better, because you want to come out here and enjoy the things like we're doing.

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