

LIV Golf South Africa

Tuesday, 17 March, 2026

Midrand, Gauteng, South Africa

The Club at Steyn City

Ripper GC

Cam Smith

Marc Leishman

Lucas Herbert

Elvis Smylie

Press Conference



Q. Lucas, I know you were there, you watched that playoff unfold a couple years ago. That was one of the moments where I think we saw, for LIV Golf, the team fandom, how fans can really get behind a team. That being said, what would you expect to see from the fans out here in Steyn City this week?

LUCAS HERBERT: I mean, I'd expect them to get behind the Southern Guards the way that the Adelaide crowds have got behind the Ripper team the last couple of years. A really good, loyal, vocal fan base out here in South Africa. You see that across all the sports they excel in, whether it's rugby, cricket, they get right behind their national teams, I guess, and the Southern Guards really represent South Africa well at this point in the golfing scene, so I would imagine they would be pretty vocally behind them.

It was funny watching the boys this morning; they looked like they were getting pulled in every direction for media this week, and sort of felt like it was nice to see someone else getting that because Adelaide is a busy week for us. That's probably a sign early in the week how big it's going to be for these guys. I know how much it means to them having a big event in South Africa so it's going to be really good for them.

Q. Elvis, you started your LIV career with individual and a team victory in Riyadh, again, the team celebration in Adelaide, but now four events in, what have you learned about the quality of the competition here in this league, and what's it been like for this kind of first quarter of the season?

ELVIS SMYLIE: Yeah, I think first things first, I think each week has had an amazing story attached to it, myself winning in Riyadh and then you've got AK winning in Adelaide. You've got Bryson winning last week and then Jon winning in Hong Kong.

I feel like there's been a lot of great stories attached to each week, and I'm continuing to see that this league is really strong. There's a lot of great players, and we're

THE MODERATOR: Let's welcome to the media center Ripper GC. Welcome to LIV Golf South Africa 2026. Captain Cam Smith, Marc Leishman, Lucas Herbert and Elvis Smylie. Cam, the Rippers currently hold first in the team standings. With the season-opening back-to-back wins and a runner-up finish last week, what does the team have to do to keep this momentum going?

CAM SMITH: Yeah, I think we're all really determined to keep the momentum going. I think it's obviously a lot of hard work to do that and something that we're trying to do. But at the moment, we're all playing really good golf. We feel confident.

This is another week that we're going to enjoy here in South Africa, and like you said, we've just going to get that momentum going so keep the hard work and keep your putts going in.

Q. Marc, you've spoken about how memorable back in 2024 that team playoff was in Adelaide against the South African team. Is there any extra juice or motivation this week knowing that that friendly rivalry exists?

MARC LEISHMAN: I mean, there's always juice every week, but I think there's definitely motivation for the Southern Guards. Obviously getting beaten in a playoff, they probably are after revenge. What a great place to try and get it, here in their home country. It sounds like we've sold 90,000 tickets, which is huge. Yeah, we're definitely excited to try and take it up to the Southern Guards, and I'm sure they're ready for a big week, as well. Hopefully we can be both there at the end of the week and give the crowd something to cheer about.

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obviously playing great as a team, which is nice. Yeah, hope to keep that winning feeling going from Riyadh and Adelaide.

Q. Elvis, I'd love to know going into the season being labeled as a proper rising star, you see it across other sports when young guys burst into the scene and start really hot, is that motivating or distracting and how is it informing your individual game going forward?

ELVIS SMYLIE: Yeah, it's definitely motivating. I think you've got the other young guns out here that are really pushing me along. I've had the opportunity to play with McKibbin and David Puig and Josele Ballester, and I think the one thing that I've noticed is everyone is always in the gym together. Everyone is always doing the 1 percent stuff that you see away from the course, and that's incredibly important.

It's great to be able to have that rivalry against those guys but then also have the opportunity to learn off guys like Bryson and Jon and these three guys up here, as well.

Q. Cam, if I wanted to introduce your team to perhaps a South African golf audience that doesn't know the four of you individually, how would you describe each of the four of you and what you bring to the team dynamic?

CAM SMITH: I think we're all pretty cruisy, all pretty laid back. But all extremely motivated to do better.

We have a laugh in the team room, in dining, but once we get out on the golf course, even in practice rounds, we're all competitive, trying to make each other better.

It's a really good team dynamic that we have and something that we're super proud of. But we're always trying to get better.

Q. Specifically if I asked you to drill down a bit and tell me about Marc, Lucas and Elvis, what stands out to you if you described Marc, Lucas and Elvis?

CAM SMITH: Geez, you're putting me on the spot here.

Q. It's not going to be easy in South Africa.

CAM SMITH: How would I describe Marc? I think Marc is one of the most underrated ball strikers of all time, an incredibly good bloke, loves to have a beer, loves to have a chat, will do anything for anyone. Likewise anyone else will, as well, on this team. It's something like I said before we're super proud of.

Herby and Elvis kind of bring the energy to the team. They're the young guys. They keep us older people in check and really keep us on our toes. I think we learn off them just as much as they learn off us.

Q. Do you have interests outside of golf as a team? Do you socialize together on the LIV circuit? I know there's a couple of Queenslanders, a couple of guys from Victoria. Sporting interests? Is there a footy interest? Do you have interests outside of golf? I know you said you don't often think about golf yourself personally. What do you guys like to do away from the course?

MARC LEISHMAN: Cam is actually traveling with a cricket bat this week. He's got a bat in his travel cover. We love cricket. We were watching the rugby in the room last week in Singapore. We all love our sport. But yeah, enjoy spending time together, whether it's dinners or just hanging out, going to check out local restaurants and just holding good conversations.

I think that's a pretty cool thing about the four of us is I think we can enjoy ourselves, not talk a whole lot about golf but hold a really good conversation, an interesting conversation. It would be cool to be a fly on the wall for some people, I guess, occasionally.

Q. There's been a lot of parallels made between LIV Golf and Formula 1. The team dynamic is something that a lot of fans have really latched on to. Do you guys see in the future where there's Red Bulls and there's Racing Bulls, that there's maybe like a Ripper secondary team kind of going through the ranks? Would that be something you guys would be very behind, and obviously with the more competition that maybe a secondary team can push for top places in the main team?

CAM SMITH: Yeah, I think I could see that maybe in tours or league underneath us. I think it's very important for everyone to have their -- like for us, our national team is us. For the Southern Guards it's South Africa. For Torque it's Latin America. I think that's really important, and I think it's important to have young kids pushing us to be better to make sure we stay here.

I don't think I could see having two teams out here, but I could see maybe the International Series or something like that where we have somebody that comes in and out, and a bit of a relegation maybe between the two teams. I could definitely see that.

Q. For a lot of the players, this is the first time they're getting to play this course. How does the preparation

for you guys change on, say, a course that you might have played multiple times to coming to South Africa and playing a course for the very first time in the week of the tournament?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, I've played here in SA. This is my fourth time. So I've kind of got a bit of an inside track as to how to prep for definitely South African courses.

All the time we're playing on kikuyu grass here, so it's a slightly different preparation around the greens. You've got to get used to that. A little different from what we played on last week. And then the altitude here, as well, the ball is going to go a little bit further, so just dialing in that.

It's just a little different for every player. Depends how high you hit it, depends how much you spin the golf ball. Those are the adjustments that you've got to make, and I would say that's the main changes from last week to this week. I think for most guys, this is our third week in a row. For me, it's my fourth.

As far as getting all the reps in, we don't need so much of that. We've done plenty of practice the last couple weeks, on the course especially, as well. We're all in a good groove. It's just more those tiny little changes. So whether I'm changing driver heads this week to get a little bit more loft, probably do a lot of work on the range today with FlightScopes and TrackMans and that kind of thing to figure out how far clubs are going so that we've got a chance coming into the greens.

Then I actually haven't had a chance to putt on the greens yet. As to the speed, I would guess they're probably going to be a little slower than last week because last week they were like billiard tables. So just a little readjustment of speed.

It's stuff that all of us do regularly week to week anyway. It's a fun challenge. It's a good part of the sport but nothing that we can't take on.

Q. One of the biggest differentiators with regards to LIV is the players' ability to wear short pants. Ironically two of you guys are in longs, two in shorts. Tell us the story there.

LUCAS HERBERT: I'm not sure which outfit Elvis is rocking today. He's not got the script, I think. Someone mentioned a turtleneck earlier. No, the short pants is only if the heat index is only 90, which I think is standard across every tour except the PGA TOUR. I think I've seen it on the DP World Tour. I've seen it in Asia. If it gets over 90 degrees Fahrenheit heat index, then they allow guys to wear shorts. Practice rounds the guys like to take

advantage. I think you're a longs --

CAM SMITH: I love wearing long pants. I wore long pants last week and it was a million degrees. That's something I'm used to.

LUCAS HERBERT: This was all I could find in my locker. I'll be straight back to shorts if I can find them after the presser, I think.

Q. Herby, you've had a great start to the season. You've always been long off the tee, always had a short game, but last year towards the end of the season your approach play let you down a little bit, and coming into this week you've gained strokes on approach all four weeks and a bunch of them over the last two weeks. Is there something you did over the off-season to kind of fix that weakness?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, I started struggling from DC onwards last year, so it was literally halfway through the season. I was struggling with some concepts in my golf swing that yeah, it sounds really stupid, but just didn't understand kind of what I was doing from a real basic concept point of view.

I actually figured that out in the off-season and that's made a big impact and then changed drivers, as well, so that's helped me a lot. I think the approach play kind of a lot of time piggybacks on your driving. I think when you don't drive it well, you're in the rough a lot, you're trying to get out of trees and your approach play looks like your problem but it's probably more the driver.

I think I've driven it better this year. I don't think I've had my best stuff the last few weeks, but I think it's been better than what the poor stuff last year was, which that's helped me a lot. Like you said, I've had a really good consistent start to the year. I think last week 17th was my worst finish. I'm pretty proud of that. I've not been known as a consistent golfer over the years, so it's nice to change that script and produce some really consistent results.

Q. Cam, I know you're focused on this week, but probably your last start before the Masters or definitely your last start before the Masters. How do you compare your form kind of going into it this year at a place where you're always great even when you're not in the best of form? How is your form this year as opposed to the last few years going into Augusta?

CAM SMITH: Yeah, I feel good. I just need to get out of my own way. I feel like I'm a little bit in my head at the moment, something that I've been working on.

My game, though, feels great. I go to the range. I go to the chipping green. I go to the putting green, and I almost feel like, what am I doing here, I just want to go play, hit different shots, and like I said, just kind of get out of my own way.

Feeling good. Last week was really good. That's a really tough test, hot, pretty physically painful out there, and a really tough golf course, as well. Game is trending in the right direction.

Q. Cam, just picking up on that with regard to the Masters, you've sort of made your aspirations. Much has been made of the world ranking element and the discussion around LIV Golf getting world ranking points. What are your major aspirations still?

CAM SMITH: I mean, I want to win another one. I want to win another one more than anyone else does. That's what we do the work for. It's an extremely gratifying time in your life and something that you can't take for granted. Yeah, I want to be up there holding another trophy. It's been a couple of years for me, even out here.

But like I said, I feel like my game is in a really, really good spot. I'm starting to feel really confident, and I'm starting to feel at ease with different shots and just kind of letting go a little bit.

I feel like I'm in really good stead for majors season.

Q. Any chance you kept an eye on THE PLAYERS a couple of nights ago, watching Cam Young there, a place that you won four years ago in that year for you when you won a major, as well?

CAM SMITH: Yeah, that's a great week. Super happy for Cam. I know he's had some close calls over the year. He's a great guy. That's a good golf course to win around. It's pretty brutal. He'll be one to keep an eye on, as well, through major season. But we didn't get to see it. We were flying here out of Singapore on Sunday night, so we missed everything pretty much.

Q. Marc spoke about the Aussie-South African rivalry. What would it mean to you as a team captain to win here on South African soil?

CAM SMITH: It would be really nice. I love the South African guys. They're some of the best guys out here on the league. We have a lot of fun with them. But I would like nothing more than for us to whip them this week.

Q. Skipper, obviously there's going to be lots of chats around altitude golf and Steyn City. There's a couple

of gettable par-4s if you're long off the tee, but you've always been known as a short game wizard. Do you think that Steyn City suits a feel player like yourself, or do you think the long dogs are going to have a better sniff at it this week?

CAM SMITH: I mean, I haven't been out there yet, so I'm wary of what I'm going to say. But I think any week where there's long rough off the fairway and around the greens, you have to scramble well. That's just something you have to do. The rough out here, I was around the chipping green yesterday, it was about six inches long, I could barely get it out.

So I think over the next couple of days figuring that out and then just figuring out the golf course, where to miss it. If you're off line off the tee, out of position, where do you hit it and where do you make your 4 and try and be aggressive as you can for those birdies when you can.

Q. Elvis, as an Australian, you have neither a mustache or a mullet. Which of those are you looking to aspire to have, and how long do you think it'll take?

LUCAS HERBERT: Mullet you're more chance, Mate. You can't grow a mustache.

ELVIS SMYLIE: Yeah, probably a mullet. It's getting a little bit long but not to the extent Cam has got it at. It's kind of his trademark, so I might just leave it to him with that one.

CAM SMITH: He would look good with one, though.

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