

LIV Golf South Africa

Saturday, 21 March, 2026
Midrand, Gauteng, South Africa
The Club at Steyn City

Southern Guards GC

Dean Burmester

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Ladies and gentlemen, let's welcome back to the media center Dean Burmester, Southern Guards GC. 6-under today, you're T5, four shots back from the lead. Another round under your belt. Just explain what the energy and all the emotions continue to be like out there.

DEAN BURMESTER: The boys tried to prep me for the first tee last night and this morning. Branden said it's going to be probably one of the coolest things you'll ever experience, and Louis said, just try not to cry. I ended up crying, and I ended up not feeling anything. I didn't feel my hands, my legs, my feet. I couldn't feel a damn thing. I'm surprised I got the ball on the tee. I was shaking.

But then I took a deep breath, made a decent swing, and I was very happy when it landed in the fairway.

But I will say, like, my moment on 17 was incredible, but the feeling of energy and the welcoming of our home fans, being able to do it with Jon and Abe, who I really enjoy playing with, was just -- I don't know. Man, I'll take that to my grave, put it that way. When I go and retire somewhere in the middle of nowhere where nobody knows who I am, I'll still remember that moment for sure.

To get it done, I kind of started slow and eased into the round, hit some unbelievable shots. I swung it about as good as I've ever swung it today. Unfortunately a little bit of a cold putter, but I know what to work on. It's a bit of a tempo thing. But hit some really good putts coming in that didn't go in, so I'm happy with the way it went. 6-under bogey-free, it's not every day you shoot that and go backwards, but I'm very happy.

Q. You guys obviously have the backing of all of the local fans. That must give you a bit of extra oomph to play your best, but is there a little bit of a nervousness as well playing in South Africa and trying to keep on top of the leaderboard?

DEAN BURMESTER: Of course. There's that added

pressure to do well. You want to do well for everybody, for the crowd, for yourself. You just want to do yourself proud.

But the four of us on our group chat last night were just talking, and a couple of guys were a little hemming and hawing they didn't do well enough, and we just said, boys, let's just go and effing win this thing. Let's just do it. It doesn't matter what it takes; we're just going to stand up and man up and will it into existence. That's our goal. We want to get out here, win this team thing, and make this the greatest golf event South Africa has ever seen.

Q. The weather has been up and down the past few days and it might have played into a few of the guys' strengths. Like you've mentioned, you might have lost a few putts. Do you think you left a few shots on the course today?

DEAN BURMESTER: I mean, that's the ups and downs of golf. That's the nature of the sport. Yeah, sure, I might feel that way, but at the same time, I got breaks here and there. That's just golf.

At the end of the day, all that matters is where I stand when you finish, and more importantly, how the crowd reacts to everything you're doing and make sure they're having a great time because they're the ones who spent money to see us.

Q. Obviously your team is tops at the moment. What's the message for you guys as a team heading into the last round?

DEAN BURMESTER: I think it'll be the same as last night. I think we've got a real drive to win this thing. I think the four of us, we collectively shot 25-under today. That's what I saw. It might have been 26 with Branden's birdie on the last.

But incredible. It's not every day that you shoot 6-under and you're the worst round in your four-ball and in your team. Hats off to the guys. We know that we're going to do more of the same tomorrow. There's going to be a ton

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of birdies. A lot of teams are going to be gunning for that top spot.

That's the nature of sport, and that's why we love it so much.

Q. How are your shoulders? Jon Rahm reckons the amount of fist bumps and hands in the air, your shoulders must be hurting.

DEAN BURMESTER: A little bit. Look, I am interacting with the crowd quite a lot and I enjoy it. I swap hands. That helps a lot.

A lot of the guys that had a couple brandies definitely hit my high fives a little too hard, but I come from Bloem, so I'm pretty used to getting beaten around a little bit, a little English guy from Bloem. You deal with it, man. I've loved it. The crowd has been amazing. They've welcomed me so well.

I saw guys out there yesterday that were wearing a Bryson shirt that said "Braaison" and then today they were wearing a shirt with my face on it that said "Braaimester." So I thought that was pretty cool. I took a photo of them. Just that kind of stuff keeps your head out of the actual stress of what we're trying to do here and just keeps you going.

Q. Polarizing week so far; it's a lot of South Africans screaming for Bryson. He's two ahead of Gracey, four ahead of you. Obviously you're two ahead at the top as a team. I think Sunday is going to change that a little bit. Bryson has been hearing a lot of "lekker," "gooi," "bliksem," this, that and the other. I think tomorrow it's going to probably go Southern Guard focused and get behind the boys. How has it felt confronting the fact that there's an American golfer in South Africa with such an immense following? And he deserves it, he's awesome, he's generous and he's a fantastic player, but how has it felt sharing the spotlight and sharing the "gees" with someone that's not from here, and do you think tomorrow you might expect something different?

DEAN BURMESTER: Look, I don't know what tomorrow holds. Obviously I wish I could predict the future because then I'd win every week, but I can't. Do you know what, Bryson moves the needle, and like you say, to his credit, he deserves it. He's done some amazing things in this game at such a youngish age, and his following on social media -- he gets it. He knows where the younger generation is, and he knows what he's doing.

I think it's a privilege to share that with our fans, that we have that opportunity to share that with him. I think he

probably feels the same, and I think that's just what makes South African fans so good. They're just the best sports fans in the world. We're talking about it all week; everybody I've played with has been saying how amazing the fans are. They welcome everybody.

I know Jon and Abe probably felt like they didn't get as many cheers, but they were so respectful towards them and they cheered every good shot and the every putt that went in, and there's no booing, there's no sledging. I haven't heard one guy sledge. I heard one guy say if I make a birdie he'll give me a Jaegermeister, which is about the closest thing, I think, to sledging.

Q. Did you make birdie?

DEAN BURMESTER: I did not. I lagged it. But I think that's the MO. That's what the South African fan is. We're the greatest sports fans in the world.

Even if you look at the All Blacks come and play rugby, it's very rare that you'll get a fan booing the kicker when he's trying to kick it over the poles. That's saying something. Everywhere else in the world they do that. So it's special.

Q. I got Gracey to commit to ringing the bell behind Fancourt's bar yesterday. I've been following your story for quite a while. I know you were a waiter at Margarita's in Bloemfontein whilst building your career, and you could barely afford round to round. If we go all the way tomorrow, which I have full faith that we will, individual or team, are we buying dinner for everyone here as a table for whatever at Margarita's in Bloem tomorrow night?

DEAN BURMESTER: Yeah, whoever can make it, let's do it. Let's make it happen.

Q. If you have a home golf club, will you be ringing the bell tomorrow night?

DEAN BURMESTER: Well, I'm a member at the Links at Fancourt --

Q. Gracey has got that.

DEAN BURMESTER: I grew up at Schoeman Park in Bloem, so I hope Schoeman Park, if they're out there and they're watching this, they get together and watch the final round tomorrow, I'll ring the bell with absolute pleasure.

Q. In Hollywood they watched Masters at the Masters; at Schoeman Park let's watch Dean Burmester bring it home?

DEAN BURMESTER: I think bringing up Rory here after his comments of South Africa is not a great idea.

Q. Obviously you're in contention now. How do you kind of process this, and what has been the kind of goal if you are to win in South Africa? How would it be tomorrow if you could lift up that trophy?

DEAN BURMESTER: It's already pretty crazy just being in contention. I think individually and in the team, it's not the welcoming, the support, obviously the noise -- still, look at all those people just waiting for us to go and sign something. It's nothing I've ever experienced. I grew up and worked while I was playing on the Sunshine Tour, and now I'm here and I get to share it with three of my best friends, three guys I've really grown close to and love spending time with.

It's an absolute privilege to be in that position, and I'm going to enjoy that pressure and give it everything I've got, basically.

We'll see what Sunday night holds; let's put it that way.

Q. Today South Africa celebrates Human Rights Day and yesterday you spoke about our divided past that we had. Seeing all South Africans from all walks of life here at LIV Golf, do you think LIV Golf South Africa falls on a perfect weekend?

DEAN BURMESTER: I think so. I think right now, with Human Rights Day, it's a perfect opportunity to grow the country closer together. Like I said before, how many people from so many different walks of life get to enjoy this experience? Thousands and thousands of people. Now we go and watch one of the world's best DJs later this evening, a couple local acts, it's an experience South Africa has never had before, and that's always going to bring the country together, and that's what we were striving for and everyone behind the scenes was working so hard to get.

I'm just proud to say that we were able to be in that conversation to help bring this country closer together.

Q. Dean, you spoke about us being great sports fans. I know you're a big sports fan yourself. We've seen you at the SA20, at the Springbok rugby games. There were a lot of famous South African sportsmen here today watching you. Talk about what it means to you to perform the way you guys did today in front of superstars like that.

DEAN BURMESTER: It's unreal. Last night I went to go watch Black Coffee with my family and Steven Kitshoff is

there, and Kitsy, he comes to me and says, Burmy, do you mind signing my hat - I don't want to ask you - and also, can I be your friend. I'm sitting there and I'm thinking, damn, where am I now. Here's this kid from Bloem, there's a World Cup winning prop, and so famous, what a guy. I'll shake Willie le Roux's hand on the range, Pollard, Habana. We've got some of the best players in the world, AB de Villiers, I saw him out there today, best cricketer, Mr. 360 of our generation. I'm just fortunate to know the guys and be able to share some time with them, so it's special.

Q. When you won your first LIV event in Miami a few years ago, you celebrated with 10 guys from South Africa. You didn't know them, they just happened to be in town at the time. Just wondering what you took from that and what it means to be part of that kind of special bond you have with this country.

DEAN BURMESTER: Yeah, I mean, those guys, Ross and a couple of the guys, I still kind of chat to, that came that day. They're just South African guys working abroad and they're working on the yachts there, and they were there for some yacht conference and they came on the first day on their own, and then Saturday and Sunday I got them tickets. I said, come through, pull in, because they all had South African flags and Springbok jerseys on, and they were just feeling the vibes, and they were amazing.

That was kind of the first small taste of what we could probably achieve this week, and this has just blown our mind. I don't think I'll be able to celebrate with 25,000 or whatever we got through the gates, but I'll sure as hell try.

Q. Let's talk about how proud you must be of Charl Schwartzel, battling that back injury but absolutely sticking it out for the team and doing so well.

DEAN BURMESTER: I think anybody who Charl knows he's a warrior. He'll never give up. But he was in serious pain last week in Singapore, very doubtful to play that third and fourth round, and then we get here and it hasn't really improved. Improved on Monday and then Tuesday and Wednesday it kind of deteriorated again. Then by Thursday morning, we were basically getting a reserve in place, Oliver Becker, from what I understand from a team perspective, and we all just said to Charl, you've got to get out there. You've got to get out there and just give it your best. Credit to Louis; Louis has known him forever, and he was motivating him to get out there.

He looked okay on the range, and he found a way to shoot 5-under that first day. That's got to be probably one of the greatest 5-under rounds you'll ever see because I know what he's going through, and hopefully he gets a week's rest and gets ready for Augusta because honestly he's

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hitting the ball probably the best I've seen in the last four years that we've been playing together a lot.

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