

LIV Golf London

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Hertfordshire, UK

Centurion Club

Stinger GC

Louis Oosthuizen

Charl Schwartzel

Branden Grace

Dean Burmester

Press Conference



every week just got better and better, and here we are a year later.

I think it's even going to grow from here. We're going to get more events and play great courses going forward. It's so much fun to be part of all of this.

Q. Dean, you're new to LIV this year. Has it lived up to your expectations? Talk about what this year has been like for you joining this awesome team.

DEAN BURMESTER: I don't know if I should say what I really want to say. No, look, it's been amazing. Like they said, I didn't really know what to expect. They kind of comforted me coming in. They had played a whole season, pretty much all eight events.

Coming into Mexico, being welcomed by three guys like this was awesome, and like they say, we're taking a world-class field all over the world to places like this, like London that has had world-class fields and we're still filling up the crowds. It's positive. Australia was a testament to that. Our support back home is a testament to that.

We've got a great following back home in South Africa, and we're a team country, and to have a team like the Stingers, all South African out here, is really cool.

I think they've grow from strength to strength and that's what we're going to try and do is defend what happened and what these boys did last year.

THE MODERATOR: As you mentioned, Charl, you're the defending individual champ and you guys are the team champion here. I'm lucky to get to spend a lot of time with the teams, and I have crowned you guys the funniest team. You guys are absolutely hysterical. Is there something to this laid-back kind of funny environment that allows you guys to play so well week in and week out?

LOUIS OOSTHUIZEN: I don't know, we're really serious.

No, we try and have fun. Sort of always been that way when we're together, and when we're on the golf course it's all golf and we focus on what we want to do and achieve. Just the rest of it, we're trying to have a good time and try and smile while we're playing.

THE MODERATOR: Let's welcome Stinger GC to the LIV Golf London 2023 press conference. Welcome, guys. We are joined by Branden Grace, Charl Schwartzel, captain Louis Oosthuizen and Dean Burmester. For the three of you that were here at this time last year, can you take a moment to reflect on the last year for us and what it's like to be back in London after everything that's happened over the last year?

BRANDEN GRACE: Yeah, obviously last year this time was a little nerve-racking. We didn't know what was going on, what to expect, and look at where we are now. Everything has gotten bigger and better as the weeks progressed on. Obviously the way we started last year was like a fairy-tale start, getting one-two-three on the podium and the team win, as well. It's just amazing how things have progressed, how happy we are, how we're enjoying golf, how we're enjoying the environment, and it's great to be here.

CHARL SCHWARTZEL: Yeah, as Branden said, last year at this time, there was a lot of uncertainty. We were getting a bit of scrutiny.

But here we are a year later, and it seems like there's a lot of positives for the future. Wherever we've gone in the last year, it seems like every event has gone really successful, and it looks like there's a lot more -- people are looking for more tournaments, more local tournaments going forward, so it seems like it's very positive.

LOUIS OOSTHUIZEN: Yeah, obviously going into this last year, we were excited but we were also very nervous, excited about being part of something different, being part of a team, having friends on your team. But it was a fairy-tale start, like Branden said, with us winning and then



Q. Looking back on last year, especially with the results and sweeping the individual podium, do you feel like in a way you might have caught lightning in a bottle, especially the way Hennie played? Could you just look back at that?

LOUIS OOSTHUIZEN: Yeah, I said last year when we were up there, I don't know how we're going to ever top this with having one, two, three and the team trophy. That was really a fairy-tale start for us. We played really well a few weeks back, as well, and then got the tournament racked up.

I think we just gelled really well together, not really get down on each other. If one of us have a bad round, we're quick to jump in and try and see what's going on, how can we help fixing a few problems.

We're having fun together, and I think as a team, that's so important that you really gel.

Q. Branden, it hasn't been done since, sweeping the individual podium. Do you think maybe it may never be because of the depth of the roster now?

BRANDEN GRACE: Yeah, probably. I think last year Louis was very clever. He racked us up in a team before everything really even started. He had a plan behind his madness.

Like you said, everything is just getting stronger and better. The teams are stronger now. There's more guys, hopefully more guys coming to make it even stronger. To finish one-two-three I don't think is going to happen pretty soon if ever again.

I think we as a team won by 16 shots last year. It's so strong now, I don't think anybody has won with more than let's say five shots ever since that. But it's nice to be here. The fields are getting stronger. We just have to keep playing good golf. We've got 14 majors out here now, so we have to play really well.

Q. Charl?

CHARL SCHWARTZEL: Yeah, I don't think you'll see it again. I suppose you never say never, but it was an awesome week for everybody, and just happened to have the same team, same guys play really well.

Yeah, I guess we got lucky that week, and we had a great time. We'll always keep trying to do that, but I'm not sure if it'll happen.

Q. You had mentioned last night that that was your first win in six years. Why do you think that week, that particular week?

CHARL SCHWARTZEL: I don't know. I managed to hit more fairways, more greens and made some more putts than the last six years.

I don't know, I was starting to play better. I just hadn't won for a long time. I always say, winning is a habit. I went through a stage of my career where I won pretty much every year, year on year, and you see guys that win often, it seems like they keep winning.

But then guys start getting droughts, and it seems to snowball in their direction, too. I was obviously falling in that same category of it snowballing in the wrong direction, and it was just nice to break that ice and things started going your way, and all the feelings of how to win came back that week, and I pulled it off.

That was a nice week for me just in a personal sense, and then this whole -- LIV started that week, and we had this team environment going, and that was a new aspect. All of a sudden the team wins and we're all on this big podium, which was new for golf. That was just a really good week a year ago with very good memories.

Q. Dean, do you remember what you were doing 13 months ago?

DEAN BURMESTER: Yeah, I was sitting on my couch watching, to be fair. Obviously I think most of the golfing world was probably watching. But yeah, it was cool to see four friends up there and doing something that they believed in and wanted to start and kick off, and to win it in the fashion that they won it was pretty incredible.

It was quite exciting for me obviously from a South African perspective, and also as a friend. I was really stoked for them.

Q. When you were on the stage that Sunday afternoon, what was going through your mind? Like you said, this had never happened before. Were you trying to figure out just exactly how to celebrate a team win?

CHARL SCHWARTZEL: I didn't really know how to shake that champagne bottle. I had never really done that so that was new to try to figure that out. It was just new to golf. We'd never seen that. You see that in Formula 1 where they get podium finishes, and all of a sudden this is what LIV Golf has done.

It's exciting just to be a part of something new.

Q. Two of you are past major winners. Maybe 12 months ago you feared of chance of doing that might never happen again. Things have changed markedly in the last month. Is there a sense of vindication and justification for the decisions you made and the stick you got for taking it, but also is there a sense of relief that perhaps the civil war in golf is coming to a close?

LOUIS OOSTHUIZEN: Yeah, look, it was sort of a decision each of us had to make. I was at ease with -- I played a lot of major golf in my career, and I was very hopeful that I would still be able to play the Open, and what I've heard from people high up saying they're pretty sure I'll be able to play an Open still going forward, so I was at ease with my decision and going forward.

I'm just glad to see that it's finally sort of come to just back to golf again and that the fighting can stop and that everyone just do their thing.

To be part of something new, and I've had a good career in golf, and I was sort of on my final stages there on the PGA Tour, was thinking about maybe even stopping after 2021, and then this opportunity came that was completely different than what I'm used to, being part of a team aspect, and knowing that I'm going to have these two that's good friends of mine in the team was an opportunity I didn't want to let go, and I thought, why not.

But yeah, I think all of us standing here are very happy with what we've decided, and we're just excited for the future.

Q. Is there a possibility now that the Presidents Cup comes back on the agenda for you if this deal can be finalized between PGA Tour, LIV, DP World Tour, and that that will be a sign that you're back to just playing golf?

LOUIS OOSTHUIZEN: Yeah, look, there's a lot of things that need to happen. I think the first thing is somehow getting World Ranking points to LIV or changing the system completely. I think the system at the moment is really -- it's not a real reflection of what's going on out there.

That can change, and we can somehow get back to getting points and things, I think there's a lot more possibilities to play. But we have all played Presidents Cup, the three of us, and we had a great time playing it, and I still watch it even -- I watched the previous one that was played and was a bit disappointed not to be there, but hopefully that all can change going forward.

Q. Charl, this time last year you were about to win \$20 million. How on earth do you spend that? That's an awful lot of money. I know you don't do it for the money, but that's an awfully big check. It was the biggest individual check in the history of the game --

CHARL SCHWARTZEL: It was, yeah.

Q. I mean, blimey. What's it like to realize that -- I know you don't do it for the -- well, you do --

CHARL SCHWARTZEL: Of course. Everything we do in life is for money, too. People say they do it for the love; we do it for the love because we love playing the game, but you also do it to support your family. You want to make money. Yeah, it was surreal.

At this stage coming in, trying to win a tournament, I wasn't thinking of the money. But then when everything sinks in afterwards and you're celebrating with the guys and you start thinking, wow, that was a lot of money I just won.

Q. Three of you qualified for the Open Championship last week. Louis, you were already there. Dean, you went and you tried, didn't quite make it. The other two of you really demonstrated there is still that fire in the belly to compete at the major championships. Having seen Sergio go and qualify for the U.S. Open a couple of weeks ago, go through the stages, the long way around if you like, how was that experience for you, and what a tight turnaround it must have been having quite a grueling week at the notoriously very difficult golf course in Valderrama, and did that help things, as well?

BRANDEN GRACE: It was just a grind. For me personally, I missed last year's Open at St Andrews, and that was pretty painful. I've played a lot of them in a row now, and that was one that you don't really want to miss.

I think anytime there's an opportunity to be able to go and qualify for a major, we're going to take it on. It doesn't matter -- like you said, Sergio, look at him, he's played in so many. I think one of his major runs are coming to an end now because he didn't qualify, but we all still want to compete against the best. We all want to play in the best events.

Yeah, I was going to go either way. It's just nice that, like you said, that fire is still there, that you really wanted to play well, really wanted to make it and just go and try and give it another go. I believe I can still win one, so I'll do everything to try to get to this one and the next ones coming.

Q. Charl, I suppose this is a question that a lot of people stood on this side of the fence, if you like, 12 months ago were asking, well, reduced amount of holes, reduced amount of tournaments to what you're traditionally used to; would that sharpness perhaps be gone in terms of major championship golf. But that's completely out of the question, isn't it?

CHARL SCHWARTZEL: No, I don't think so. I think what you see out here is guys, because we play less tournaments, and then obviously less holes, 54 holes, guys still come out on a Monday night, and it seems like preparation now is a little bit more prepared for the tournaments than what we were when we played more golf and more holes. Guys come and spend more time. I think their games are sharp when they do start the tournaments, and I think we can see why the scores that are being shot -- the guys are playing really good out here. What it does is it's broken up nicely for us so you can stay sharp.

We saw Brooks obviously win the PGA, and a lot of the LIV guys have done pretty good.

The guys are staying sharp, so I think playing out here definitely doesn't give you a disadvantage in playing major tournaments.

Q. Louis, obviously great success at the Open Championship down the years, not just in terms of picking up the Claret Jug but also top 10s, et cetera, as well. How much are you looking forward to it, and also two of your teammates?

LOUIS OOSTHUIZEN: Yeah, I was quite excited to see these two make it and felt sorry for Dean not getting it done. But yeah, I enjoyed them playing 36 on Monday because it means I was fresh yesterday when we played a little bit of a money game.

Look, to me the Open is the ultimate to play in. Like I said, when I made my decision, that was the only thing that was sort of in the back of my mind, I really wished or just hoped that I could still play it until I decided I didn't want to play anymore.

But yeah, I'm really looking forward to Liverpool and can't say I remember a lot about the golf course, but I'm sure when I get on-site and play a few holes it'll come back to me, and just trying to from now on really in the next two weeks get the game as sharp as possible.

Q. Obviously you won last year as a team. Charl, you won. Does it change the way you approach if you're defending something? Or is it exactly the same?

CHARL SCHWARTZEL: No, I don't think it changes much. I think once you get on the golf course -- there was a lot of things coming back to us like how I played this hole last year, what I did here last year. But the fields are so strong now, and I think it's going to be a tough task what we achieved last year. But I don't think anything changes the way we prepare for every week. We have our routine. We play Tuesday, Wednesday, pro-am Thursday, and then the golf on Friday, so nothing is really changing on that.

We've got a few more things to do today and then ready for tomorrow.

Q. Charl, do you change anything when you're defending?

CHARL SCHWARTZEL: I don't think I change anything. In a way it's just very positive memories of what happened last year. Mentally you come out here and you know what you achieved last year, what you did, and those are just really good memories coming into this week. Yeah, preparation is the same. Still need to hit those fairways and greens and make those putts.

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