

KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship

PGA Frisco

Frisco, Texas, USA

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David Toms

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, and welcome back to the 83rd KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship where David Toms is joining us. Welcome to Frisco. A pair of wins already for you in 2023. How would you describe your year so far?

DAVID TOMS: Well, a solid start for sure. Like I said, I think I won a couple times in March. I believe they were both in March. Just was playing well and putting well, making big putts when I needed to.

We've played a handful of tournaments since then. I've done okay. I think I had a third-place finish in Houston. Just pretty solid.

I think the weeks that I haven't contended, it was just didn't score my best, and then obviously in a tournaments where I won, things just went well.

I look forward to being here this week and playing. It's not far from home. It's only a three-hour drive for me to get over here, so that's nice.

Starting to get hot, which I like. I like the weather. So the last time we played a tournament in Dallas it was freezing cold and raining, so it's nice to be a little drier and warmer.

Great facility here at Fields East I guess is the official name of what we're playing. It's a great logo actually. I want to go try to find a shirt. I think it's a cool logo.

But great complex. I know they've put a lot of time and effort into making this a special place, and I think they've done that.

Q. Winning again like that a couple tournaments in March, what does that do for you as a player, your confidence, just everything rolling like that?

DAVID TOMS: Well, I mean, I think Rocco said it best. He said it a couple times, he said, "Good playing. It's about

time."

You know, I don't know. It's hard to win out here. I tell people all the time, they're like, what are you talking about. I said, well, it is PGA TOUR Champions, and you had to be successful to be able to even be out here on a regular basis.

Everybody won at some point in their career and multiple times and multiple majors. You don't have a case where a lot of times on the regular tour you had half the field maybe never even won a golf tournament before, much less major championships or big events. Everybody has that experience, so you have to go out and play better.

I was fortunate to do that early in the year. Gave me obviously a lot of confidence moving forward.

As far as what I was working on in my swing, in my short game, my focus and determination, anything like that, it just was kind of a reward for knowing that I'm doing the right thing at this time.

Q. Is there a stretch of the course that got your attention?

DAVID TOMS: Well, I played the front nine -- not the front nine. I played the back nine yesterday mid-morning, and I thought it was really good, solid test of golf. I mean, there was a variety of short holes, long holes, holes that you really had to pay attention, other holes where you could be aggressive.

Then today, I started on No. 13, which has got to be one of the hardest holes to start on early in the morning, but hit a good shot there, so I felt better about that hole.

Then I got around to the front nine, and there's some tough stretches there on the front nine, a couple 460, 470 par-4s in a row, a couple of long par-5s, things like that.

Even No. 1 is a tough tee shot right out of the box with bunkers on the right and you want to get off to a good start.

There's a lot going on on the golf course that the more you play it -- I plan to play again tomorrow, maybe only nine,

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maybe 18, I don't know. Depends on the wind direction. Because even from yesterday, the wind direction we had today was completely opposite from when I played the back nine yesterday.

I think it's a golf course where you need to play and really spend some time to figure out how you want to play it, how you want to -- what you want to hit off the tee. For me, it's a lot of drivers just because of the length. It's almost 7,200 yards for us. So I'll be hitting driver quite a bit unless it really gets baked out.

But then all the bunkers. You look out there, and there's a lot of sand and a lot of high lips, and you have more room than it looks visually, but you need to play it so that you feel confident in where you're trying to lay balls up on par-5s, where you're trying to hit your tee shot on par-4s, and then how aggressive you can be on the par-3s based on the pin placement.

A lot of visual intimidation is what I like to do it, but there is more room out there for what it gets windy than what it looks like to the eye.

Q. You are familiar with this part of the country. Are you surprised with any of the elevation changes?

DAVID TOMS: I was a little bit surprised in the elevation change, although I have played Dallas National here in town, and there's a lot of elevation change there.

There's some elevation change where we play at Las Colinas Country Club, so it's kind of sneaky as far as the rolling hills and everything, but you get a little further north like this -- and I think they did a good job using it, though. It doesn't seem extreme at all. It's a tough walk. It's just a big property for us.

I mean, yesterday we had no shuttles, and so it's a long way to get to the driving range, the putting green, the first tee, the 10th tee. For a bunch of old guys, you can walk yourself to death. It'll be an endurance test I think if it stays warm like this, and you've got to stay hydrated. So we'll see how that goes.

But I think over four rounds, you're going to be mentally and physically exhausted.

Q. You've been out here a long time on the Champions Tour. Some golfers can kind of peg what a winning score will be or a range of a winning score. What would you say? Do you think double digits under par here this week?

DAVID TOMS: Well, I think the course setup is going to

control all that. I think the wind is going to have a lot to do with it, what's the wind direction, how do they set the pins based on the wind direction, where they set the tees. If they play from where we played from today on No. 10 and they put the pin over on the right side of the green, you might see two birdies a day.

That's on a lot of the holes. They can do that on quite a few holes based on where they put the pins on the green and what type of shot you have, what length of shot you have based on the wind, or they can use a corner with the wind coming from the opposite way. They can use a right corner with a right-to-left wind or a left side with a left-to-right wind where you can't get close and control the storing.

I think after four rounds, anything, if you get to double digits under par the way the golf course played today, you'd be very, very happy.

Q. Do you see some mid 60s maybe scores out here? Do you see low 60s, mid 60s possible for someone?

DAVID TOMS: I mean, I think you'll see somebody shoot in the mid 60s every day, somebody, but they won't do it every day, because guys are good players. If the wind really hasn't blown like it can in this part of the country this time of year -- I remember playing Colonial this week every year where we got some really windy days, and so far we haven't had that, so with that being said, I think you'll see some guys that get hot and shoot some good rounds.

But they're going to have to keep the ball in play, and not only in play, the fairways are generous, but a lot of holes you have to be on the correct side of the fairway to have any chance at all to get to some of the pins.

Q. Some of the guys in here before you thought this place measures up nicely for the regular tour with the coming PGA and possibly Ryder Cup down the road. What's your sense of how this course might look in that scenario?

DAVID TOMS: Well, I think as it matures more and they can get some Bermuda rough growing and maybe pinch the fairways a little bit, with that, obviously there's plenty of length here that they can use to control scoring in that regard.

But with the greens, as they mature more, they could probably get them a little bit faster, so it could be tough. It could be a tough test of golf. I can't imagine. We were out there playing today, and some of the holes where we couldn't get anywhere near the pin. I said, well, what if it was blowing 20 or 25 miles an hour what would we do. So

then you're just trying to hit to the center of the green the best you can, and then that might even be a challenge.

Then to have putts that are up and over, where -- to me that's the hardest putts in golf. Even if they're not long, you could have a 20-foot putt and six feet of it is up and 12 feet of it's down and the wind is blowing, and it makes putting very difficult.

Certainly they can -- this can be a challenging golf course for any level of professional golf.

Q. (No microphone.)

DAVID TOMS: Yes, I mean, today I hit a couple of wayward shots and got into spots that I was like, this is very, very difficult where I am, and it's hard to score. But then other times where I hit the driver really well, and I set myself up, and I had 7-, 8-, 9-iron type situation where I felt like I could be aggressive. But at the same time, they were pro-am pins, and that means middle of the green.

There's some holes where you have uphill shots where it's a blind shot. You can see the flag, but you can't see the green, where it looks like the pin is on the left side of the green, and then you get up there and it's on the right side of the green, and it's the first time to play it. So those types of things you really have to get used to. I told my caddie today, we're going to have to pay attention to the pin sheet to see not only your distance but where is the pin on the green, because anytime that you have an uphill shot and you can't see the putting surface to get a feel for exactly -- so really you're just trying to figure out where your miss needs to be. Just say you don't have the perfect yardage on the wind is a certain direction and you're just trying to hit a safe shot, say 10 or 15 feet. It's like, okay, where is that.

So I had a couple times today where I felt like I was within 15 feet of the cup, and I wasn't even on the green. So things like that will be challenging.

Then the backs, a lot of times golf courses we play the back of the greens got deep rough and it just rolls a step over the green and then you can chip back on. Here it can roll 30 yards off the green, and not only does it roll off the green, it could roll off into deep rough or hazards or things like that. You really have to get a feel for it and pay attention at all times.

Q. (No microphone.)

DAVID TOMS: I'd have to look at a list, but anybody that's played golf their entire career and they've won major championships and senior major championships or whatever, they're great players, and I've looked up to a lot

of those people throughout my time. So I'd have to look at the list to tell you who my favorite players were that are on there.

But it's just -- it's a great event. It feels like it's a big event for us. It's something that we look forward to every year.

I'd like to have my name on the trophy, as well. I have a Wanamaker -- I don't know what they call the PGA Junior trophy, but I've got one of those, too, so it would be nice to get it on the senior trophy.

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