

Senior PGA Championship

Congressional Country Club

Bethesda, Maryland, USA

Thursday, May 22, 2025

Ernie Els

Quick Quotes



THE MODERATOR: Ernie, good start for you today. How would you describe your opening round.

ERNIE ELS: Yeah, it was consistent. It was a round I wanted to have. I would love to have had a couple better. At the end there I had a couple of chances.

It was raining a bit this morning. It was a little uncomfortable, a little chilly. I'll take something under par and see where we go.

I think it's going to be -- scoring opportunities are going to be this afternoon, unfortunately, but it is what it is. We couldn't control that.

Q. Knowing what the weather was last night and you're thinking -- were you pleasantly surprised at how good you --

ERNIE ELS: Yeah, yesterday was -- didn't play a lot of golf yesterday, and luckily it rained because I don't think anybody played golf yesterday, not much. But I had a really good pro-am on Tuesday, so I had a good look at the course. So I just had to kind of do my warmup this morning and hope for the best.

I mean, listen, I would love to have squeezed one or two more out there, but it's fine.

Q. Is it imperative you get it in the fairway?

ERNIE ELS: It is, and I missed quite a few fairways on my front nine. I missed quite a few and didn't quite capitalize on short irons. You need to be in the fairway. But I'm playing nice. I started getting my rhythm on the back and started hitting some nice shots. I'm looking forward to the weekend.

Q. How much different did the course play today from the pro-am given the weather the last couple days?

ERNIE ELS: It played longer. Pro-am the ball was running out. The 16th, the par-5, I was hitting 4-iron in. I had to hit

driver for my second this morning. So it played a little longer.

But then the greens were a little bit softer. So scoring is not bad. So right now, you have good scoring conditions. I'm seeing good scores this afternoon.

Q. When you come into a major, is there preparation-wise a different kind of mindset as opposed to just a regular event?

ERNIE ELS: You know, this one feels more like a major. Last week they called it a major, but it's just a nice big Champions Tour event. But this one has got more of that feel. It's got a golf course with history, and it's got some prestige here. So this one feels good. It feels big. It's a good feeling to have on this course.

Q. Is there a horses for courses kind of mentality for you here?

ERNIE ELS: Yeah. I mean, this one should be. The fairways are quite generous, and if you're a longer hitter you can hit it over some of the brows. You can get to post of the par-5s. Maybe not No. 9. And you can get your ball down there if you're accurate with your driver and you have some length. So you can attack.

I'm looking at good scoring, depending on what the weather -- if there's no wind, we can get after it a little bit.

Q. Does it matter when you look back on your career, does it matter where you won?

ERNIE ELS: Well, I was lucky enough to have won at good ones. I've only won four, so those are four -- Oakmont, here, Muirfield and Lytham. That's a good question. No, I don't think you absolutely should care. It's not up to you where they put the venues.

If you play good enough and win a major, if you win it at Torrey Pines, so be it. Not meaning Torrey Pines is not a good golf course; it's a different kind of a course. But no, you take a major where you get one, I promise you.



