

Senior PGA Championship

The Concession Golf Club

Bradenton, Florida, USA

Tuesday, April 14, 2026

Alex Cejka

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We're here at the 2026 Senior PGA Championship. We're joined by 2021 Senior PGA Champion Alex Cejka. Welcome to The Concession Golf Club. What are your thoughts on the golf course so far?

ALEX CEJKA: It's great. We played here two years ago, just 1-9, so I had a lot of practice done a couple of years ago.

The course is in great shape. You know, it's a little bit different around the greens. You've got to hit a lot of greens. Otherwise, you have tough short game to deal with, but it's in great shape. I think it's a great venue for a major championship.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up to questions.

Q. Alex, just kind of talk a little about the course, but just how aggressive can you play around here? Can you reach the par-5s? Will you be hitting driver? How much do you want to take on this course?

ALEX CEJKA: I think it all depends where the pin positions are. You can hit definitely driver off the tees and then it all depends if it's into the wind where the pin positions are, because a lot of the par-5s especially have those funky greens. So you want to miss it at the right side of the hole, you know, to the pin position. So it all depends on how good you feel with a 3-wood.

They're reachable, but barely, right? At least for me. Of course, we have a couple of long hitters here, like, this week. So the par-5s are kind of doable if the wind is right. Obviously if it starts blowing 20, 30 miles an hour into the wind, then it's going to be really tricky and challenging. You know, they moved -- the difference from the team event we played here compared to this week, they moved a lot of tees further back, so we're playing at a little bit different course than what we played here two years ago.

They wanted to make it like a birdie fest for the team event, like drivable par-4s, like the, whatever, 12, 13, whatever it is, the short. Now we're playing the back tees. I don't think

it's really drivable. So even the par-3s they moved us 30, 40 yards further.

So you have different shots, but the course is in great shape. It's firm. If you hit good shots -- you've got to play smart here. That's the key.

Q. You have two top-5s so far this year. Talk about how your game is trending and how you're going to feel on the course this week.

ALEX CEJKA: Where do I start? Yes, the beginning was pretty solid. I felt great. Unfortunately, I had a really, really bad back. I had to get a lot of treatments, a lot of injections. So the last four weeks it's been really, really tough for me. I couldn't really practice as much. I didn't even practice for Tucson and Newport, the last two tournaments. I literally just played a tournament. It wasn't good at all, and I had bad finishes, like 40th and 60th.

The back feels great, but I'm starting to, like, start grinding again the last couple of days only, unfortunately. So I'm still rusty when I can say this way a little bit for not playing the last four weeks as much, but you know, I got to go day-by-day.

The body feels great. The game is coming every day a little bit better and better. If it's good enough to win this week, I don't know, I got to take it and see how it is. It's always tough to come back to a first tournament after injury. We've seen it in the past from all the players, but we have four in a row, so now we kind of starting to have a regular schedule, as you want to say, and not like one off, three weeks break, two, two weeks break.

I'm just glad that I kind of got my situation sorted out. Hopefully, knock on plastic (laughing), that I'm going to be fit for the season, you know?

Q. In terms of difficulty, how does The Concession compare to some of the other major courses that are on this circuit?

ALEX CEJKA: I mean, if you look down the last couple of



years, every golf course we played, it doesn't matter if it was last year at Congressional or Benton Harbor or Southern Hills where I won, they're all challenging, long, difficult championship courses, right? Especially the way they set up the course.

It's up there. I mean, if you play really well, if the weather allows it, you play really well, you can score low here, but you can easily shoot a couple over if your game is not on and you miss the greens, and it's tough to make up-and-down. It all depends how you play. There are so many great players in the field.

But I'm sure there's going to be a couple low, I don't know, 5-, 6-, 7-, maybe even 8-unders. I can see that if you really play well, you get a little bit lucky.

I see definitely a couple. Maybe not a lot, but a couple low rounds during the week if the weather permits. Like, obviously no rain in the forecast, no 35-miles-an-hour wind, so with normal conditions.

Q. With the greens here, do you need to be conservative and aim for middles of greens, or do you have to get it on the right level?

ALEX CEJKA: You've got to be on the right level. You've got to avoid to miss short side yourself, because everything runs away 10, 20 yards away from the green. It's really difficult. A lot of shots you've got to be disciplined and miss it at the right side where you can have a chance for an up-and-down, because it's really tough to make up-and-downs like from when the ball rolls down 30 yards from the green and the pin is tucked in the corner five paces on.

You know, as I said, a lot of great players here, a lot of, you know, players who have great strategies who are great all their career, right? Not everybody makes stupid mistakes. Obviously you make during playing a lot of mistakes, but, you know, you've got to play smart, let's say, this golf course.

Q. What's the biggest difference between the course you see today compared to a few years ago when you played it last?

ALEX CEJKA: You mean right now and the team event we played two years ago?

Q. Yeah.

ALEX CEJKA: As I said, it's just a little bit shorter. There is a couple of par-3s that we play them way shorter. The rest everything is way longer, the par-5s, the par-4s. So

they lengthen it a little bit compared to the team event, but you know, it's still there.

You've got to play good. I mean, it's around maybe 7,000 yards. It's not like something stupid brutal, 7,500, 7,400 like the PGA is playing, but it's a great trek.

You've got to be patient on the greens, because it's just tough to make putts. A lot of green, a lot of slope, a lot of little plateaus. So you've just got to, you know, be lucky too a little bit.

Q. Alex, the toll this sport plays on your body has been something that's been in the news recently. Can you talk about the idea of having to play with pain, how constant is that, how you kind of manage that having done this for 40, 50 years?

ALEX CEJKA: Yeah, I want to say on this tour everybody has some kind of a kink, right? We are not 20 anymore. All those guys, if you have a problem, you can't really cry out here because everybody is on some kind of medicine or has back problem, back problem, knee problem, whatever it is, right?

Some guys have minor issues. Some guys have, like, more severe problems. I had herniated disc. That obviously goes to a little bit worse category than just have a sore knee or something. I've been having this. For the last two years I've been struggling with this. Even, like, two years ago I only played half of a season. I was out 12 tournaments because of this.

I'm just trying to fix it as quick as I can and maybe play just a couple more years out here, but I don't see me playing, like, another 10, 12, 14 years like Bernhard, almost 70. My body is just slowly breaking down, like everybody else. It all depends how you manage the little injuries, how you fix them, how lucky you are.

You know, some guys have a little wrist injury and never come back, so with everybody it's unique, everybody is different. I want to say this week -- I want to say maybe 50% have a body issue who tee it up, right? You've got to suck up the pain, and you've just got to play as hard as you can, like every other week, you know?

Q. You mentioned Bernhard. Now you are the top-ranked German player in the senior tour, no? I want to know how you live that progression and being with Bernhard's career there too?

ALEX CEJKA: Yeah, Bernhard has been a big part of my life, golfing life. It's fascinating to see what he's done obviously on the golf course over the last, I don't even

know, four decades, five decades. I want to say he's even a greater person than a golfer, what is tough to imagine when you see his résumé, right?

I love hanging around him. I love practicing with him. I like to go just to lunch with him. It's just a great guy. You know, we had over the last couple of years a lot of German players who came up. It was Bernhard for a long, long time forever, right?

Then we had a couple of guys like me, Marcel Siem, Martin Kaymer. There's slowly a couple of guys came up. Now there's another two or three on the PGA TOUR, Matti Schmid, Stephan Jager. So slowly getting a couple of German players, but I don't think anybody will be like Bernhard from our country ever.

We have a great harmony. I love looking up to him. As I said, he's even a better person than a player.

Q. Don't forget the fact that you are the top ranked German in the senior tour.

ALEX CEJKA: Who me?

Q. You are.

ALEX CEJKA: Ahead of Bernhard?

Q. Right now you are.

ALEX CEJKA: I should write this in my diary, one time.

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