

Chubb Classic presented by SERVPRO

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TiburÃ³n Golf Club

Alex Cejka

Press Conference



ALEX CEJKA: You know, it started a little bit harder because I had to Monday qualify into this tournament. So I made it through and then I played really well, so that was the first time literally I was like playing for the victory like on Sunday.

In the end I think I was like one or two shots maybe back. I think Stricker won I think.

Q. Uh-huh.

ALEX CEJKA: So it was great. You know, obviously I was just trying to play as good as possible because I didn't know in how many tournaments I'm going to get in and what the story is, if I need -- you know, that top 10 finish, I knew it's going to get me to the next tournament.

I really played well here. The conditions were great last year. It was perfect weather. It was firm. Little wind. This year it's a little bit different. It's windy. The course is playing a little bit longer.

But, you know, it was a great tournament last year when I played here for the first time.

Q. And, you know, doing so and then this is the first opportunity you get to come back and play somewhere where you had success, what does that do for your mindset? Do you have a good feeling?

ALEX CEJKA: I think for every golfer, when you come back to the place where you did well, doesn't matter if it's last year or five years ago, you kind of had a good vibe.

Q. Yeah.

ALEX CEJKA: You know you played great in the past. But every week is different. Every year is different. There is never guarantees.

But my game is good now. You know, I had little health

issues in the wintertime so I was forced to take a lot of weeks off. You know, I'm maybe not as sharp as I was last year at this time.

Q. Okay.

ALEX CEJKA: But I'm shaking off the rust. I'm grinding, and I'm just actually excited to play like three in a row because we have two more coming.

You know, hopefully waiting for some, you know, good stuff to happen, let's say.

Q. And when you did get that first win, it was about a month I guess or so after, you ended up beating Stricker in a playoff, right?

ALEX CEJKA: Yes.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about that day?

ALEX CEJKA: Yeah, you know, I didn't even play -- I think he played in the group in front of me here, so here a year ago, and then being paired with him months later and playing for another chance to win the tournament, it was great.

I mean, Steve is such a great player. Incredible career. It's tough to beat most of these guys, I would say. He was in form. He played really well. Somehow I took him down. We had a playoff and I was just lucky in the playoff. You never know. So I was just lucky to beat him in the playoff.

That freed up my whole year, playing what I want to play and not trying to finish a tournament, go to the next Monday qualifier, Monday sites. So that was really nice, yes.

Q. A few weeks later you win another major.

ALEX CEJKA: Came out of nowhere, you know. I was actually a little bit hurt that week, but I played with my heart. I just had a great run where I drove the ball well. My game was overall in great shape.



It was just a question how can I finish it, you know?

Q. Uh-huh.

ALEX CEJKA: I was just riding a wave and it was great. I love the golf course. I played well. You know, (Wind interference.)

That's why can we practice and grind and play all these tournaments. But it was a great time.

Q. So has it taken the pressure off now? It's a two-year exempt is that right, or is it three?

ALEX CEJKA: I don't even --

Q. You're good for a long time.

ALEX CEJKA: I don't even know.

Q. You don't have to Monday qualify for a long time.

ALEX CEJKA: That's what my main goal was. The pressure, it takes it a little bit off because you can play a lot of tournaments for couple years, but, because you had such a great season and you want to continue like always like the following year, and it's not easy. There is only a few guys who can do it over and over and over again.

You know, I'd be delighted to be in that category to win like every year, one, two tournaments. It wouldn't matter which one they would be. But, again, I just -- playing against so many great players here and there is so many new rookies coming out and they are all great players.

It's just tougher to win, you know. So I got to really be on my game if I want to win. I really got be on my game that week and hope for the best.

Q. You're not planning to be the next Bernhard?

ALEX CEJKA: It's tough to be the next Bernhard. Of course I want to be the next Bernhard. I think I'm I think worldwide is still another 100, 200 victories behind him.

This guy had an incredible career. He's an incredible guy. Been playing incredible golf for the last 40 years, maybe even more.

Q. Right.

ALEX CEJKA: What he accomplished in Europe in the '80s and '90s, I mean, he was my hero when I was a little kid.

Q. Sure.

ALEX CEJKA: You know, I think he's the reason why I turned professional, because golf in Germany in the '80s was nothing. Nothing.

Q. Yeah.

ALEX CEJKA: Our sport was tennis, Boris Becker, Steffi Graf, all these. Nothing golf. There was one person and we didn't have coverage, didn't have TV at times and everything, because there was only one guy and he played mainly all over the world. Not even in German.

So when he came to Germany, I tried to watch him and copy him. As a kid you have a dream and say, Oh, one day I want to be playing with this guy and not just watching this guy.

He inspired me a lot. Not only him, but the '80s era, 90 era was Faldo, Seve, all those European guys who were successful in the world, not only like on the European Tour.

You know, one of them is here also. (Indiscernible) Like in the '90s he was a great player.

Q. Yeah.

ALEX CEJKA: You know, that was it. Now, I somehow did it. I'm playing with those guys now and I used to play with those guys in 2000 on the PGA Tour, some in Europe.

Now we all are blessed that we have an after-career basically. You know, we all do it because it's our passion. It's in our heart. We still want to win because that's why we lasted 30, 40 years.

Q. Yeah.

ALEX CEJKA: And, yeah, I'm excited that I'm finally belonging in that category and play and beat some of those guys occasionally.

Q. Did you ever see Bernhard at a tournament, watch him when you were young?

ALEX CEJKA: Oh, yeah.

Q. Did you?

ALEX CEJKA: I watched him many times. We used to have the German Open in Frankfurt. He came to my home club to play our national championship we had almost every year in our club.

You know, I just didn't go to school. I went to see him play. One year even I signed up for caddie and I was -- my player who I was assigned played with Bernhard in the national championship.

Q. That's awesome.

ALEX CEJKA: So I -- instead of focusing on my caddie job I was like watching and observing what he's doing, you know what I mean? So I think I got in trouble with my player. What are you doing? Bring me this.

I was like totally ignoring him and so I wanted to be so close to Bernhard. But you are 14 years old.

Q. Yeah.

ALEX CEJKA: You know, all those things played a role, all those other players and Bernhard and the passion for the sport, although I played other sports, too, this sport just stuck with me.

You know, I'm happy. I think I had a good life, good career when I'm going to one day look back at it. You know, I'm just I think we all love this game.

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