

Chubb Classic presented by SERVPRO

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Naples, Florida, USA

Tiburón Golf Club

Tommy Gainey

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We're now joined by Tommy Gainey, the reigning PGA TOUR Rookie of the Year, making his first appearance here at the Chubb Classic. How great is it to be here in Naples this week?

TOMMY GAINEY: A lot better than being in South Carolina right now. A lot better. Weather is perfect. Golf course is good.

Q. Okay.

TOMMY GAINEY: Look who I'm surrounded by.

Q. Awesome. You finished 11th at Hualalai at your last start two weeks ago. How do you feel like that week went for you, and what have you done the last few weeks getting ready for this week?

TOMMY GAINEY: Golf-wise terrible. As far as a place to be, I mean, Hualalai, the Four Seasons, it's a place you definitely need to go visit if you haven't been there. Trust me, you will enjoy that week.

Q. Yep. And the last two weeks, how have you spent that?

TOMMY GAINEY: Last two weeks just been home, hanging with the family. I mean, it's been so cold. No golf. 40 degrees, 50 degrees, low of 20 and below. Not 20 below, but 20 degrees and below. Just been awful weather, so just glad to be here where it's warm.

Q. Looking ahead to 2026 as a whole, you turned 50 in August. This will be your first full season on the Champions TOUR. What are your goals for 2026?

TOMMY GAINEY: Obviously the goal is to win. Every time we tee it up the goal is to win. Now, being the Charles Schwab Cup the goal is to win that or at least have an opportunity to win.

Q. You've been out here on TOUR oops for a long time. Long time since the Big Break days, Two Gloves nickname. Maybe going for something that's not there, but as far as like philosophical, you're 50 now, you're stepping onto Champions TOUR ground. You ever take a look back and just see how far you come and gauge your level of success, give yourself a grade of how much you grown and developed?

TOMMY GAINEY: Absolutely. Always look back at where I started and where I'm at now. I look in between those years. You know, I had a lot of fun on the PGA TOUR. A lot of really good players. Korn Ferry Tour was not very much fun because there is guys hitting it quite a bit by me. It's not fun when they hit it 80 yards by you and even 100 now.

But I had fun. Both tours, PGA TOUR and the Korn Ferry TOUR they got me ready to be successful out here like I did the last nine tournaments I played in 2025 and right now. I owe a lot to the tours for getting me ready.

And the players, I really look back and I think, I really am appreciative of the fact that my game was good enough to hold up against those guys.

Q. That's a great answer. And then last one from me is you're kind of making a similar start to new ground, new tour. What's important to you these days?

TOMMY GAINEY: Family. My family is important. I got a 17 year old that's about to graduate high school and go play college golf. I've got an 11 year old and I've got a wife. Everything I do now, it used to be about me until I had kids.

Now it's about my wife Erin and my two boys. Everything I do is try to secure their future and have some fun, because God has blessed me with this ability to be really good at golf, to really have a stage to make a difference.

I would really like to do that.

Q. How has that focus, has it in a way maybe even helped your game on the course?



TOMMY GAINEY: Absolutely. Been through a lot of stuff. It's been a rollercoaster ride for me when I first got on TOUR to where I am now.

God has definitely had a front seat for it. You know, everything that happens, happens for a reason. I'm stronger now than I was before because of this.

Q. Couple quickies. When you made your debut on the Champions TOUR last year, looking ahead to the season, was there a couple of players or few players out here that you looked up to or kind of you looked up to in your playing days that you wanted to pick the brain of? And were there some of those conversations that have stuck with you as you kickstart your full time year this year?

TOMMY GAINEY: Obviously I had a lot of friends that I played on the TOUR with when I got on in 2008. Dicky Pride was one. Obviously Steve Pate is another, and Davis Love, III. I can keep doing down the list. We're talking about legends out here. Legends.

I'm just a player, not a legend, icon. Just a player. These other guys, they're legends. You can just look at their careers, look at them, you look at what they've accomplished, look at what they do outside of the golfing world and golfing business, I mean, that says a lot. Speaks a lot of volumes.

Absolutely, Davis Love, III would be one. I would love to pick his brain. Fred Couples. I mean, how could you not like Boom Boom. Obviously Dicky Pride. Known him for a long times. Tag Ridings, Darren Clarke, Thomas Bjorn. I mean, guys like that you can learn a lot from because look at what they accomplished in their careers.

When you win majors, they know what it takes to win a major. They also know what it takes to win in every aspect of life. That's something that I would really like to pick their brain about.

Q. You also mentioned that it's almost like you're using your golfing ability to almost not give back, but to shine a spotlight on this TOUR. What are some of your goals off the golf course in addition to on the golf course for this year?

TOMMY GAINEY: Well, you know, obviously just being I guess you could say the Rookie of the Year, the new guy, whatever you want to call me now, it's a privilege and honor to be out here. I'm playing with -- number one, I'm playing with great guys. That's the first thing. And I'm playing with legends. I can call them legends because I've

seen their careers, I've seen how they played, I've seen how they interacted with fans and other people, and, you know, it's pretty cool that I'm out here now and I get to play with them or against them every week I go on the PGA TOUR Champions.

So there is a lot for me to learn, and I'm sure that I can talk to a few of them, if not a lot of them. Billy Andrade just passed by. That's another guy that you would love to pick his brain because he's been out here for a while and his career, wow. People like that are not afraid to just -- you know, if you need some help, they will be glad to just sit you down and give you some advice.

Listen, I'm not afraid to ask for it. Just being the new guy here, why wouldn't I ask for it? They been out here. They played all these courses. They been around the block so to speak.

I'm looking forward to picking some brains.

Q. Two more from me. This year, so first time you're playing the Chubb Classic. This tournament in 2027 turns 40. It's one of the longest tournaments out. You've played on TOUR since 2008. There are a lot of tournaments that have longevity on the PGA TOUR. As a player for tournaments like this and sponsors like Chubb and others in Hawai'i and on the PGA TOUR, what does that mean to you guys for tournaments and sponsors to invest in you guys to do what you do best?

TOMMY GAINEY: First off, is it 2026 when it's the it's the 40th?

Q. 2027, so it's 39 this year.

TOMMY GAINEY: Okay. The first thing you got look at is why has Chubb been here this long? What I would say to that is the relationship that they have with the players, what they get out of it. The players respect this tournament enough to where they want to play it.

I mean, you can't have good sponsors without the players supporting the sponsors and the fans supporting the sponsors and the tournaments, and they support us.

So it's on us to make the tournaments better. And when you got a tournament like Chubb Classic and it's going to turn 40 next year, that tells me one thing: They like what they get out of sponsoring an event. The players, they support it. They support their foundation, their charities, whatever they might have that they need. The players, we do that, we support them.



Listen, without the sponsors, we don't have a tournament. I mean, that is just cut and dry.

Q. Yep. Last one from me, a fun one. Big Break is coming back this year. You were on two of them. Won one of them. When you heard that Big Break was returning, because there has been a lot of clamoring for the last ten years, what are your initial thoughts when you heard Big Break was coming back?

TOMMY GAINEY: I can't wait. I can't wait. Obviously back when I was on it there was a lot of good players. Now it's like the game of golf and the depth of the play is unbelievable. It's the deepest that I've ever seen and these kids, they come out and they're ready. They're ready right away.

You've seen people -- look at some of these guys. Luke Clanton, look how well he's played. That's one. Like Michael Thorbjornsen. I didn't mean to say his last name wrong. He's a stud. Just finished tied for second or third in the last tournament on PGA TOUR.

So these guys come out ready. Whatever they're doing in college, whoever they're seeing in whatever they're doing, it's working. They're coming out right away and showing they can be successful and be that next guy that win two, three, four times a year.

And I'm excited about most about the Big Break is what everybody needs to realize is you can hit a good shot, a bad shot, or mediocre shot and you're packing your bags. With the new talent we have as deep as it is, there ain't no telling how good of golf you're going to witness. I'm excited for that.

Q. Just going to ask you a quick one. You've got two boys. Are they taking money off dad on the golf course?

TOMMY GAINEY: Well, they're not taking money from dad yet. My 17 year old is pretty good. It won't be long before he's able to beat me. He is really competitive now against me. That says a lot. He's just young. He's 17.

So I mean, he's got a lot of growing up to do. But when he gets his golf management straight end out, then he's going to start shooting some numbers like I shoot.

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