

RBC Heritage

Tuesday, April 12, 2022

Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, USA

Harbour Town Golf Links

Stewart Cink

Press Conference



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THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome 2021 champion Stewart Cink here at the RBC Heritage. Stewart took part in a tradition here of hitting the ceremonial shot with the cannon blast. If you could talk us your third time doing that.

STEWART CINK: Yeah, third time, and it's a little surprising, I remember it being really taken aback by how loud and how much compression that cannon produces when you're hitting the ball from 15 feet away.

So I was ready for it this time, I had the ear plugs really screwed in and still you can't get, there's no way to be ready for that. To try to hit a ball into the air with that noise going on. It's hard enough with a cell phone going off here and there. But that cannon is a new level.

THE MODERATOR: Now back in a place that you love so much, defending, talk a little bit about the state of your game coming into the week.

STEWART CINK: Well, I feel like this year's been a really, it's kind of a year that's gotten away from me so far, I've played really close to playing very well but I just have been trying to kind of grasp at something that hasn't quite connected just yet. I've had some moments but it hasn't been the kind of year that I was hoping for.

I'm looking to come to a place like Harbour Town and maybe get some confidence memories to turn things around. And I'm not far off and I'm staying like steadfast focused on what I'm doing and it's just, it hasn't worked out for me yet this year. I'm in a position where I don't have to fret about it too much, I'm still enjoying it, Reagan's caddieing, we're having a great time and I feel like it's a pleasure to play golf in competition. And I want to get myself into the thick of it again before too long because I feel like emotionally I'll be in a good spot to compete.

THE MODERATOR: Speaking of Reagan, you guys have had a lot of memories over the last couple years on the golf course, another one last week in Augusta. Just comment on your week and also the hole-in-one there on 16.

STEWART CINK: Augusta was kind of like a little glimpse into the whole season, where I didn't play that well and I was just a little off and Augusta just punishes you for being a little bit off, and then we had one moment that definitely shown brightly with an ace on 16, a memory that we'll never forget. Reagan might even be the owner of crystal pretty soon from that. 25th birthday. But it was on his birthday, he was born the Tuesday of my first Masters back in 1997. So my memories of him and the Augusta National Golf Course and the Masters go back as far literally as his life started.

Q. This tournament seems to be a popular one for pros to bring their kids bring their family, even not caddieing. What about this tournament makes it such a good destination for kids and families to come with you?

STEWART CINK: I think the number one things are you stay out in this area, most of us stay right in the community. The bike riding is pretty spectacular around here. There's some easy restaurants to go and relax. The beauty of the place. A lot of the golfers live in the region so it's not that hard to travel here. It's spring break for several. There's a lot of reasons. But it's a great place to bring our kids. Now that my kids are now old and grown ups we still haven't stopped bringing them.

Q. I was talking to the child care volunteers and given the timeline your kids must have been in some of those programs before they were old enough to follow you around the course. What were your kids' experiences with that, do you remember anything that they were doing during the tournament while you were out here and what's your experience like with those volunteers?

STEWART CINK: I remember the PGA TOUR Family Center started the year of my rookie year I believe, 1997. So it's grown alongside us, with the PGA TOUR and my kids have grown up with it and it was huge for us. Reagan was born in '97, so ever since he's been alive there's been that service that they provide, so that the wives can get out and watch the golf.

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Most people don't realize how engrained the wives are into this. This is something they're heavily invested into and most of our wives are pretty much de facto sports psychologists and they're darn good at it, they know us better than anybody.

So the freedom for them to be out there watching and seeing and experiencing and understanding what's going on is vital to the success of the player. Without the PGA TOUR Family Center that's not happening.

Q. Do your kids have a favorite memory from their childhood? Obviously winning on the bag is probably No. 1, but before they were 18, do they have a favorite memory?

STEWART CINK: I would let you ask them, but I would say that Reagan's favorite memory from here from adulthood would be winning, as a caddie, and his favorite memory from childhood would probably be that big sandy play ground over there under the tree a couple hundred yards way from here, right beside the yacht basin. That's a great place for the kid to hang out -- and the adults. The of. It's kind of a party and a playground at the same time. You've got the adults having their little party and you got the kids having their little party in the sandy playground under the Christmas, underneath the tree roots.

Q. Looking back to last year and now what does it mean to you to have full capacity with fans at this tournament as a golfer? What is it like to come back here with the COVID restrictions no longer here?

STEWART CINK: Well, we really love having the fans that we can play in front of. It gives us the energy and it just makes the place feel like a sporting event and that's awesome. But I also know it probably means more to the tournaments to be able to have fans back because it means more goes to the community in charity donations.

If there's nobody sitting up here in these seats, there's nobody buying beer or T-shirts or food or snacks or anything like that, that's where the funding for charity goes to. So it's great to see everybody out and I know the weather will be nice this week, it looks like the forecast is really solid, so there's going to be a lot of smiling faces out there and hopefully we'll give them something to cheer for.

Q. Tiger referred to you as the Kitchen after his final round Sunday. What's the origination of that nickname and how do you feel about it?

STEWART CINK: Well it's been something that people called me ever since I was little. Ever since I can remember. Tiger thinks he started that, but he did not start

that. I've been referred to as Kitchen ever since I was a little kid playing golf back in Florence, Alabama growing up.

There was a guy named Tim Kitchens who I played in a couple partner events with up there everybody just thought that was the funnies thing that Kitchens and Cink were playing together. And I was 13, 14 years old when that happened, people been calling me that for years. Tiger's always called me that, it's just kind of a funny nickname, Tiger's got nicknames for everybody just like we have for him and everybody else too. It's is part of the locker room banter.

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