

Myrtle Beach Classic

Thursday, May 7, 2026

Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, USA

Dunes Golf and Beach Club

Martin Laird

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Martin, first round, 7-under 64. Got to be happy with that start. Just talk about the round a little bit for us.

MARTIN LAIRD: Very happy. First of all, I think we got a little better conditions that we were all expecting. We got lucky with the weather. It was nice to take advantage of that.

I've not really been putting great for a while. I feel like I've been telling people I'm playing better than my scores just because of my putting recently. It was nice to finally have a day where I made some putts and started out making a nice 12-footer on the first hole and probably a 15-footer on the second hole, and that kind of got me going.

Yeah, they kept going in, which was nice.

THE MODERATOR: What was the difference in your putting from what it has been? You mentioned that you're putting your putter in the bag recently.

MARTIN LAIRD: Yes, switched my putter. A whole different style. I went to the low-torque or zero-torque putters to see if my start line could get a little better.

You know, it's one of these things, I come out on the road to tournaments and been putting back. Then I'll go home and play my course and go play with friends and make putts for fun it seems like. You start thinking about what difference am I making? I'm trying a lot less at home in terms of taking less time and still reading the putts and kind of came this week with the mentality of what I've been doing has not been working.

One kind of quick read for a lot of the putts. If it's one I think I see right away, don't try and find something else and just go. I did that in the first hole. I had a quick look. Thought this is just going a little bit left and literally said to myself, don't go look anywhere else, just go now. I went up and hit it, and it went right in the middle, and that is what kind of set me on the way.



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Obviously very happy. I think they said out there 151 feet of putts. I had one that was very lucky. About a 40-footer one hole that had a little bit too much speed and hit the middle hole and went in. I'm going to take that because there's plenty that I've been putting that think they're going in and haven't been.

Q. Did you play here once before?

MARTIN LAIRD: Played here a couple of years ago, yeah.

Q. What did you learn from that trip here about the golf course?

MARTIN LAIRD: I remember I liked it a lot. I remember I bogeyed 18 to miss the cut by a shot, which I wasn't very happy about. But, yeah, I remember really liking it and feeling like this is a place I could play well because you have to drive it -- if you drive it in the fairway around here, you can have some good looks.

Fairway bunkers are excellently positioned around here. They're almost in play every hole, it seems like. If you're in the rough and in these bunkers, it's harder, but if you get it in the fairway, you can have a chance. I like that type of golf course.

Generally I play better on courses where if you drive it straight, you can play well. I'm not the longest hitter anymore. So I knew I'd like, and yeah, obviously very happy with how I played today.

Q. You played in Puerto Rico, the only other PGA TOUR event this year. Playing some Korn Ferry Tour. What's it been like for you bouncing back and forth, and how big an opportunity is it for you this week?

MARTIN LAIRD: Yeah, this is obviously a huge opportunity. I kind of obviously have been playing Korn Ferry. I was going to play out there when I didn't get in PGA TOUR events this year and went to Puerto Rico, like you said, and was excited to get in here and hopefully have a couple more starts in the next little stretch.

Yeah, obviously any time you get to play in a PGA TOUR event even at my age is still great. Yeah, it's been fine going back and forth, but it's hard sometimes to jump back

and forth because you don't really know where you're going and what run you're going to have, but I knew I'm going to have a nice stretch here these next four weeks.

I'm going to play four in a row, two Korn Ferry events and two PGA TOUR events. That was a nice run coming up. I've been practicing hard at home. I had four weeks off, which was nice too.

Been working with a new instructor, and it's been going pretty well, and we've put in a lot of work the last few weeks. It's nice when you do that and could you come out and have a good result.

Q. I saw you withdrew the first round from your last start on the Korn Ferry Tour. Was that an injury?

MARTIN LAIRD: I had one hole left and couldn't make the cut, and we had a thunder delay and finished and I got a flight the next morning.

Q. You learned on Monday that you were here. What kind of scramble was it to get here? How much did you practice?

MARTIN LAIRD: You know, it was a big scramble because I looked Sunday, and I think I was out by 10. I was, like, no, I'm not going to be going.

I woke up Monday morning to get my kids ready for school and started getting text messages saying, you're fist alternate. Then one came through saying, you're in, from friends and whatever. It was a bit of a scramble.

Obviously managed to get a late flight on Monday, got stuck in Atlanta Monday night and flew in here Tuesday. You know, it was fine. It's not ideal, but I still was more than happy to change some plans. It was harder for my wife. She had to change a lot of plans without me being at home this week, but obviously happy to do it.

Like I said, any time you get in a PGA TOUR event I'm going to be happy. It was a scramble, but well worth it.

Q. The second one was you took advantage of the par-5s, which over the short history of this event seems to be make a difference. You were 4-under. Can you talk about the par-5s?

MARTIN LAIRD: Yeah, obviously the eagle was great. The first one, holed a nice putt, and then on the second one I hit 3-wood off the tee and kind of didn't hit it great and left a perfect number for 3-wood in for my second shot into that second par-5 and hit a nice shot in there, like, 12, 15 feet, maybe 15 feet. It's always nice when you hit a hot is

like that and then take advantage of it making the putt.

That's the kind of day it was. I felt like every time I hit a really nice shot, I took advantage of it and made the putt. Those runs don't always happen happy. When they do, it's nice.

Q. You mentioned a new instructor. If you want to mention who it is and exactly what you guys were working on predominantly during that break.

MARTIN LAIRD: His name is Pat Coyner, and he's the teaching pro at my club at Colorado in Cherry Hills, and we started working the end of last year. I just kind of went to him with a couple of questions and liked what he said and went from there.

You know, he's actually here this week. He wasn't going to come this week, and then he made a last-minute plan. He came out Tuesday. We got, like, eight or nine inches of snow in Denver the last couple of days, so I think he saw that and thought, let's go.

It's nice because he hasn't been to a tournament with me yet. We did some good work and he watched today. Yeah, we've been -- nothing major in my swing, but just a few things that really helped me get a little wider on the way down. I used to get a little narrow at times and hit it right. We've really been working on that for the last few months.

It's been good on the range, but hasn't gone to the course yet. I knew it was going to be good. If it was that good on the range, I knew it had to translate over to tournament play, and it hadn't yet. Then it was nice today to hit -- my iron game especially was better than it has been today, which was nice.

Q. Do you have any type of history of getting into a tournament as an alternate and performing very well?

MARTIN LAIRD: I'm not sure as an alternate. I know in 2020 I got in as a sponsors exemption into Vegas and won the tournament, so that was probably the closest to that. I maybe have as an alternate, but I don't think. Fortunately for most of my career I had full status and didn't have to worry about that, but you know, I'm at that stage where I'm totally happy where I'm at.

Like I said, if I get in any event, I'm going to jump at the chance and come play.

Q. To kind of follow up on that about, you're 43 and you're at the top of this leaderboard. A lot of guys in their 40s are thinking, well, a few more years to the

Champions Tour, something like that. Obviously that's not the way you approach it. A, can you just talk about your mindset at this stage of your career? Is this a golf course where maybe experience in tight situations is more important than some other things like distance?

MARTIN LAIRD: I mean, I think experience is good on all golf courses, but I think this isn't maybe a course where if you really hit it far -- I mean, obviously that's going to help everywhere, but it's probably not as big a help here just because if you get it in the fairway, it's not the longest golf course. It doesn't help maybe quite as much.

But in terms of where I'm at, I mean, I'll be honest, the last couple of years have been tough. I have thoughts do I even want to play anymore, do I want to do this anymore, do I want to do the grind of traveling and being away from family a lot and all that? Even early in this year I was struggling and playing some Korn Ferry events and not playing well.

When you are my age and been doing it 20-odd years, you kind of start thinking, is it worth it? I've had four weeks off, and my wife was great. We were, like, let's make a decision. If you're going to keep playing, let's really go for it.

I kind of decided I'm going to go the rest of this year and play, hopefully get in some tour events. The kind of mindset is a little more like my putting. Let's stop trying so hard and grinding. Let's just go and play. If it is my last year of playing a bunch of tournaments, that's fine. I think I finally maybe came at peace with either way it goes.

I know I can still play. That's the thing. That was kind of the hard thing was I knew I can still play, but, you know, it wasn't always coming out.

Q. Last thing on that. When you get the call and they say, hey, you're in, there's not a moment where you say, no, I'm good, I'll stay home?

MARTIN LAIRD: Yeah, I mean, the guy that's caddying for me texted saying, hey, you're in, are you coming? I was still half asleep, and I kind of laid there going, I think I'm coming (laughing). I got to figure this out.

As soon as we got up and saw there was a flight I could get that day and then it was just a case of, yeah, let's -- my wife has been great. She's been with me a long time and knows that our schedule can change on anything last-minute. She was obviously very supportive. We made a quick turnaround and, yeah, obviously glad I did.

Q. You mentioned you got a new putter. There was something else new.

MARTIN LAIRD: Coach.

Q. New coach, and then you also got a new caddie. Do you find that invigorating and refreshing? Maybe that's a reason that you're focused no now?

MARTIN LAIRD: Sometimes with -- the new coach, yeah. I'd had the same coach for a long time. My career wouldn't be where it was without him. He helped me so much, but -- and it wasn't that what we were doing wasn't great. Sometimes you need a change.

It was kind of exciting working on something that I hadn't worked on before. Like a slightly different thought of what Pat wanted me to do. Even though it was different, it was kind of fun to go to the range and work on something a little different and then started seeing results. Then obviously it's easy to get on board then.

Kind of same with the putter. Sometimes you just need to look at something different. I'm not someone who changes equipment very much. Once I start changing, it means it's not been very good for a while. Obviously I'm happy I made the change, because today it worked.

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