

Constellation FURYK & FRIENDS presented by Circle K

Thursday, October 8, 2026

Palm Coast, Florida, USA

Hammock Beach Golf Resort & Spa

Tommy Gainey

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Tommy, welcome back. Different course this year, but you're defending. How do you feel? Take us through what you're looking forward to this week.

TOMMY GAINNEY: The biggest thing is I won this tournament last year, so I have a chance to defend. That's the biggest thing. That's step one.

Step two is different golf course. So all the good vibes off the golf course last year at Timuquana, we come here to Hammock Beach, different golf course, a lot longer, a lot longer. Plus the weather is going to be more of a bigger factor this year than it was last year.

I think it actually looks like it's going to rain all the way through Sunday. So they've already had a bunch of rain out there now. The fairway is going to be soft. The ball is going to plug off the tee. I'm sure we're going to play it up. The greens are going to be so soft that it they might not roll that smooth because they've had so much rain and they can't do all the maintenance on all the greens that they need to. That's going to be another big issue.

The weather has caused a bunch of issues so far, but I'm just glad to be here and have a chance to defend.

Q. Last year take us through the emotions that you felt after winning after just turning 50 and kind of coming out here for the first time.

TOMMY GAINNEY: The biggest thing about winning last year is I didn't have to worry about Monday qualifying anymore. I had to do, I think, five -- I made 4 out of 5 Monday qualifiers and finally won on the last one. That was tough.

When you get into a Monday qualifier and there's three spots available and you've got 50 guys, 60 guys, 40, three spots ain't a lot. Three spots is not a lot. Just I was very lucky and blessed that I got hot. I got hot at the right time. Now that I won, I'm looking forward to this year. The stress has been relieved.



Q. What did you learn about yourself during that process, having to earn your way out here?

TOMMY GAINNEY: A lot of things. I'm always the type I never give up. I don't quit. My parents did not raise me to quit. They raised me to keep at it. Things are going to go good. Things are going to go good, as everybody knows, but the biggest thing is when things go bad, that's when the true person comes out is what they've always told me and taught me. So I'm trying to get a little better at that.

Sometimes I get a little negative. At my age now I'm starting to try to get over it, try to do better as a person, and I know I've got it in me because I've won one time out here.

Listen, the competition is only going to get stronger and stronger. Look what Stewart Cink has done. Look what Alker, Steven Alker is still continuing to do. Look what Zach Johnson's done. Ryan Palmer just come out for the first time this week. Charlie Hoffman is coming for next year. More guys like this out here, listen, these guys can still play, and those guys that have just come off the PGA Tour, they can still play.

So it's just going to get tougher, and I've got to be sharper. I've got to play better. I've got to do better, and hopefully it works out because the competition is definitely going to get a lot stiffer.

Q. What do you love about still playing at this point?

TOMMY GAINNEY: I'm very lucky and blessed to be playing still, and I'll tell you why. A lot of people outside of golf, they don't really understand what I'm about to tell you, but I think you'll get it and everybody that is a golf nut or in the golf media, they'll understand this.

A lot of people don't understand that we're one swing away from our career being over, one. One swing. They don't think about stuff like that. I do. I do because golf is all I've ever known. So if it happens to me, then I've got a family and I've got a good team behind me that can support me.

But golf is my life, and God's looking out for me, so that's a



good thing. I've got that going for me, and that's huge. But it's just a tough job. It really is, but it's a job that I love. I love golf. I love what it's done for me and my family. I love what it's done for some of the charities that I've provided for and some of the friends that I've met through golf. It's unreal what golf has done for me. I can't express in words what it's done for me.

Q. How did you celebrate after you won, and what did you do with the trophy? Anything special?

TOMMY GAINEY: I celebrated -- so last year we drove down. My wife Erin was here. My son Davis was here, my youngest. He's 12. Last year he was 11. He's 12 now. I was able to have one drink and celebrate with Jim and Tabitha Furyk and some of the volunteers that helped put on such a great tournament last year. And what a sponsor, Constellation with some of the other sponsors, Circle K and some others, just to name a couple.

But I had one drink, celebrated for a little bit, and had to get back on the road because Davis had to go to school the next day and we had to get back home to South Carolina, which from Timuquana, I think, was just over five hours because all the construction they're doing on 95 and 20.

Anyway, I didn't have time to celebrate like I wanted to, but earlier this year, my wife pulled a little surprise for me celebrating my 50th birthday, and I think I took it out celebrating then. So we blew it out pretty hard.

Q. And the trophy, anything with the trophy?

TOMMY GAINEY: The trophy is in my man cave. I've got like a man cave with kind of like a cinema type screen that we can watch whatever on there. I've got some jersey ins there signed by some pretty big celebs. So it's just my room where I can just get away and just go in there and just look around and just realize how lucky this game -- how lucky I am and how lucky I am and good to be able to play this game.

Q. What do you say to other Monday qualifiers, guys that are not exempt when they get out, when they turn 50?

TOMMY GAINEY: Keep at it. Timing is everything. I'm just a great example of timing. It happened on the PGA Tour in 2008, or 2007 when I got through Q-School, and it happened last year when I had the Monday and ended up winning the tournament.

It's not like it's impossible, but it's a lot tougher than people think.

Q. You said last year that Jim was one of the guys that you looked up to when you were coming up. Looking back, what did it mean to you to win the tournament that he hosted at such a great venue?

TOMMY GAINEY: Oh, man, so I'm going to tell you a little story of how we met. Dean Teykl worked for Callaway, and he still works for Callaway now. I just got out there, and I was really raw, like on the PGA Tour. Jim Furyk was a guy that I looked up to when I was a kid growing up because you look at Jim and you think class act, heck of a player. Good father, good husband, that's great attributes that I would love to have and instill in myself.

So I asked Dean could he introduce me to Jim and kind of maybe play a round. Played nine holes with him, and we had a conversation because he kept up with my career when I first got out there, and he told me words that I'll never forget. He said, Tommy, listen, he said I kept up with you on the mini tours when you played them. You were a rock star out there. You were just absolutely shooting numbers like unreal. Just top twos, winning, threes, seconds, fifths. Just snap your finger and there it is.

He said out here it's a little bit different. But you know what, golf is still golf. It's still a game. Just enjoy it because your talent will take over. Let your talent work. Just enjoy yourself. This is where it's at. This is the best Tour in the world. Enjoy it.

From that day those words stuck with me, and I just appreciate him taking the time to play like -- I don't know, it probably took us 2 1/2 hours to play nine holes. I just appreciate him taking the time to go out there with me during that nine-hole stretch and just share some knowledge because knowledge from a guy like that can go a long way and can definitely help me. It's helped me in a lot of different ways in my life, and I can't thank him enough.

My question is whoever votes for the Hall of Famers, why is he not in the Hall of Fame right now? That's my question to them. Get off your tail, get him in there. It's simple. His career says all you need to see. It is Hall of Fame worthy. So what you waiting on? Just get it done.

Q. Is there anybody else that kind of was a mentor or took you under their -- made you feel welcome out here when you first got to the Tour?

TOMMY GAINEY: The Champions Tour?

Q. I was thinking more of the PGA Tour, but either way, either one.



TOMMY GAINEY: So Jim and a lot of the Callaway guys. Jim was one, Boo Weekley. Obviously everybody knows Boo. What a character, he's a good friend of mine. I love that guy. Dicky Pride was another guy I talked to. I didn't get to know Doug baron until I got out here, what a super nice dude. Really, really love that guy too. And Tag Ridings.

Those guys, when I first got on the Tour, they really helped me as far as like comfort-wise because if you're not comfortable in a situation, that situation is not going to go your way. To have guys like that help me to kind of get comfortable, I can't thank them enough because my career has been like a roller coaster, up-and-down, and the help that I've had from them and the knowledge, it's worked out good for me out here, and I can't thank them enough.

Q. Can you think of any commonalities from when you won at Sea Island to when you won the FURYK & FRIENDS, anything?

TOMMY GAINEY: They say once you win once, the second one comes easier. Can I disagree with that statement? Because I just won one time on the PGA Tour, and I've had chances and other opportunities, but it just didn't happen. So it was God's plan, just meant for me to win one time out there.

So as far as one time out here, I'm hoping to fix that here soon. Maybe this week would be a good start.

It's all about being comfortable, and I think I'm more comfortable now after winning that first time because it told me that I can do it. When you can do it once, you can do it again. It's just all about timing. Timing is everything out here.

When it's your time, you're going to shine no matter who's chasing, no matter who else is behind you chasing, it doesn't matter. When it's your time, it's going to happen.

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