

U.S. Senior Open Championship

Thursday, July 2, 2026

Columbus, Ohio, USA

Scioto Country Club

Stewart Cink

Press Conference

STEWART CINK: Stewart Cink.

THE MODERATOR: We're here with Stewart Cink, 3-under 67. Started off a little bit slow, but you caught some fire on the back nine there. What did you find at the turn?

STEWART CINK: I don't think I found anything. I just decided to start trusting what I'd already been in possession of. I've been off for a little while, and I started like I've been off for a little while. Middle of the fairway on 1, and I inexplicably lost my trust in the downswing and flared it out to the right in the bunker.

A couple other shots on the front nine, I don't know. I had to prove it to myself again that I could play decent golf a certain way.

The back nine was really nice. I actually could have shot quite a bit lower on the back nine. I missed three very reasonably like inside -- right around 10 feet or less birdie putts.

Could have been better, but all in all, it was a good score. It's tough. It's really tough out there. The heat is a factor for sure. It affects your focus and your energy level. Sometimes even the simplest shots just kind of -- it's easy to fall asleep at the wheel when the conditions are like that.

Q. How about that finish, that second shot in at 18 with an exclamation point really on the round?

STEWART CINK: It was a really good finish. I had a pretty good drive, and it weirdly kicked right up the hill and kind of snuck into the edge of the bunker. I got a wonderful lie. It was sitting like right on this table here, it was so good.

With an 8-iron, it was kind of an easy shot to go ahead and compress right through the sand. I hit a good solid shot right online. It did exactly what we hoped it would do. It is



what we call -- we like to say that was Bears. It doesn't make sense to anyone else in the room.

Q. What did you just say?

STEWART CINK: There's one person in Columbus, Ohio, that will understand what I just said, and that's my old caddie Taylor Ford, who lives here. He used to say -- he used to remind me of Herman -- who was the Jets coach? Was it Herm Edwards? They played against the Bears in the playoffs, and he said something like the Bears are who we thought they were, and we let them off the hook. Was that Herm Edwards?

Q. Dennis Green.

STEWART CINK: That's right. Dennis Green said it. The Bears are who we thought they were. So my old caddie Taylor used to say when I hit a shot it worked out exactly how we planned he would say, that was Bears. It was exactly what we thought it was.

And so I've adopted that with my subsequent caddie. We'd call that shot on 18, that was Bears.

Q. A lot of golfers think they'll shoot lower or they left a few out there, but 67 on this golf course, you'd have taken that right from the 1st tee, right?

STEWART CINK: Yeah, we don't really think ahead like that score-wise because you just play hard and the course gives you a little and it takes away some.

The conditions were pretty rough out there, other than the actual golf course conditions, which were just absolutely perfect. But the heat and the -- it's hard to get close to some of the front pins today. The greens were fairly firm. The speed is not -- I wouldn't say scary, but it's hard to get close to the front pins.

You've got to really trust that ball landing short of the green even with short irons. That's not something we're used to doing. The ground game is certainly a factor here at Scioto. It was really cool the way it set up.

Q. The fact that you had a strong finish. It's harder to finish strong when it's this hot, it's this tough of a golf course. What do you do to keep your mind in it, I



guess more than anything, but also keep your energy up, focus? What are the tricks?

STEWART CINK: Every day is a little different. For me, I sought the shade a lot today. I did not carry an umbrella. I thought about it, but I did not take my umbrella. I did purposely walk way out to the edge and walk in the trees quite a bit. Stood in some weird places while the other guys in my group were hitting on the tees like way off to the side or whatever.

I definitely sought the shade. My wife made me some little turkey -- yeah, turkey and cheese and chard. Do you know what that is? Chard rolled up like little burritos with those ingredients and a fresh, you know, something to eat during the round. I had two of those today.

I think food like that can hydrate you a little bit too because of all the water in the chard. It was hard. It was challenging. I drank a lot of water. I went through the hydration powder.

I wasn't really all that talkative today. I just tried to save my energy for just deciding what to do and focusing on the golf shot and just getting to the house.

Q. You're the only player to go five birdies on the back nine today. Just how much of an advantage will that be for you tomorrow because you're playing in the morning but you're also starting on the back nine?

STEWART CINK: I don't think it's an advantage for the back nine. It's not relevant. Today was a good day for me on the back nine, but if I had played the course in reverse, I think today would have been a really good day for me on the front nine because I played a lot better on the second nine, not because of the nine, but because of me.

I just played a little bit more like myself on the second half of the round today. I'm hoping to continue just playing like myself the rest of this tournament, and I don't care what side of the course it is. I love the course, and I love both front and back.

I'm going to be excited about challenging myself and trying to piece this puzzle together the rest of the way, and maybe Lisa will continue to make me these little roll-up things. If we don't run out of chard, should be a good week.

Q. Do you remember a hotter round that you've played in in terms of temperature?

STEWART CINK: Oh, yeah, yeah, I remember hotter rounds. I have played in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia before,

many times. It's never been as cool as today in KL. It's the hottest place I've ever been by far. Then in Tulsa in 2007, the PGA there, you probably remember. I changed clothes in the middle of the round. Memphis was notably hot quite a few times.

There's been lots of hot rounds. This is really hot, but it's not the hottest. It's very uncomfortable out there, especially for a 53-year-old. All of us seniors out here, when we were 25, these days hardly we even noticed. But now we definitely notice.

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