

U.S. Senior Open Championship

Friday, July 3, 2026

Columbus, Ohio, USA

Scioto Country Club

Stewart Cink

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Stewart Cink after an even-par 70 second round. Stewart, what does that last putt going in do for your confidence heading into the weekend?

STEWART CINK: It was really not just the last hole, but I made significant putts on my last four holes. That definitely helps the confidence. Seeing the ball go in the hole is huge in this game. STEWART CINK: It was really not just the last hole, but I made significant putts on my last four holes. So that definitely helps the confidence, just seeing the ball go in the hole is huge in this game.

I salvaged an okay round today when it was really pretty rough all around, not really much happening. I kept shooting myself in the foot, just not executing very well.

May be the heat a little bit. You know, it's hard to focus, and you just lose your concentration just a little bit. It's a tough track, so it punishes you if you're a little bit off.

So I salvaged the round today. It's hard to focus, and you just lose your concentration just a little bit. It's a tough track. It punishes you if you're a little bit off.

Dug myself a little hole, but the last four were -- it was really good to salvage those.

Q. 37 out, 33 in. Was there anything that was working on the back half of the round that maybe wasn't working on the front?

STEWART CINK: I just kind of dug deep a little bit on after I made bogey on 4, my 13th hole, I just, I don't know, doubled down on my commitment a little bit more. I just felt like I was just -- it's hard to say -- I wouldn't say going through the motions because that would be a little too strong of a word. But it was just a little sloppy with my technique and my commitment.

I just -- that bogey on 4 kind of woke me up. I hit a lot of really good shots after that, a lot of really good shots. It



doesn't always result in birdies, but at this particular stage, it did, and that was nice.

Q. Do you feel like your distance off the tee gives you an advantage out here? I think right now you're sixth in driving distance off the tee.

STEWART CINK: It does no matter what course you're playing. Power is an advantage in this game. So it's not the kind of course where the farther you hit it, it's just every hole gives you an advantage. Because there's holes where you have to lay back; there's a lot of holes that take driver out of your hands.

The biggest difference is just being in the fairway. If you have some power, you can come into these greens with less club, and you can hit it higher, you can stop it faster. The targets aren't that big out there.

Q. You said you were just kind of going through the motions, maybe that was a little bit too strong. How much of that had to do with maybe the heat and kind of dealing with all the other aspects, in addition to your golf game?

STEWART CINK: Between kind of trying to control where the shot goes and then just completely letting go and freeing it up, it's really a difficult balancing act to do a good job being the proper amount of both of those things.

I think the heat is a factor, where it just -- I don't know. Physiology, I don't know what it is, but the heat just makes it harder. You can have a lapse of concentration very easily.

Then you put the -- a golf course like Scioto in front of you with a lot of shots that are just kind of like tempting you to be a little more aggressive than you probably should be, a perfect example of that was number -- the 18th hole, when I played my 9th hole, middle of the fairway, hit a great drive, and then just the worst second shot, like just asleep at the wheel there in the swing.

That's an example. I did a couple of those today, and I haven't been doing those. It could also be part of it that I'd been off for a little bit. So this is my first individual competition since I played it at Aronimink, and I didn't play that great there.



I was just -- I've just been a little bit rusty the last few days. I played a really awesome back nine yesterday and I played a really awesome last four holes today. I need to keep digging deep. It's going to take a lot.

I know today is kind of the last really hot day, but low 90s doesn't feel very good here either, especially when you've got the golf course being difficult and there's a lot of humidity, a lot of pressure. It's a real physical test out there, and mentally you've got to stay in it.

Q. I know this tournament is a lot about mental fortitude in general, certainly deal with everything else. I know it's not the way you drew it up to start like that, but the fact you did close strong today, does that give you maybe an extra boost going into the weekend because you've seen you've been struggling for a little bit of a stretch and then pull yourself out of it, which is going to happen out here?

STEWART CINK: Yeah, it does. It certainly better to do it that way than it would be the other way around. You know, if I started hot today and then just gave it all back. I'm encouraged by the fact that I played my best golf at the end of these rounds, these hot days.

Yeah, there's something to be gained from that, but we're always like trying to psych ourselves out anyway. I'm going to find the positive no matter what. If I'd have done the exact opposite I would have told you, no, I was so happy I got off to a great start. There's always positives to be taken from it, yeah.

Q. You talked yesterday about having that Denny Green mentality after that shot. What was the give and take like on that last hole with the caddie? I saw the make, and then I saw the finger point right after. What was that give and take?

STEWART CINK: It was just -- you know, my caddie, Chris Jones, he knows exactly what I'm trying to do on my putting, and believe it or not, it's not necessarily to make the putts. It has a lot more to do with the process and the rhythm of my pre-shot routine.

So Chris knows that I'm really dialed in on trying to make those very, very consistent. So I use him as accountability. I tell him like, watch this. I know you're going to be counting. You ready? Keeping the rhythm with me.

So it gives me something to be accountable for out there other than just myself, because it's real easy for the results to take over. I just don't believe that's a good mental head space to be in when you're putting.

Chris is a really good partner in that regard out there. So that was what that was about. It was like me telling him watch this pre-shot routine; this is going to be one of the best ones of the day, and it was. The ball happened to go in, which was a nice bonus.

That's what that little bit was about, see, that's routine right there.

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