

**FINAL ROUND INTERVIEW: BERNHARD LANGER**  
**Sunday, June 14, 2015**



**ALEX URBAN:** We would like to welcome the 2015 Constellation SENIOR PLAYERS champion Bernhard Langer into the interview room. Bernhard, you are the first to successfully defend this championship since Arnold Palmer in the mid 1980s, so that's a pretty impressive feat. Talk about the week and the big victory.

**BERNHARD LANGER:** Well, it was a magical week. Obviously to do something that Arnie did is amazing. To be just mentioned in the same whatever you call it, bracket or something is incredible. But for me this was an awesome week, just started out wonderful. The weather was great, found my game, was pretty much in the lead from day one and played some really good golf just from the get-go.

It was wonderful to have my wife and my two sons with me. We stayed with a family close by that were extremely hospitable and just very nice to get to know and spend some time with. So we had fun having dinners and barbecues and cook-outs and Red Sox game and all sorts of stuff, so it's just a great week all around.

The golf course was in terrific shape. It was a challenge with the wind and the slopes and the tough greens, but that's what majors are all about. Had a great leaderboard, lot of great players were up there. My hat's off to -- gosh, forgot his name, shot 64 today, who finished second -- Kirk Triplett. What an amazing score that was today, wasn't that easy.

And Monty, we know how good he can play, he was up there trying to challenge. Russ Cochran played really well. I played with him the last two days and yesterday the putter was just brutally cold for him. He could have made four, five, six putts easily and it would have been a real race down the stretch but it just wouldn't go in for him, and we all have some of those days. But he did well, finished third and a lot of great champions on that leaderboard.

**ALEX URBAN:** We'll open it up for questions.

**Q. What was it like playing with such a big lead?**

**BERNHARD LANGER:** It's fun, I enjoy playing with a big lead. You know, you've still got to pay attention. It's not like it's over. I remember going into the Masters with a four-shot lead on Sunday and everybody thought, well, he should win that, but hey, we saw what happened to Greg Norman when he had a six- or seven-shot lead over Faldo and lost by four or five. So you just never know what happens. This game is so amazing. It's brutally tough when things go wrong and bad and enthralling and thrilling when things go right.

So my goal was today to break par, as I said yesterday. I figured if I break par today it's going to be almost impossible for somebody to catch me. I got off to a great start. Well, first I three-putted 3, which was not very good, but eagled the next hole to bounce back big time

and hit it stiff two holes later. Just the lead was never less than six or something, I think, five or something or even seven, I don't know. That just gave me that comfort. It allowed me on some holes to shoot away from the flag; not away but to play for the safe side, hit the middle of the green, don't take any chances. My game was good enough to do that for the most part.

**Q. Just to kind of follow it, it was told you went 48 holes without a bogey and then you hit the bogey and then responded with the eagle.**

**BERNHARD LANGER:** Yeah, that bogey, I mean, it was a terrible three-putt. But I misread the first putt and the second one I thought it was left center and my caddie thought it was straight. Anyway, it doesn't matter, but the eagle was the big one. I responded with three perfect golf shots, had a great drive, a fantastic 2-hybrid and made about a 12-foot putt to get two shots back, not just one.

**Q. I think everybody in this room out there knew that it wasn't much longer before you won again. Some of the guys, at least one of the guys said that when you set the bar as high as you've set it, then maybe when you don't win all the time you put a little bit more pressure on yourself or you try -- not pressure but just try a little bit harder. Were you trying a little bit harder do you think?**

**BERNHARD LANGER:** I think I always try hard, that's just my nature. I want to do and give the best that I have no matter what I do, especially in golf, but even if you play ping pong with me I'm going to play as hard as I can. Whatever I do, I want to do it well. But in golf, we put so much into it. All the guys practice a lot, we work out, we get here two or three days early and play practice rounds and pro-ams and try and get our games together, try different clubs and shafts and all sorts of stuff, so you want to do well. It's no fun playing for 50th place. Amazingly enough, last week was my worst finish of my seven and a half years on this tour, I finished 48th, and that was obviously nothing to write home about. I'm glad I bounced back the way I did.

**Q. Well, that was my question because I talked to Joe Durant and he said he played with you Saturday and he said he could just tell that maybe you were trying too hard.**

**BERNHARD LANGER:** Well, it's just the kind of game it is. Sometimes, yeah, maybe I was trying too hard but there's days when just everything goes against you. You hit a great shot and you end up in a divot, and you hit your second shot and you hit the flag, which is a perfect shot, and then it bounces off into the water. Weird things can happen out there. If the putts don't drop, then you can do whatever you want, you're not going to shoot a low score.

Then I got a couple of tips from my coach, as I mentioned already in here the last few days, and really made a difference. I started really flushing the ball, hitting it on line, solid and hit a lot of greens. I mean, on Friday I think I hit 17 greens in regulation. Actually hit 18 but the one spun off. Hit a lot of greens again today and when you do that, you give yourself

opportunities.

**Q. I'm from the local Belmont press. Could you talk a little about your experience here in Belmont, the Belmont Country Club and what your experience of this whole week was?**

**BERNHARD LANGER:** I truly enjoyed it. I thought the people were extremely friendly here, very hospitable, loved the food, loved the golf course, enjoyed -- whoever I ran into, they were very complimentary and welcoming. They were thrilled to have a tournament here of this caliber. We stayed with a wonderful family just off the golf course. They opened their home to us and we felt like we were at home and that's just very special and makes it unique. We ate at a couple of restaurants, the food was fantastic. Everything was just phenomenal. The whole week's experience was great.

**Q. Were those restaurants in Belmont?**

**BERNHARD LANGER:** Yeah, of course they were. I'm not going to drive to New York or somewhere else to go eat.

**Q. Some of your fellow competitors have been joking this week about what phenomenal shape you're in, and how do you stay in shape like that?**

**BERNHARD LANGER:** Well, some is good genes, but I do work out. I enjoy working out. I hurt my back when I was 19 in the German Air Force and I've had back issues ever since. They wanted to operate on me a couple times, I wouldn't let them, so I had to stretch, I had to work out, I had to get in shape. Not that I wasn't before, I was always in good shape actually.

But I'm not the fittest guy out here. There's at least a handful out here I can think of that are in better shape than me, so it's not all about that. But it pays tribute when you walk a course like this in 85, 90 degrees of heat six days in a row, actually seven with the practice round, and we've been walking courses like this the last three weeks in a row. It helps to be in shape and keep your -- I was going to say blood pressure here, whatever, just keep it down so you don't -- you're not out of breath when you get to a golf shot. You walk up to these tee boxes and you're supposed to hit a golf shot and some guys are really struggling with that and others are just, it takes them 10 seconds and they get their heartbeat down and they're ready to go. I would rather be one of those.

**Q. I know in the trophy presentation you mentioned your faith and how that helps you out here on tour. Can you tell me a little bit about that?**

**BERNHARD LANGER:** Oh, yeah, my faith is everything to me. I grew up in what I call a religious home. We went through the motions through the rules and regulations, but that really -- you know, make a long story short, I was invited to Bible study three days after I won my first Masters and I felt an emptiness. I should have been on top of the world

because I had just won my first major. I was actually ranked No. 1 in the world. At that point I had just married a year ago. I had a beautiful young wife, had trophies, money, cars, houses, top of the world rankings, top of the money list. I had it all, what the world thinks makes you happy. But there was an emptiness and I couldn't pinpoint it. So anyways, what was missing was my personal relationship with God, with Jesus Christ. I was invited to the Bible study, was challenged to get a Bible, buy my own Bible and study it, and I did. Within a few months it became very clear that this is what was missing in my life. So I gave my life to God and tried to be a Christian ever since. It really made a difference. It gave me a peace that surpasses all understanding. It put my priorities right. It just helps me in every aspect of being alive and eventually dying, too.

**Q. Who invited you to that original Bible study?**

**BERNHARD LANGER:** Bobby Clampett, a colleague of mine. We were actually -- we looked alike, so we played the practice round together at Hilton Head, you know, right after the Masters, and after the practice round he invited me. And it was cool because I said something not so clever in the Butler cabin on Sunday at the prize presentation. I mentioned Jesus' name in vain. I said something like, Jesus Christ, I can't believe I'm four shots behind Curtis Strange after nine holes.

When Larry Moody and Scott Simpson -- Larry Moody is the chaplain of the tour and Scott Simpson is a colleague of mine who won the U.S. Open; when they heard that, they prayed and said, Wouldn't it be cool if this guy would become a Christian one day, and three days later I showed up at the Bible study and a couple months later I became a Christian, so prayer works.

**Q. I know a lot of the younger players on the PGA TOUR, Bubba Watson, Rickie Fowler, they're Bible studying Christians. Bubba's been getting a lot of grief lately for sometimes his temper on the course and how he's not a good Christian. What do you think about that?**

**BERNHARD LANGER:** Well, people think we're perfect just because we're Christians. I always answer it no, we're Christians because we're not perfect, because we are sinners. We're imperfect, that's why we need Christ's forgiveness. So don't expect us to be perfect. I never will call myself perfect. Don't put me on a pedestal just because I'm a Christian. I'm trying to become more like Christ, but it's a process and I lose my temper at times and I might say things or do things that are not Christlike, but hopefully there's more and more things that are Christlike than not Christlike, if that makes any sense.

**Q. You mentioned last week's finish and I'm wondering if you came off that to here at a low point or off a poor finish like that, how do you explain turning it around so quickly and now here with the trophy?**

**BERNHARD LANGER:** Well, I wasn't thrilled about the way I played last week, let's put it that way. So I got on the phone with my coach and sent him a few swings, but I do that on a

regular basis, almost every week or every second week. Just explained to him the kind of shots I was hitting, either blocked them a bit or I pull hooked them or hit them a bit thin or a bit fat.

So he had a look at them and just called me back and said, yeah, I see the three things I shared with you already, I think. So I tried that on the range and I'm going, wow, this feels a lot better. So I took it out on the golf course and wow, now I can hit it where I'm looking, I'm not guessing anymore whether it's going to peel off this way or end up over there. So it's a lot more fun playing golf that way.

**ALEX URBAN:** We would once again like to congratulate our 2015 Constellation SENIOR PLAYERS champion, Bernhard Langer.

**BERNHARD LANGER:** Thank you, thanks very much.