

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW: SCOTT McCARRON
Wednesday, August 26, 2015



PHIL STAMBAUGH: Just thought I would have you in, newest player on the Champions Tour.

SCOTT McCARRON: Do I get to come in every week until someone else comes along?

PHIL STAMBAUGH: Until we get Brandt.

SCOTT McCARRON: Until Brandt qualifies?

PHIL STAMBAUGH: Or J.P.

SCOTT McCARRON: He's out all year until next year, J.P. Hurt his wrist.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: Fourth start on the Champions Tour, it's getting a little better every week, T-12 at the Shaw Charity Classic in Calgary. You now come to a course that you know or played a little bit. Talk about coming back to En-Joie for the Dick's Sporting Goods Open.

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, it's great coming back to En-Joie. I loved this golf course when we used to play it during the BC Open. I love the town, I love the fact that this whole town gets behind this golf tournament like no other tournament on tour even. We get huge galleries down here every year and when we came here for the Champions Tour, I asked the guys, how is it, is it the same? They said it's even better that the Champions Tour is playing at En-Joie, so I'm happy to be back.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: Anything come back to you about the golf course when you went out there for the first time?

SCOTT McCARRON: Yeah, I remember you've got to drive the ball very well around this golf course. It's fairly narrow off the tee, a lot of trees overhanging. So it's a golf course I remember I liked a lot because you had to drive the ball fairly straight and I could reach most of the par 5s and still can, so I like this a lot. Looking back last year with Kevin Sutherland shooting 59, I don't know how he did that. It's quite a score after playing it again today. This is going to be a great week.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: How about the Champions Tour in general, Scott? You're now getting a little more familiar with it, just a thought on that.

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, I love it. I played on the PGA TOUR for 21 years. I had a great time out there, but it was -- it was time to go to the Champions Tour. I've only been playing probably 10, 12 events a year for the last couple years after a couple injuries, wasn't fully

exempt, so once it came time I turned 50, I could hardly wait. So it just seems to be the last probably two and a half years I've just kind of been waiting for that start. When I finally got my first start in the British Senior Open, I was actually pretty nervous teeing off there at the British Open, British Senior Open at Sunningdale because all that build-up for two years to get out here. Once I got going, made a couple bogeys and then it was like okay, we're back to playing golf again, playing in competition. I'm having an absolute blast. It's like being in a time warp, I'm back to 1995. I'm playing against the same guys I played against back then, all my old friends. It really is special to get back here playing again.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: We'll just go for questions.

Q. What has surprised you? Three events, but what has surprised you?

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, I don't know about surprising me. The competition, I knew the guys went low every week. So I've been watching for the last couple years, watching tournaments on TV, watching the scores and just amazed at how low these guys are shooting. These guys can still flat-out play, and 30 of them can probably still play on the PGA TOUR. I don't know if that surprised me, but I knew that these guys could still play.

I guess the other thing that maybe surprised me a little bit is how good these events are run, how well they are run. The fans come out to support them. Calgary and Minnesota were fantastic, and this week is supposed to be one of the best. I'm happy that fans still want to see good golf and still see recognizable names, and I think a lot of the fans can relate to us maybe a little bit more than some of these young 22-, 23-year old guys that hit it 350 yards. We're more plodding along, hit it to point A, hit it to point B, good short game. So I think you can learn a lot from watching Champions Tour players.

Q. I know you just talked about it a little bit but just talk a little bit more about what it's been like here on the Champions Tour and what kind of adjustment you had to make coming from the PGA TOUR.

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, it's been fantastic coming out here and playing with all the guys that I first came out on the PGA TOUR in 1995 with. A lot of the guys that are playing, have been successful out here were my mentors when I first got on the PGA TOUR, Mark O'Meara, John Cook, Peter Jacobsen. These are the guys I sought out for advice, how to play pro-ams, what to do in a pro-am, how to do pro-am pairings parties and dinners and hosting them, the whole bit. It's nice to be out here with those guys that taught me so much when I first came out.

As far as adjustments, you know, with only three days and no cut, you don't get really any rest period. You've got to put the pedal to the metal right from the get-go on day one on Friday. For me, it was Thursday, Friday, try to make a cut, try to get in the hunt. This it seems like you've just got to go low every single day. It's funny, my first event in Minnesota, I got my Friday tee team and I'm like, well, where's my Saturday tee time? Oh, yeah, that's right. I'm learning the ropes out here, where to get the carts, where to go, all

that stuff, but it's been a lot of fun.

Q. What's it like to be a rookie again?

SCOTT McCARRON: Yeah, like I said, I was a little nervous playing in the British Senior Open my first event. There was so much buildup for seemed like two years before I got out here that I've been just kind of waiting. Being a rookie, I've been getting razed a lot by a lot of the guys. I have to carry some of the guys' luggage from the airport to the hotel, had to make Tommy Armour dinner, I'm giving Mark Calcavecchia rides today in the pro-am. Just little things. I'm just waiting for Brandt Jobe to get out here and Todd Hamilton so I can start hazing them.

Q. (No microphone.)

SCOTT McCARRON: The only thing I'm going to do is not anchor. I'm going to do exactly the same thing. I've been putting with the long putter since 1991, I'm not going to change the stroke at all, just going to pull it just barely of my chest with my left hand and not anchor it. At home I practice and play with it all my games that way. It really doesn't make any difference even though they say anchoring, my thumb is just barely resting on my chest and it kind of moves.

I'm really disappointed with what they did with the USGA with the anchoring. For me, after doing it for so many years, 1991, and also to get on the Champions Tour and they say now you've got to learn something different after the thousands and thousands of hours I've put in with practice to get to be a pretty good putter with the long putter, I think is completely unfair. But again, that's just my situation, my opinion. Guys will find different ways to putt. I don't think it was the best thing to do for golf. Golf is already a tough enough game. I really don't look at myself so much, but I look at all the guys like my father and the three guys that he plays with that all putt with long putters or belly putters. They all asked me, What are we going to do now, go fishing? There are guys that just can't putt for some reason, they have the yips or it's easier to stand up with a long putter. For them to now have to go find some other way to putt I think is very unfortunate.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: Scott, good luck this week.