
DAVE SENKO: We'd like to welcome our tournament host, Greg Norman, to the Franklin Templeton Shootout. Greg, a couple things to get us started. This is year 28 for the event and our 16th year in Naples. Been a very successful run here. Maybe you can talk a little bit about that to get us started.

GREG NORMAN: Well, I think it's simply the support we've had from this community. Sixteen or 17 years ago we knew this community was dying for golf. It hadn't had a PGA Tour event around here, so they were asking for us, they were crying out to us. So moving here was -- it wasn't a big decision, it was an easy decision. And 16 years later, to have the support the way we've had from the tourism and the mayor obviously around this area and the Ritz-Carlton and the golf course is being received extremely well. So year in and year out we get these favorable responses and it leads us to want to come back.

DAVE SENKO: Another good 24-man -- I can't say 24-man field, 24-player field, including Lexi Thompson. Maybe just talk about Lexi being here this year, the first female since Annika played here.

GREG NORMAN: Well, I thought it was time. That was another thing that we canvas quite often is the requests from not only the players but requests from the locals, what would they like to see. And the CME's been very successful and well received here as well, but I just thought a couple years ago that we thought that we should consider inviting back another female player. Lexi by far has got the charisma and is the No. 1 U.S. player out there on the tour, and she can actually get the ball out there a pretty good way. So putting her out here with the guys off the back tees, I believe she'll be playing the same tees, was a pretty easy choice. Then to pair her up with Bryson, I've always been a big supporter of the younger generation and giving them an opportunity through inviting them through to the Shootout. So it was an automatic pairing for them. I'm looking forward to see how they do.

Q. Maybe if you could just catch us up on the charity aspect, CureSearch, once again the primary charity.

GREG NORMAN: Yeah, it has been, always will be. At the end of the day, it's near and dear to my heart. It goes back basically 28 years, maybe even longer, 30 years when I first went into a pediatric surgery and watched a child that could fit in the palm of my hand that had cancer. That really hit me pretty hard 30-odd years ago and it stayed with me. That's why we're giving money for CureSearch today in the hopes that we eradicate childhood cancer eventually. We're getting there. I believe when we started it was like 28 percent and now it's up around 78 percent success rate for kids with cancer.

Q. Greg, what do you think Lexi can learn from an experience like this this week?

GREG NORMAN: Well, hopefully a lot. Realizing that watching some of the players, the quality players -- look, when the younger girls watch her play, she can compress the golf ball pretty darn good, right, because she can get it out there longer than most. Then you come up and watch the guys compress a golf ball and you can see the difference. So she'll learn a lot by the ball flight and the art of getting yourself around a golf course.

I've always been a big believer in if you can actually get out there and play with players who are better than you, you're going to become a better player yourself. So hopefully she'll be able to take a lot away from this week.

Quite honestly, I hope they're in contention come Saturday afternoon. I think it would be great for the tournament. I personally would have liked to have seen where she might have been up a tee where she was going into the greens with the same irons, relative irons as the guys were doing, hitting into the greens. That's the PGA's Tour's decision, but that's what I would have liked to have seen have happen.

Q. How did you play the last two days and what was it like to see this golf course that you have redone from that aspect?

GREG NORMAN: Well, I love the golf course. I think I'm very, very proud of my guys and what they did. We knew we had a mission statement and Host Marriott did a great job actually allowing us to bring the golf course back to the way we really wanted to see it with the sidewalls. The artificial sidewalls are just magnificent. And then to get the feedback from the players, the putting surface are beautiful, that TifEagle putting surface is fantastic. It'll take a little bit of time for that Celebration on the fairways to mature a little bit and get itself rooted in, but at the end of the day, the golf course to me was just a pleasure to play.

Q. And how did you play?

GREG NORMAN: I played on and off, some good, some really ugly. Some shots were probably comparable to yours, Greg, but outside of that there were some shot that were comparable to this Greg here. But I think I made probably four, four to five birdies a day, which is not too bad.

Q. Strategy wise, how did you used to address this event in having a partner rather than playing as an individual?

GREG NORMAN: Strategy wise, because I was always a great driver of the golf ball, I let my playing partner go first, and if the ball was in play, then I would just hit it 100 percent every tee shot. Most of the time I got it out in play and that really helped because you're further down the fairway. So I always strategized that way.

My playing partners were always great iron players that were comparable to me, so when we played the same golf ball, there wasn't a big difference changing up and my

understanding, the same irons into the greens, the ball flight. So I was lucky with my partners, we were balanced out fairly well. Even though I only won it once, I believe. Once? Yeah, once I believe with Steve Elkington. I felt like I had more chances than just that, for sure. But I love this format, I really do. When I speak to the guys in the locker room, they all love it as well, too.

Q. Jason and Brandt, when they were in here earlier, talked about how they had some success early into the next year. I don't know if it's been a theme, but there have been guys that have won here that have carried that on. You know, obviously this is a special week for you, but what does it mean as a player to see, even though this is a team event, them to take the success and maybe use it as a springboard in the next couple months or whatever?

GREG NORMAN: I think that's proof in the pudding. Even though it's a "silly season" event as they call it, it's a co-sanctioned PGA Tour event and every player uses every competitive round as a steppingstone into the next round, right? If you're playing poorly and you're coming into the Franklin Templeton Shootout, you can actually use it as a catalyst to practice, especially under the gun. Then you just find one thing and that one thing turns into the other and then all of a sudden you develop momentum and then you're looking into the first quarter, second quarter of next year feeling good about yourself.

And vice versa, if you're coming off a really good season and you're coming in here, you come in here feeling great, you feel more confident, you play a bit more relaxed and you actually play a little bit better because you're more relaxed.

Again, it's confidence taking it into next year. I think more from the fact that I've seen it help the guys who are not playing well and they use this one to help them springboard themselves into a better season next year.

Q. Next year the Tour's going to change up the Zurich tournament in New Orleans, make that a team event. First of all, do you like --

GREG NORMAN: Hmm, I wonder why.

Q. Do you like the concept is my first part.

GREG NORMAN: Well, this has been a team event for 28 years, right? So it will be interesting, it will be interesting to see how that plays out. I've quite honestly, I don't understand what it is. What is the -- how are they playing the team event? Is it just a four-ball, best ball?

Q. I think it's different each day, right? Foursomes and four-balls.

GREG NORMAN: Foursomes and four-balls? Oh, really? That's original. Okay. It will be interesting. But how do you do world ranking points then?

Q. I guess you both would get first-place points.

GREG NORMAN: Is that how it's working? I haven't followed it at all really.

Q. I think they split it. They don't get Masters, they get PGA --

GREG NORMAN: But they get a PGA Tour win, right?

Q. It's a PGA Tour win for both and they get into the PGA Championship.

GREG NORMAN: TPC?

Q. I think so, yeah. The only thing is no Masters.

GREG NORMAN: All right.

Q. If they had that when you were playing, who would you have liked to have partnered with?

GREG NORMAN: Oh, back in those days? Knowing that format, you said it's foursome and a four-ball?

Q. Yeah.

GREG NORMAN: In my day, who would I play with. Probably someone like Trevino or -- I mean Raymond Floyd, Tom Watson. Steve Elkington would have been good there because he's really a consistent ball striker. Guys who can make a lot of birdies. I mean, I always made a lot of birdies so you'd want to have someone like myself in your back pocket because if a guy can go out there and make six or seven birdies a day, that's what you want in a four-ball event, right? In the foursome, it's a true foursome I'm assuming, right? True alternate shot?

Q. I believe so.

GREG NORMAN: You'd better find somebody who can hit it straight. Where are they playing, by the way?

Q. At the TPC Louisiana.

GREG NORMAN: All right. I don't know that golf course. It's a Pete Dye golf course, right? So it's probably a little quirky, so you've got to make sure -- quirky meaning good. I would say you have to get somebody who can really hit the ball out there long and straight. I didn't answer your question, but anyway, I talked around it enough.

Q. There's also some talk about the LPGA and PGA Tour having a team event in the future. Would you like to see something like that and how would you see that --

GREG NORMAN: We had that back in the '80s. Absolutely. I loved it, I loved it. I loved playing with the gals. I played with Nancy Lopez, Sally Little. I loved those events. I thought they were very, very good to commingle the tours because we do have friends out there and it's totally different. Like in tennis, you'd play probably five or six tournaments a year where the gals and the guys are sharing the two-week stretch. So I think there should be more of that. I think it would be very healthy for the game.

Q. Why do you think Lexi is a good fit for this tournament?

GREG NORMAN: I saw you come in late, but she --

Q. I was filming Lexi.

GREG NORMAN: Okay. I think she's strong enough, long enough to be able to get the ball out there because they're going to keep here at the back tees with the guys. I think she hits it out there around 275, 280, which is a really good, strong number for a female. No disrespect to the other ones, but that's getting the ball out there pretty darn good. So she should be able to handle the golf course and that's a good balance. And quite honestly, she's the No. 1 U.S. player and she deserves an opportunity to get out here and go toe to toe with the guys. It wasn't a hard decision for me to make.

Q. Greg, you're also well known for your business acumen. What are you looking for in this Greg Norman Shark Tank and what's the prize going to be?

GREG NORMAN: Well, I don't know what the prize is going to be because I don't know what the entries are going to be. I think it's fantastic, to tell you the truth. I said to Jane -- Jane right here was very instrumental in getting it done. Quietly did it without notifying me, by the way, which is equally impressive that she did that because she knows my personality. And to work with the University of Miami where my son went to as well was important for me, South Florida.

So actually, of all the new things I'm doing, this one could be really exciting. You never know where it could go, to tell you the truth. Quite honestly, it is the legitimate Shark Tank because I am the Shark, so at the end of the day we'll play with it. I've got a great panel of people that are going to be, people that I know extremely well, from lawyers to CFOs to people who understand what branding's all about and how to build a business and maintain a business. I'm looking forward to March the 24th, I really am. University of Miami's done a great job of working with Jane, so we'll see how it all plays out. I think something good and bigger will come out of it.

Q. Bryson, on top of everything else he's done, he's trying to putt sidesaddle.

GREG NORMAN: Yeah.

Q. Did you ever try that?

GREG NORMAN: No.

Q. And what do you think --

GREG NORMAN: I didn't even let you finish the question, did I? No, I didn't. I'm not as -- I'm more confident in my normal stroke than anything. But he's a very cerebral guy and he's very much into the physics side of golf, and if he feels like this is going to be advantageous to his game, he's going to go try it. So your brain is going to lead your body to where you want to go. If you're super intelligent like he is, right, you've got to allow yourself to go in that direction. If he tries to suppress that intelligence and try to be just a normal golfer, then he will probably become a bad golfer. He's got to allow himself to be free within himself.

But he's got to be careful, too. You don't want to have too much white noise going on. It's pretty hard up there to get up there amongst the top-5 in the world. To get there is no easy feat, but to stay there is even a harder feat, so the less white noise you have, the better off you are.

DAVE SENKO: Everyone okay? Thanks, Greg.

GREG NORMAN: Thank you.