

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW
December 8, 2017



SEAN O'HAIR
STEVE STRICKER (-15)

DOUG MILNE: Guys, thanks for joining us for a few minutes after a very successful start to the 2017 QBE Shootout. Nice finish today with the eagle-birdie finish and the chip-in on your part. Got to be feeling good obviously. We're not sure what the weather's going to be like for the next 12 to 15 hours or so, but you guys got to feel really good about today. Just a few comments about playing off of each other?

SEAN O'HAIR: Yeah, it was a great day. We had a lot of fun. Love watching this guy roll the ball, so much to learn for me. Really felt like I played well from tee to green and made a couple putts, but just the confidence with his short game, I just really feel like I can play so much more aggressively and not have to worry about kind of hitting a bad shot or anything like that. Just really felt like it was a good pairing. We kind of ham-and-egged it pretty good today and it was fun.

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, it's a really good pairing. He hits it so far down the fairway that it gives us the ability to go in there with some really short irons. At times I stood on the tee and I'm like, Why am I even hitting the tee shot because this guy's going to be 40 yards ahead of me and hitting in two or three less clubs. So that's a great advantage for us to get so far down the fairway, to get two good shots into the green, and we were picking each other's ball often today. It wasn't one sided or the other, it was just a great team effort I thought. He made some great putts early in the round and he showed me the line when he didn't make the putt, and so it was really a good team effort and I feel very comfortable with Sean. We're friends and been friends for quite a while, so it was fun to play with him today.

DOUG MILNE: You and Jerry I think led by a stroke last year with a 56. Going from different formats one day to the next, maybe I'm overthinking it, but is there a need for you guys to talk about anything that might come along tomorrow in terms of kind of putting the best strategy in place with a different format on the second day?

SEAN O'HAIR: You know, I thought the strategy was kind of going into today who's going to hit first, who's going to putt first. I always felt like today was about trying to free me up off the tee to where I can maybe swing at it a little bit harder, and then for him, if he can see a line he's got a pretty good chance he's going to make putts. That was kind of the whole idea for today. I think tomorrow with both of us hitting tee shots, it's a little bit easier with alternate shot and I think we're not going to play quite as aggressive as we did today and just kind of see if we can just kind of keep it out in play and make a few putts. Really I think in an alternate shot format's more about fairways and greens and not putting too much pressure on your partner. You don't want a lot of three-, four-footers for pars and you don't want to miss a ton of greens either. So at least that's kind of what I'm thinking. How about

you, Pard's?

STEVE STRICKER: It's the first time we've talked about it. No, he's spot on. I mean, the other events that I've played here in the past, it is, it's about making pars. You're going to get some birdie opportunities, but you just want to drive it in the fairway, which you're going to do because you've got two guys driving it for the most part, and then get it on the green and maybe you can putt a two for birdies. But you don't want to be scrambling around on that alternate shot day, especially with the weather the way it's looking for tomorrow, it's going to be a little bit more difficult. Important to get off to a good start tomorrow, too. It's an opportunity where if you do have a good round, you can really separate yourself from the rest of the field as well.

Q. How much does it help that you've each won it and you know kind of what it takes to get up there? I mean not together obviously, but you won with Kenny and you with Jerry.

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, we've been here, we know what it's all about, we know what tomorrow's all about. The only unknown is the weather, I guess, but we've gone through that multiple times and this is an easy pairing. We've got pretty similar demeanors, we're friends, we get along, it's easy to play with Sean. It was a great day, it was fun.

But no, you know, we know what to expect, I guess, to answer your question. And tomorrow's the day that can either make or break you.

SEAN O'HAIR: Yeah, I think kind of going back to the strategy point, I think in alternate shot, me personally, I kind of would like to see him putting the ball, making the birdie putts. Just mentally I'm just kind of thinking all right, where am I going to be playing from from the fairway, what kind of shots am I going to be having in, and if I can just get it within 25 feet, he's pretty automatic so that's kind of for me what I want to do. So we're going to have some decisions to be made because I feel like I'm driving it pretty good so we're probably going to have a couple balls in the fairway and it's just a matter of who we want putting. Obviously I think everybody knows who we want putting, so that's the deal.

Q. Steve, I heard you took some good-natured ribbing last night over your Presidents Cup efforts.

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah.

Q. Did you survive?

STEVE STRICKER: I survived. I dished a little bit out, too, as the night went on. That whole team was a pleasure to be around. What you saw last night was what we experienced for the whole week with those guys. It was that back-and-forth ribbing nonstop for the whole week, and they got along so well with one another and it was a special week. Yeah, last night was no different really.

Q. Steve, does it ever get old how low people go in this tournament?

STEVE STRICKER: It doesn't get old when we're one of the ones going that low, right? It's a blast. There was a few years where I didn't come here to play early on. Now I've been here for 10 years in a row and I was wondering why I didn't come here to start with. It's so much fun to be here and to play in the event and to play those two pro-am rounds is fun. The guys are really loose, the amateurs are loose, the dinner parties are a lot of fun. The whole week is a great week and it's for a great cause. To be here with Greg, who's meant so much for the game over the years and been an idol of mine when I was growing up as a kid watching him play, you put all that together and to play with a friend, it's a pretty special week.

Q. What's that feeling when you here the roar of the crowd when you chip in on 18?

STEVE STRICKER: It's fun. You don't expect to chip it in. I thought I could give it a good run and get close. He's up there, we know we're going to make par. I've never been in that position of hitting first, I always hit second with Jerry, and so it's a different feeling for me today. I liked it, it was an opportunity for me to be a little bit more aggressive than normal. It was fun. You get a great partner who hits it a mile and putted it good and hit some great irons. That's why we shot 15 under, we worked well together today.

Q. Are you a little surprised there's -- I think Sneds and Bubba can have some holes left, but you guys are, you know, with Keegan and Brendan three shots clear of everybody right now easily. The scramble is really bunched together. How much will that help you going into alternate shot, which you guys already addressed?

SEAN O'HAIR: Personally, I just kind of look at it as we did our job today and tomorrow we've got a job to do, and as long as we do our job tomorrow we're going to have a chance obviously on Sunday. Obviously three totally different formats, I think strategies are totally different, the feel is totally different out there. I felt like we just did a very good job of not letting a lot go out there today and we made the putts that we needed to.

STEVE STRICKER: Can I hit from your ball on Sunday, where you hit it from, is that possible?

SEAN O'HAIR: Let's get you on the green and we're good to go. But yeah, it's just a lot of fun. Kenny and I have played quite a bit in this event and Kenny's a great ball-striker, and kind of our nemesis has always been the putter. With Strick, I mean, not only does he -- I mean, for someone who hits it very, very straight, he actually hits it pretty frickin' far, too, so he's kind of got the whole package. And the putting is just, it's like praying Tiger Woods 2008. I mean, you know, it's pretty easy to make putts, so it's fun.

DOUG MILNE: Thanks, guys.