

DAVIS LOVE III

JACK RYAN: We would like to welcome Davis Love III into the interview room at the 2022 Rocket Mortgage Classic. Davis will be serving as team captain of the United States team at the Presidents Cup coming up in September and is making his first start on the PGA Tour since the RBC Heritage.

Davis, just a little bit about your game? Making your first start competitively I guess since the SENIOR PLAYERS, how do you feel like your game is at this point?

DAVIS LOVE III: It's coming around. I started working with Justin Parsons this year and he's making a lot of simple changes, so I'm getting used to it. I was showing signs, had some good days at the SENIOR PLAYERS at Firestone, I was in the rough a lot like the good old days there, but I'm excited about it. I'm working hard on little technique things and setup things, so I'm a little bit rusty. I'm excited to go out and play this week and then next week at the Wyndham. Two Donald Ross courses in a row, so I'm very excited about it.

JACK RYAN: As far as the Presidents Cup, obviously you've been serving as captain for a little while now, but now we're about a month out, month and a half out. How are you feeling about the team and the events you have coming up?

DAVIS LOVE III: Yeah, I just got off the phone with our PGA Tour boss of the Ryder Cup, Mack Horton, on the U.S. side. I said, Do you realize the Presidents Cup's coming up really fast? He said, Yeah, too fast.

A lot of preparations, it's finally here. Like Steve Stricker with the Ryder Cup, that was a three-year process. This has been a three-year process because of the delay, so we're excited to get going.

That is one of the main reasons I'm here because there are a lot of guys in the field that are going to be on the team or possibly on the team. So I got to play with Will Zalatoris yesterday and then we got paired together for the week. And Cam Young and Cantlay, and there's a lot of guys that are vying for spots that are obviously trying to work their way up the FedExCup and work their way up the Presidents Cup list. It's a good week for me to be out and I've learned a lot already.

Going to have some dinners the next two nights with some guys. Good week to be out. Again, I played the golf course yesterday and just Jason, the tournament director, and I were talking, the build-out, the vibe here is incredible. I'm excited to be here and play in Detroit.

Q. To your point about trying to keep an eye on guys who might make the team while

also keeping an eye on your own game, unless you're a hammerhead shark, that would seem like it would be sort of difficult to do. The nuts and bolts, how do you actually do that?

DAVIS LOVE III: Well, I've gotten a little bit used to it. Corey Pavin asked me to be assistant captain for the Ryder Cup in 2010 so that was in 2009, so it's been a long, long run of doing it. Just talked to Charley Hoffman about some board matters. I've been a long-time board member.

Has it affected my game? Yes, I'm a little bit ADD scatterbrained anyway, so it's a little distracting. But it's good, like I learned so much in nine holes with Will yesterday, about him, about things going on.

Had a great dinner with Mike Hulbert, who's now working for CBS Sports, one of my long-time friends, helped assistant captain and support for Ryder Cups and Presidents Cups, he came up with two or three really good ideas last night at dinner. So it's beneficial to be out here and be around the guys. Our best ideas for Ryder Cups and President Cups come from players and what they want and what they need. It's important to be out here and amongst them.

Q. Do you try and set up like practice rounds accordingly? Like how do you --

DAVIS LOVE III: Yeah, I planned ahead with Will to play here and then we got paired together. I said, By Friday night, you're going to be sick of me. But it's good.

Obviously next week at Wyndham we'll have guys that are grinding it out for FedExCup points, but it's also going to be their last chance before the Playoffs to get some Presidents Cup points. It's coming so fast right now. Guys are asking me, Should I play Detroit and Wyndham or can I just wait until the Playoffs? Is it going to affect my position on the team? Guys are really thinking about it.

You have balance. What I've told guys all along since the Playoffs started, I said, Focus on winning the FedExCup, that'll take care of your points on both lists, and I have a bunch of picks. So I'm trying to relax the guys and let them go play because I know in that position when I was playing for points, it just completely messed me up. So I'm trying to get them to just focus on -- several guys I just said, Do what you normally do and don't worry about me, I'll take care of -- we'll talk about that later.

It's good to be out and just communicate with guys. One of my young friends, Andrew Novak, goes, Are you playing this week? It's nice to be out and at least him know that I'm out here trying to play and I'm working on Presidents Cup.

Q. Have you spoken to Tiger about his interest in any way, shape or form of participating?

DAVIS LOVE III: Yes. Speaking to Tiger on all subjects and he's been an incredible help all the way back to agreeing early for the 2016 team of being an assistant, an assistant for Stricker and then obviously he was captain.

So what we learned back in the 2014-15 time when the PGA of America put us a little bit more in charge of making those kind of decisions is that somebody needs to be the leader, and obviously Tiger's strategy, understanding the history of the game and the history of Ryder Cups, if I wanted to find out what we did statistically, I could either call my stats team or I could call Tiger because he knows. Remember when this match was happening and we went alternate shot first instead of best ball? All those kind of things he really remembers, so he's going to be a big help.

I don't know who my next two assistants will be, we're just watching guys play right now. We have a very good idea of a short list for me and then for Zach for next year. Hopefully, maybe even next week we'll announce two more. I've got Fred and Zach already, Fred Couples.

Q. (No microphone.)

DAVIS LOVE III: I think just like his golf game probably. He has a desire to play, but can he actually do it. He had a lot of fun sitting back and watching the Ryder Cup with Justin's dad. I think he likes that role a little bit more, you know, and anything big that I do around the Tour, there's a short list of guys that I'm going to ask advice from and he's one of them, for sure.

Q. Davis, being back here in Michigan, I'm wondering if you could share with us your memories of playing in your career at different spots in our state here.

DAVIS LOVE III: I've always loved coming here, great fans. Certainly a lot of times in Flint, major championships, Ryder Cups. The fans really come out and that's why you see so many red bunting in sky boxes and grandstands here because the fans really support golf. I love playing here.

I came up a little short a couple times here in Michigan, obviously in the Ryder Cup and the U.S. Open, but I love playing here.

You know, big old cities like this have great golf courses and there are a lot of great golf courses here and obviously across the state, but getting to play another one like Detroit Golf Club is going to be a treat for me.

Q. Davis, Bobby Jones used to talk about how he would lose weight during the course of a week of competition. What did it do to you trying to close out a tournament on a Sunday, all the pressure that a lot of times it's very hot out but you're trying to think your way around it. What did it do to you physically, what did it do to you mentally and psychologically?

DAVIS LOVE III: Mentally, it wears you down. Physically, that's what I keep telling younger guys like my son, Dru. You don't understand, you know, five or six days of walking week after week after week, and then if you get in the mix, then it wears you down even more. So the guys that are super fit like Tiger Woods and Rory McIlroy, go down the list, you go out there on the range and look, these guys are fit. You have to be ready for that.

My thing is when I played, got in the hunt whether I won or not, that night I was still so jacked up it took me a while to calm down. And Paul Azinger gave me some great advice earlier in my career is you have to figure out how many in a row is right for you. Some guys need two or three, some guys need five or six. He said, You've got to figure out where your peak is.

So my peak was I just ran out of that -- being able to focus on the weekends if I got tired at about four weeks. Three weeks in a row was about perfect.

You have to balance all that. I remember playing the Bob Hope and Emmitt Smith was playing and ran into him on a Saturday and he goes, Man, I am so tired. Tired? You're a pro football player, how do you get tired?

What we do is different than other sports, but it is mentally taxing. And you just stand up all day, we don't really get to sit down and take a break. I definitely wore myself out. Now at 58 that's even a bigger issue playing out here with these kids and trying to walk and keep up and be competitive.

Q. Davis, how much more difficult has the job of captain become having all these players that probably might have made the team be suspended?

DAVIS LOVE III: Well, it's unfortunate that we look at a list and we have to skip over. I send out an email or survey or something and just skip over guys, it's unfortunate.

Obviously it's been a little bit harder on Trevor than on me, but what I said a few weeks ago at the SENIOR PLAYERS is I know the guys that are vying for the team now are super committed to the PGA Tour and are very excited about the Presidents Cup. I'm going to have guys like Homa and Zalatoris that are jacked up about it, to be on their first team.

It's just, it's a distraction. To use an old Tim Finchem line, it's just a big distraction, it's just hard. I did a radio show the other day and the guys said, What do you think about Talor Gooch? Do you think he could be a pick or not? I go, He's not eligible, and there was silence. I know he's on the list but he's not eligible to play.

So yeah, that's tough. Hopefully, we're going to get to the Playoffs, we're going to move forward, then we're going to get to the Presidents Cup and it's going to be obviously a controversy for a while. When we get -- like here this week, it's going to be exciting golf this weekend and there's going to be a lot of fans out. When we get to the Presidents Cup, it's going to be 12 guys that are ready to go and play. And it's business as usual for our assistant captains, our stats team and the players. It's business as usual, but it is a little bit

of a distraction.

Q. You mentioned Max Homa. As you've been studying guys, what is it you like about him in particular?

DAVIS LOVE III: Just his passion. I think now we're seeing, starting at the top with Tiger and Rory through guys like Homa that are saying the right things and expressing eloquently their passion for the PGA Tour and why they play the Tour.

That part of it I love from Max, and then obviously he's hysterical, he's funny, he's fun to follow. But he makes it a point that he is wanting to make the team and you love to hear that. There's some guys like me who got spoiled for a while and you just assume you're going to make the team every year and I'm doing my job. We have four or five of those guys that are doing their job. Justin Thomas, are we going to do this or are we going to do that? He's ready to go. But have that passion and the new guy that's really going to bring some energy to the team and excitement to the team, I love that about Max. And there's a bunch of other guys who are in that boat, but Max has been very out front with it and that's great, that's what we need.

Q. Earlier today you said that you learned a lot with Will Zalatoris, from him or about him. Could you just clarify what you did learn about him?

DAVIS LOVE III: Well, that he doesn't hold that I went to North Carolina against me, and he went to Wake.

Just little things about he's passionate about playing on the Presidents Cup team. He's a supporter of the PGA Tour, he loves being on the PGA TOUR and his goals are to obviously win major championships. He pops up every one. You know, so you see him on TV or you see him around the locker room, but when you stand right beside him and see him hit a golf ball. It was said about me when I was that age, like listen, it's a different sound when Davis hits it. It's a different sound when a guy like that hits a golf ball and to stand right there with him and watch him, and then hit my 5-iron into the green and he hits his 8-iron into the green, it's fun to see that.

So every step I take like that with Will, whatever happens the rest of this week, whatever happens -- I'm going to be in Memphis for a few days -- it just builds up that relationship where we're comfortable. He's a pretty confident, fun guy, but now I know that I don't have to worry about Will and I getting along. He knows who I am, I know who he is and that relationship, that captain-player relationship, you know, he's got my number. I just need to do that with a couple more guys. Obviously it's a bonus and I'm playing with him the next two days. After watching him play on TV a lot and now to get to play with him -- that's what Stricker did really well, he bounced back and forth both tours. I've been out of it the last couple years so I haven't really been able to play enough out here and I'm working on that. It was a good day yesterday on a lot of fronts for me.

JACK RYAN: Thank you very much for your time, Davis.

DAVIS LOVE III: All right, thank you.