

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
August 2, 2022



WEBB SIMPSON

JACK RYAN: Webb, I don't want to bury the lede. Just had Davis Love III in here, just named you one of his captain's assistants at the Presidents Cup at your home course at Quail Hollow. Reaction when you heard the news and now that it's official?

WEBB SIMPSON: Yeah, when I first heard the news, it was something I was hoping for. So when I heard that he was going to let me join his team, it was a great feeling. Kind of flashbacks to when I was a kid. Davis has always been my favorite player. I got to play under him in 2012 and that was awesome. Just he's been a part of many other teams and it's great to have played under him and seen him be a captain. And I had the privilege of making three Presidents Cup teams and three Ryder Cup teams and I've learned to understand the importance of captains and assistant captains and what they do not just the week of the event, but how much work they put in leading up to the event, how many conversations they have and how much data they're looking at.

As I have thought about the Presidents Cup at Quail for so long, obviously I wanted to make the team. I haven't had a great year. Still have a little bit of time left, but I thought if I didn't make the team, I would love -- I'd give anything to be a part of it because as Jim Furyk told me in 2011 in Melbourne, when you're done with your golf career, you're going to really look back and remember your wins and your team events. So far, those are the best memories I've made in the game are the three Ryder Cups and President Cups. So I'm super excited to be alongside Davis, Zach, Strick and Freddie. Yeah. I've got to get this down.

Yeah, I know those guys well, been around them for a long time. I don't feel that much older than the guys who are going to be on the team because I've played with them for so long now, but I guess to some of them, like Scotty I'm a lot older than. Yeah, I'm really excited, and what a bonus to be at home at Quail Hollow.

JACK RYAN: Here at the Wyndham Championship, your 14th consecutive start here, five straight top-10s, only one score that wasn't under par in the last five years. Coming to a place that you've won obviously before, what are you looking forward to this week?

WEBB SIMPSON: Well, I'm looking forward to being on a golf course that I know very well. That's one less thing I have to think about. I feel like I've been having to think about a lot of things. My game hasn't been great, I've been working on things really hard, but knowing that, OK, Paul and I have been around this place a lot, we know what we're doing, that makes me feel great about the week.

I've said this before I think when I come to Greensboro, no matter how my game is, I'll always feel like I can win here. Started out great last week, but again made a ton of mistakes

rounds two through four and that's kind of my year. So what we're focusing on this week is if we can limit mistakes no matter what and play a little smarter than we've been playing, I really feel like I'll have a chance on the weekend.

Q. Davis said that Tiger spilled the beans. Can you talk a little bit about was it a phone call, how did that happen? When did you find out?

WEBB SIMPSON: It was last Tuesday and I was actually in Wilmington, North Carolina, with my family and we were at Trolley Stop, our favorite hot dog joint. My kids had already made the owner mad because they continued to open the door, so I'm stressing, it's my turn to order, my phone rings, I looked down and it's Tiger. I told Tiger I had to call him back, I got to order my hot dogs. So order my hot dogs, get out of there, call him back and yeah, he just kind of referenced me being from -- you know, living in Charlotte, Quail Hollow's my home, that he thought it would bring a lot to the team.

It meant a lot, but honestly, I got done with the phone call and I'm like, I don't know if that was official or not. I don't know if he meant like he's rooting for me to be assistant or if I am assistant.

So I just waited, and I saw Zach on Wednesday, or I guess yeah, the next day in Detroit and Zach and I had a laugh about it. I said, Davis still hasn't called me, so I don't know. And then Davis gave me a shout I guess maybe the next night.

But yeah, not that I feared not being a part of it, but there was a part of me that's like, if I don't make the team and Davis goes a different direction, that's fine, but it's going to be hard to see the Presidents Cup happen there and not be a part of it in some way. So I was really, really relieved to get a chance to be a part of it.

Q. One other question. Well, two. What do you think you can learn being an assistant captain and do you see yourself as a captain down the road?

WEBB SIMPSON: Yeah, that's a big dream and goal of mine. There's still quite a few things I want to accomplish as a player, but just seeing these captains in the last few years take that role, and you can tell it means so much to them to represent the players, our country. So I definitely want to do that.

And I think as an assistant -- as a player you're worried about so much that week getting ready, preparing, all that kind of stuff, pairings. As an assistant, I feel like I'm going to be able to observe a lot more on what Davis is doing, what Zach's doing, Strick, Freddie, the support that those three assistants are giving to Davis.

So I'm probably going to be -- I'm going try to be a sponge as much as possible. I've heard these captains say before that the best thing the players can do is be themselves. So I as a player still, I want to give these players every opportunity to do what they normally do every week. So whatever they need, I'm there for them. Yeah, it will be a learning week for me and

at the same time try to give my strengths when I feel like I need to give them.

Q. Your golf game, you mentioned not the season you've wanted. Has it been health related or did health lead to swing issues or where do you stand?

WEBB SIMPSON: Yeah, in a nutshell I think for me the last three years I went on a journey to get longer. I got longer. I do think it's one of the main reasons I was able to win the Waste Management Phoenix Open, RBC Heritage because of my length.

Now, the downside of that is it started a couple of bad swing mechanics that were really hard to see at first because in '19 I'm playing great, '20 I'm playing great and you don't really notice things as easily when you're playing well. You don't ask questions, you just keep going.

But I got in a few bad swing habits that have now I guess manifested this year throughout my game. So I feel like the last four, five months we've been playing catch up, trying to neutralize everything. We've been pulling up a lot of video from kind of from '17, '18, '19 before I started getting longer.

The good news is I've retained the distance, but I'm starting to hit more fairways. So I'm in this weird place. I told Paul leaving Detroit that I'm shooting -- I'm finishing 50th or 60th, yet I'm really confident, and I haven't really been in a place like that in my career. Normally, I'm 50th or 60th and I'm searching for confidence. That shows me that my game is there, I believe in myself, I've just got to be a little smarter, I've got to think a little better.

And this golf course, even though the scores are good every year, it is a golf course where you cannot make mistakes, otherwise it's so penal. The rough is up this year. So I'm looking forward to that challenge. I've just got to limit my mistakes. The last few weeks I've just been saying I just want to get to Memphis, I want to make the Playoffs. I haven't been in this position for a while where I needed to make a push to make the Playoffs. But if I have a good week this week and I'm there at Memphis, it's a golf course I love as well, similar to this, bermuda greens, bermuda rough. Yeah, just kind of see how far I can make it.

Q. Webb, you have a pretty good connection with the captain, with Davis Love III, especially now. Have you asked him what do I need to do to get a pick? Do you need to win here? Do you need to win a Playoff tournament?

WEBB SIMPSON: I haven't asked him for specifics, but I mean, I would think I need a win coming up very soon. Worst case, somehow make it to Atlanta. If I make it to Atlanta without winning, I don't know if that's good enough.

But I certainly -- I'm excited for that captain's phone call to see who we should pick. If I'm even in the running it could be funny/awkward if I nominated myself for a pick, so we'll see.

Q. So let's say that you are picked. Would you be a player-coach?

WEBB SIMPSON: I don't know, I don't know. I think obviously Tiger was a little different because he was the head captain. If I were to make the team, maybe Davis would find someone else to be an assistant. I don't know how that works.

Q. Webb, as a former Arnold Palmer scholarship guy at Wake, flashback to 2011 and winning your first PGA Tour event here, now you have another former Arnold Palmer Deac who's looking to do the same thing in Will Zalatoris. Any thoughts on him possibly following in your footsteps this week?

WEBB SIMPSON: Yeah, Will's had an incredible year. He's a threat it seems like every week, and when he shows up at an event, he's one of the few guys that everybody's thinking they've got to beat him to win.

I'm sure he's got tons of confidence, I'm sure he feels comfortable around here. Yeah, this is a course where I think short hitters have won, long hitters have won. Will's certainly long. I got to play with Will here last year maybe on Sunday, Saturday or Sunday, maybe Sunday. Yeah, Will's eager to kind of jump over that finish line and get a W, so I'm sure it will be soon if it's not this week.

JACK RYAN: Any other questions for Webb? All right. Thank you for the time as always, Webb.

WEBB SIMPSON: Thank you.