

PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE
September 14, 2023



ERNIE ELS

THE MODERATOR: Ernie, thank you for joining us here at the Sanford International. Just got done playing in the pro-am. How does the golf course look?

ERNIE ELS: Golf course is in great shape this year. Seems like they had a good summer. Seems like it ball is running out a little bit, but fairways are in great shape. Greens are in great shape.

The greens are holding a little bit. Today is a little windy. Would've been tough scoring conditions today, but I think overall if you play good golf you can score some good numbers around here this year.

Q. How do you feel about your game come into this week?

ERNIE ELS: Yeah, I got some rust off my game last week. I was struggling a little bit with a bits of a rib injury so the guys in the physio really looked after me. I feel a lot better, a lot looser. I love playing here. I ran third last year so I've had some good finishes here, so really looking forward to playing a good week of golf here.

Q. What have you taken from your previous experiences here as you get ready for this week?

ERNIE ELS: Yeah, I mean, it's a golf course that can give you some birdies, but you got play it accordingly. You can't just go out there and go blindly with a driver and hit it all over the place. I believe you got to get it in position and get your second shots into the greens. The greens are rolling nice, as I say, this week. If you're on your game you can score okay. Seems like we are going to have -- touch wood -- we are going to have drier weather hopefully tomorrow, and then depends on the winds. If the wind blows like it's blowing today, it's going to be tough scoring. That's quite a defense for the golf course. I think overall the guys are going to enjoy playing the golf course this week

Q. What did you think of the field, the guys assembled for to tournament?

ERNIE ELS: It's a brilliant field. Obviously Steve is here. He's the hot hand at the moment. Bernhard, Darren, many, many other players really on form playing here. Steve Flesch winning last week.

It's coming to the meaty part of the season where you have to make a bit of a run to get into the Charles Schwab end-of-the-season event.

So there's a lot of guys playing for an opportunity starting this week, so the guys are really gunning for the victory, so it's going to be interesting to see what's happening

Q. You mentioned Bernhard. Impressed about how he continues to play so well at his age?

ERNIE ELS: He's got every chance to win this week. You know, there is a lot of run in the fairway so guys that don't quite carry the ball long enough you can get the ball out there this week. It's going to be about accuracy and shotmaking and putting. I mean, I think Bernhard, as he's proven, he's top of the list when it comes to that. Going to be a lot of the guys in contention this week.
