

PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE
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ERNIE ELS



Q. We're now joined by Charles Schwab Cup leader Ernie Els here at the Ally Challenge. Just start with your opening remarks about being back here this week.

ERNIE ELS: Oh, always great to come back to the area in Detroit, Flint. I'm sure everybody says the same thing, but we love coming back here, especially the guys that played on Tour. We played this golf course many times and nothing's changed. It's still a nice golf course, the way we remember it. It's in great shape this year. We had a bit of rain, but it's getting firmer. It should give us a good challenge.

Q. What is it about Warwick Hills that you and the other pros like so much?

ERNIE ELS: Well, it's just traditional golf, you know? It's not a lot of hazards, water hazards. There are, but it's not all over the place. The golf course is right in front of you. You've got four par 5s, four par 3s and the rest par 4s, so it's very traditional design and layout. If you're hitting it well, you're going to get rewarded, it that's that type of a golf course. As I say, the greens are running beautifully. So every year we come back, they really do a great job for us getting this golf course in condition and that's what players love. I think that's why it gets such a great field here.

Q. Ernie, you're leading the Schwab Cup in points, Stephen Ames right behind you, and then there's a little gap. What's been the difference this year compared to your last couple years where you were kind of climbing up? This year it just seems like it's an Ernie year.

ERNIE ELS: Well, thank you. Yeah, there's quite a few guys playing really good golf, myself, obviously Stephen Ames, Steven Alker, some of the other guys. I just started to get kind of my way around playing the golf courses, got used to a lot of the courses I've never seen before and just played at a nice high level.

You have to play at a very high level in all your disciplines on this tour to win. You can't just get away with kind of on talent. So I've been working on my game and I'm excited to play.

Q. Could you talk about the atmosphere out at 17? Is that something that you enjoy or does that bother you a little bit? Different guys have different opinions about that.

ERNIE ELS: Yeah, I mean, I think that's kind of a hole that's come with the times, you know? Our day, we used to have certain golf tournaments where the crowds were a little bit more rowdy. I remember Dallas was always a big crowd back in the '90s, TPC always on some of the courses, and this I remember from the '90s. No. 17 at Warwick Hills has always

been more a noisy kind of area of the golf course, but people seem to have some fun.

And they've really built it up, Ally has come and built it up. I see they even can have a little concert in there seems like. I think it's nice. I think it gives it atmosphere and people can get (indiscernible) if they want.

Q. Ernie, you haven't won here yet, but you've been very close a couple of times. If this is going to be an Ernie week, what happens?

ERNIE ELS: Well, I think I've got to have everything this week. I think this is a type of course where a lot of guys are going to shoot low scores. You can't really separate yourself that easily, I don't think. I think it's going to be a tight finish and whoever can keep his nerve on the last three holes may win.

Q. Last one from Champions Tour Social, what's your go-to gas station snack?

ERNIE ELS: Gas station, it's got to be jerky, beef jerky. If there's know biltong, South Africa bilton, I'll go with the jerky.