

PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE
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STEVEN ALKER



MODERATOR: Steven, thank you for joining us here. You are the defending champion of the tournament here, the Charles Schwab Cup Championship. Just to start, how does it feel to be back here?

STEVEN ALKER: Yeah, it feels great. As soon as you walk on the grounds it's a good feeling to know what you did last year and in the previous year as well.

Yeah, as I said, I like this golf course. I've played well here before. Just try and take those vibes into the week.

MODERATOR: Speaking of vibes, two years ago you took home the really big prize here. Can you speak to all that?

STEVEN ALKER: Yeah. Well, I mean, obviously I didn't win the golf tournament, but I did what I needed to. And Padraig did what he needed to. It was kind of an exciting finish for the fans and for us. Last year was obviously a different scenario, we were just playing for second.

Yeah, 2022 was huge, it was just a -- it was only my second year and to have that season I did and just kind of show that I felt like I kind of belonged and get some more wins was great.

MODERATOR: Speaking of doing what you need to do, you enter this week No. 2 in the standings. How do you feel?

STEVEN ALKER: I feel good. Just that week off was great, we had four weeks in a row, just to settle down and get things in line. Yeah, I feel good about going in and just having a chance to win. Defending a tournament is always great, too. You come here and, as I said, you just bring those vibes forward, bring them into the week. But that's a good feeling to come here as defending champ.

Q. I'm curious about Jason Caron's late run here. Not exactly the same path you took but kind of similar. When you see that, what do you say about someone pulling that off?

STEVEN ALKER: He's a solid player. To do what he did, he played well. I know he's got good game because I played with him out on Tour. You know, again, he's done the hard yards, he's been around, he's done Korn Ferry, he's been on and off the PGA TOUR. I think where he was and what he was doing as a club pro and to come out here, it's exciting. Like



for me, change is all new and I think that's pretty cool. Kind of relaxes you a little bit and kind of have some fun.

Q. Did he seek you out perhaps to maybe pick your brain? You have kind of similar backgrounds.

STEVEN ALKER: I played with him a few times the last couple months and, you know, little questions here and there, he'll ask a few things. But I think he's got a good golf brain. He's good enough to play out here and he showed that. If he wants to play a full schedule, I think he's good enough to win.

Q. Sounds like you're not surprised at all to see him pull that off?

STEVEN ALKER: Not really. I think there's a bunch of guys going to come out and kind of do what I did through Mondays, or they'll have great years. There's just more guys coming out, it's getting more competitive and I think you're going to see more Jason Carons.

Q. Steven, knowing that you control your own destiny this week, how soon will you be watching the scoreboards?

STEVEN ALKER: Probably not until last few holes, to be honest. You know, I've maybe struggled a little bit finishing some tournaments off of late, I think we talked about that yesterday, and so my goal this week is head down, blinders on and score as low as I can score this week. The golf course is such that it's going to be pretty low scoring, so get after it.

Q. Do you prefer the four rounds over three rounds for this event?

STEVEN ALKER: Yeah, I think so, definitely. The last tournament of the year and a lot can change. The three days, that extra day, a lot can change in a day. Yeah, I like the four-day format.

Q. There's been a little talk about 14 with being right on the road but I guess also a tree's not there anymore. Do you play 14 differently? How does that --

STEVEN ALKER: No, I think maybe the target line is maybe slightly more left than it used to be, but not really. You're still just trying to hit a good drive out there and you still have to hit a good drive. Knowing that tree's not there, you've got more room on the left, kind of frees you up a little bit. Yeah, the same plan, straight down the middle.

Q. Do you anticipate any additional like pressure, intensity across the field as we finish up that fourth day knowing that it's new to the format?

STEVEN ALKER: I hope so, I hope there's going to be the juices flowing and that going on. I hope it's close for everybody, the fans and that excitement. Me personally, coming down



with like a four-, five-shot lead on the last I think would be nice, but to have -- to be in that position and have a chance to win, that's just what we play for, you know what I mean? And to have the juices flowing and the nervousness and everything about it, that's what we want.

