

PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE
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BERNHARD LANGER



Q. Bernhard, thank you for joining us. Just overall thoughts being back here for the third Galleri Classic?

BERNHARD LANGER: It's awesome. It's a fantastic venue, really beautiful golf course in fantastic shape. Michelle does a wonderful job running this tournament. It's really a pleasure to be here all week and enjoying this hot weather at the moment.

Q. You did miss last year with the Achilles but came back very strong, maybe stronger than people had thought, or anybody from that injury. What was the key to coming back and returning to being Bernhard Langer again?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, I suppose just doing a lot of rehab, following the protocols from the doctor and the physiotherapist. Believing that you can do it and just do everything you can and maybe a little bit more in the gym. Otherwise, to get back to where I was and I always thought I would come back, it was just a matter of when and how. So it was a long and tough process, it still is. I'm not 100 percent and maybe I never will be, but walking is still difficult so I've been riding a cart for the most part -- well, walking 18 holes. I can walk, I'm OK walking nine holes, but then I get a little fatigued and stiff and all that kind of stuff. It's still a process trying to get better in that department.

Q. And yet you did come back and not only played well but won at the end of the year. I assume you come into every tournament thinking you've got a chance to win, right?

BERNHARD LANGER: Yeah. There's some courses where, you know, my game suits better than our courses, so it all depends. But I was surprised in Hawaii, which is really a bomber's golf course nowadays because they changed the fairways and there's hardly any rough, I was surprised I finished second there to Ernie, who won in the end. You never know. If my game is on, even with my lack of distance compared to the younger guys, I can still compete at the highest level.

Q. And how does this course fit into that?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, we'll see by Sunday, right? You've got to -- I've got to hit it very straight, I've got to keep it on the short grass so I don't come out of the rough with less spin and I can control my distances better for my second shot if I come from the fairway. You know, some of the par 5s I won't be able to reach while the young guys will. They come in with shorter clubs and high trajectory and more spin, which makes it easier to stop the ball. I've got to try and be better in the other departments. It often comes down to obviously



making precision shots but making a lot of putts, that's the key.

Q. You're coming off a great win, 2024 Charles Schwab Cup champion. What would it mean here to win in the desert, which is considered one of the most beautiful places to golf here on the west coast?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, it would be fantastic. Everyone is amazing, especially when you get to my age. You never know when the last win comes or if there ever is another one. When I first came out here, I was told and the statistics proved it that you win most of your tournaments between 50 and 55. By the time you reach age 60, you have no chance, basically that's what the statistics proved.

Well, we proved the statistics wrong, and there's not just me, there's other guys that have won in their 60s and they're very competitive. I think that will be the trend in the future as the guys stay fitter and stronger and stay committed to the game. I think there will be several winning into their 60s.

Q. And your group you're playing with, Freddie and Justin Leonard, what does it mean to play with those guys alongside, just you being a legend itself here in the valley?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, it's always fun playing with most of my colleagues, they're great guys, and Freddie and Justin certainly fit right in there. Freddie's one of the fan favorites wherever he goes, so I imagine we're going to have a pretty big following. Justin just won his first tournament a few weeks ago, so I'm sure he's excited to be competing again and try to show what he has. It should be fun playing with these two guys.

Q. Talking about your game and maybe how it's different than it used to be, you said last year it was going to be your last Masters but you missed the Masters. You have it in a couple of weeks and you're going to play it again. You go there and you're going to play great or do you go there and say let's have dinner and have a fond farewell?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, all of that. I think I'm hoping to play great, and I have to play great to make the cut because the course is so long for me that nothing but great will do it. I'm coming in with 2- and 3-irons where the other guys are hitting 9-irons on every hole and that's just hard to compete. So I'm not going in there with a mindset of winning anymore, that train has passed, but trying to still perform and show some good shots and hopefully be there on the weekend.

Q. (No microphone.)

BERNHARD LANGER: True, yeah.

