

**ROUND 1 QUICK QUOTES**  
**June 6, 2025**



**ERNIE ELS**  
**TIM HERRON** (-9)

---

**MODERATOR:** We're joined by World Golf Hall of Famer Ernie Els and his partner, PGA Tour Champions player Tim Herron.

Guys, take me through your round today and being partners this kind of first Champions Tour team format.

**TIM HERRON:** Yeah, it was nice to hit the first one off the tee in the fairway. I pulled the 8-iron a little bit, but Ernie got in a good rhythm. I just felt like -- we didn't really even talk about it, but I just felt if I get the ball on the green, he could free up a little bit and hit some beautiful drives, which he did.

**ERNIE ELS:** Yeah, thanks. I mean, we -- we did what we needed to do. It's a golf course that's very demanding, you know, if you go sideways. We try to keep it in front of us. Like Timmy says, I think he did a great job leading us off, freed me up here and there to have a little bit more of a go with a driver.

But I think we did well. To be 9 under, you know, we're not out of it, we're right there. We've got a different format tomorrow and I think we just keep on plugging away. I think the way we're playing I think we can be there on Sunday afternoon.

**MODERATOR:** So is there a different mindset going into tomorrow with it being a scramble format?

**TIM HERRON:** Probably not off the tee, you know? I'll get the ball in play and let him feel like he's freed up a little bit.

**ERNIE ELS:** Yeah, I think we'll do the same tomorrow. Get the ball in play and then you've got two goes at the green, and then you have two goes at the putt.

If you get on a roll tomorrow, you can really get going. Today we had perfect weather conditions. So there was no wind, that was really a factor. If you have two goes at it, two pros going at it, should make a birdie here and there.

**Q. Is it harder tomorrow to (inaudible)?**

**ERNIE ELS:** I don't know.

**TIM HERRON:** We haven't played it. Yeah, I mean --

**ERNIE ELS:** A full scramble.

**TIM HERRON:** I think what they did is I think guys that are maybe 4 or 5 under will have a good chance of maybe shooting 10 or 12 or something like that. Didn't really see 12 out there.

**ERNIE ELS:** Yeah, I mean tomorrow will be -- you know, you can't be thinking ahead too much, you've got to take care of the shot in front of you.

I think we did -- as I said again, we did that well, and we've got to keep doing that tomorrow and then get it on the green. If we can hit every green in regulation in 18 holes tomorrow, I think we're going to have two goes at it on every single hole so hopefully we can make some birdies.

**Q. Did you have fun?**

**TIM HERRON:** I did.

**ERNIE ELS:** Yeah.

**TIM HERRON:** I haven't sat here in a couple years, so I had fun.

**ERNIE ELS:** It was a ball. I mean, we go back many, many years, so to play actually in a format like this, it was really cool.

**TIM HERRON:** Yeah, I really appreciate him accepting. I asked him.

**ERNIE ELS:** We remembered the next day. Remember what I said to you?

**TIM HERRON:** Yeah, he did say that, yeah, he did.

**Q. Along those lines, Brendan Jones was in here earlier and this has kind of been a fresh start for him. He struggled a little bit but he played well today, and this could be a big week for him. Tim, this could be a big week for you. Ernie, is that motivation knowing that it could be a big week for him?**

**ERNIE ELS:** Well, when we played the first hole it was the furthest thing from anybody's mind.

**TIM HERRON:** No, we're not --

**ERNIE ELS:** We're just trying to squeeze it down the fairway --

**TIM HERRON:** We're trying to do that tomorrow.

**ERNIE ELS:** -- and now we're kind of in it, now we're just going to keep rolling with it.

**TIM HERRON:** Still getting the feel of the course, too.

**ERNIE ELS:** So much golf still to be played.

**TIM HERRON:** Yeah.

**ERNIE ELS:** Three shots behind now.

**TIM HERRON:** Yeah.

**ERNIE ELS:** Even when you're 5 behind on Sunday you've still got a chance. But it would be great to have a good week together.

**Q. Is there a different kind of pressure when you play with a partner as opposed to --**

**TIM HERRON:** Oh, 100 percent, yeah. You feel like you're leaving 'em -- I told him, I've done it all so don't worry about it. I know he's trying. If I'm trying, that's all we're trying to do is try.

**ERNIE ELS:** Yeah. Let me tell you, if we were playing straight foursomes, you would see serious tension.

**TIM HERRON:** Exactly, yeah.

**ERNIE ELS:** With one ball from the tee, you'll really feel like you could really let your partner down. But with the better ball and tomorrow's format, it's a little bit more friendly. You still have a little tension to help your partner out, definitely.

**Q. (Inaudible) team golf formats, the emotions seems to come out of you guys a little bit more often. You guys seemed like you were able to keep it in check today. Do you feel maybe as you get closer to the end of the tournament that may come out a little bit more?**

**ERNIE ELS:** I think that's natural. You get into Sunday and you get into the back nine, yeah, that's when the juices are flowing, but in this format you can lean on your partner, which I did today and what Timmy --

**TIM HERRON:** Yeah, lean on your partner.

**ERNIE ELS:** So that's a good week. Yeah, come Sunday it won't be like any other Sunday, but there will be tension and we're looking forward to feeling that.

**Q. The feedback we got before the tournament was that people were glad it was a team event just because of how tough the course could be. Was it indeed that tough? Could you imagine being out there on your own ball today in the situations that would have made this course a little bit too difficult?**

**TIM HERRON:** Well, what I would say is I have three sons that are trying to play golf, college golf and one's turning pro. I'm going to have 'em come down here for a week just to play this golf course and kind of learn about their game because this is one hard golf course.

**ERNIE ELS:** Yeah, if you grow up here and you play this type of course, you'll hit it like Steve Stricker. You'll be forced to hit it like Steve Stricker because if you miss, you guys have played it, if you miss here you can really ratchet up a score. Maybe in a couple years' time we'll play an individual event again, but I think the team format's really catching on with the players.

**Q. (inaudible) a guy from Wisconsin (inaudible) your putter grip and I know you (inaudible) early on. Has that died down or --**

**TIM HERRON:** No, no, it's died down. People understand I'm not going to bend over six inches to get my ball out of the hole.

**ERNIE ELS:** But it's a nice thick end to the grip.

**TIM HERRON:** Yeah, it's nice.

**ERNIE ELS:** It's a beast.

**TIM HERRON:** Yeah, it is a beast. I might need a new suction cup, but it's lasted a couple years so it's been good.