

ROUND 1 QUICK QUOTES
September 5, 2025



STEWART CINK (-7)

Q. Stewart, 7-under 64 in the opening round, you're keeping the roll going. Can you describe that round to us today?

STEWART CINK: Yeah. It wasn't the greatest round really, I think it was a testament to patience out there. It's not like I holed a lot of putts, not like I hit it close a whole lot, not like I hit every fairway. I was just really patient and most of my misses were in the right place. When they weren't, there were a few heroics and it all added up to a pretty low score. It wasn't the kind of round that's really sustainable though. Definitely want to clean things up. I think if I -- I would say if I played exactly the same way as today, I would expect more of a 3 or 4 under round instead of a lower score like I got.

Q. You talk about heroics, I believe some of them might have been on 18. Can you kind of walk us through that?

STEWART CINK: Yeah. On 18 I put my drive way right, bad shot, and the one saving grace about the area over there was that I was on a bare patch of really hard dirt where I could at least get the club on the ball and do something with it. If I was in the rough, it would have been impossible. I would have just been chipping to the fairway. So it gave me an opportunity to at least kind of maneuver the ball up there.

I actually wasn't trying to get it up on the green, I was trying to get it front left down in the fairway rough to get it up and down because it's just where the hole location was, it was a pretty easy third shot from short of the green and left.

And the ball just came out like a dream. Had a little more cut on it than I meant to, perfect trajectory and just rolled right up there to the front edge.

Q. You talked about sustainability. What is the change over the next few days?

STEWART CINK: Well, I was a little like, I don't know, felt a little anxious early in the round and my shots were just not very clean, some of my processes were a little muddy. You know, I hit in the water -- I didn't hit it in the water, I hit up against the bricks on the par 3 No. 4 and had to take a drop, made bogey. Made a good bogey there, made about a 10-footer.

So just not all that clean operating early on. Kind of got through it around just under par.

And then I played pretty good golf for a stretch of holes there, played the par 5s well. I hit it close on a couple par 3s and I saved myself when I was in a little bit of trouble. Greens are

receptive, they're smooth. You can be aggressive out there.

It's kind of a sneaky difficult driving course. It's not narrow but the trees are in perfect spots where if you miss the fairway left or right, you're almost always going to be blocked.

Q. Did the rain play a factor? I know it wasn't coming down too hard, but was it a factor?

STEWART CINK: Yeah, it changed the conditions just a little. Wasn't really raining that hard, but it changed the distance the ball was going for half an hour. It made us reconsider what we did off 17 tee. I ended up not changing, but I didn't know if driver was going to go far enough to hit driver over everything there and I ended up hitting it and hitting over everything. It was about a 30- or 40-minute spell where the rain was hard enough where you had to handle the umbrella and it was just a little added anxiety with all that stuff. But we're used to that stuff.

Q. Stewart, when Padraig played here a few years ago he said he thought his length was going to set him up to be a really significant force on this tour. I talked to Thomas Bjorn this week and he said he thought the tour was evolving to reward like even more so. You have that kind of length. How important is it going to be going forward for players on this tour to be long?

STEWART CINK: Well, it's important going forward, it's always been important going backward because it's golf and power in golf matters a lot. It has for a long time and it still does.

The difference out here on the Champions Tour is going to be that as players behind me turn 50, these are going to be players that have had power as one of their top priorities in their game for their whole career and now they're just going to bring it out here. So there's going to be more and more guys that are hitting it 170-plus ball speed off the tee and just absolutely sending it off the tee. That's what's going to happen and it's coming.

Padraig and me and a couple other guys out here that already do it, we're just going to be joining the ranks.

Q. All the guys that basically benefited from the Tiger proofing?

STEWART CINK: I wouldn't say -- yeah, Tiger was one of the first ones to hit it really far and straight, use his driver as a weapon, but before him Norman did it. Davis Love was an incredible driver.

It was more I think the technology that we learned how to take advantage of, like the launch monitors and all the data and optimization. We all learned -- strokes gain off the tee, we learned how important it is to push your ball a little further down the fairway. Basically every 10 yards is a tenth of a stroke. That's kind of like giving it away for free there, if you can hit it

10 yards further. Sometimes it's by choice, sometimes it's not laying up and hitting driver.

Q. Stewart, how big was the par save on 10?

STEWART CINK: It's early so I wouldn't say it was big, but it was fun. It was a horrible shot.

Actually, I had a really good game plan on that shot and then when I pulled the club from the ball, a piece of grass flipped on top of the ball and I was too far into the swing to stop and it just freaked me out. I just basically hit a flinch ball right there. I mean, what do you do? It hits the cart path.

So yeah, good second shot to get it to 15 feet and then the putt is just a putt. It was nice to save it, but I wouldn't say it was like a key moment in the round or anything. I went ahead and made a nice easy par on the next hole, 11, after driving it pin high about 30 feet from the hole. It's not like that par on 10 gave me tons of momentum.

Q. Yeah, but the second shot on 11 was hard?

STEWART CINK: It was very hard, yeah. I didn't hit a very good tee ball on 11. I hit it in the wrong place. Yeah, you can't be right of that flag.

Q. Hit 3-wood, right?

STEWART CINK: Hit 3-wood. We all know you can't be right of that flag and I hit it a little right of the flag and I had exactly what I deserved, a difficult second shot.

Q. When you come off of a day like today, you come back here and you say I muddled it around, did this, did that, don't seem very happy you shoot 7 under. When you are striking it pure and you shoot 2 or 3 under, which one are you more mad at?

STEWART CINK: I'm not mad at either one and the reason is because I try really hard to not evaluate too much by the score.

Today was one of those days where my score was probably better than I played and I've had plenty of days where my score was worse than I played.

So I try to evaluate more on like how my processes were, where my heart was during the round, especially if you can tie poor shots to areas where you could have been cleaner. I had a couple of those early on, that's what I was describing earlier. That's what I really try hard to do.

The score's a little bit irrelevant in golf, it's a small sample size, but the things we can control, that's where I like to evaluate.

And I'll talk to my caddie, Chris, here in a few minutes about sort of the way the round went

in that regard and we'll come up with if anything needs to change for the rest of the weekend. Maybe not, maybe it was an execution thing. We always try to go over that, that's what we try to do. That's why we don't put too much store in like a 7-under round versus a 2-under round. It's all about the processes. You try to be -- we try to be sustainable with really good processes and control.

Q. Saw you earlier with Chris, the drummer from OAR. He's a big fan of yours and I know you're a big fan of theirs. Will you be watching the show tonight?

STEWART CINK: I am planning to go, yeah. I brought clothes to change into, so I thought ahead.

Q. So you are an OAR fan?

STEWART CINK: I am, yeah. A couple years back I connected with some of those guys over social media and just kind of started this little conversation with them. We've seen them a few times. We've actually never met in person, but my son met them kind of randomly after a show one night. They're really good guys, I love their music and the vibe. I'll probably enjoy the music tonight.