

**STEVEN ALKER**

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**Q. Joining us here today we have Steven Alker, defending champion of the 2025 Cologuard Classic.**

**Steven, you're making your 100th start here in Tucson. How does that feel, especially that you live here in Arizona?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Yeah, I was unaware of it until you mentioned during the week on Tuesday. Yeah, I guess it's a big deal.

It's nice to be back here in Tucson and defending. Yeah, a special week. A hundred's always good. Yeah, you can look forward and think, can I do another hundred? That's probably four or five years away.

Yeah, it's nice to be back as defending champion.

**Q. And what have been you been doing the last couple weeks kind of just getting ready?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Yeah, I've been down in New Zealand actually for a couple of weeks. It was my mother's 80th birthday. Good to see some family down there. Played the New Zealand Open as well. It's been a fun two weeks.

I've only been back home a week and just getting climatized again. Yeah, I'm fresh and ready to go.

**Q. No one was expecting it to be 100 degrees for your 100th outing on the Champions Tour. How might the weather affect how the course plays?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Yeah, good question. Depends how much water they want to pour on the golf course, I guess. The greens, they're going to have to keep them reasonably soft and under control, but the fairways can get a little bouncy around here. If we get some wind as well, it can dry up pretty quickly. Yeah, that could mean a lot of different clubs off the tee and playing a little more conservative and not aggressive. We'll see, 105 is kind of nothing. I'm an Arizona resident, so I'm going to be OK with 105.

**Q. Did you think back when you qualified for Seattle many days ago that we would be here today at 100 starts?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Yeah, no. It's come up awfully quick. You look back and jeez, it only kind

of feels like yesterday.

But yeah, to do what I've done since Seattle four and a half years ago, it's been amazing. Did I think I would be standing here? Probably not. Certainly not with 10 events, 10 wins at least.

**Q. What is the hottest round of golf that you played? Where was that?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Temperature?

**Q. Yeah.**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Trying to think. Probably somewhere humid. I played in Florida and out there. Alabama, I remember Alabama. I can't remember the event, it was on the PGA TOUR. It was maybe 105, but it was -- humidity was stupid. That one I can remember. But I've played in some heat here in Arizona as well, just casual rounds. 115 degrees, it's hot.

**Q. What do you remember about the final round last year?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Probably the putt on 18, to be honest. I wasn't kind of really in the tournament, I was kind of hanging around. I finished strong and got into a playoff and was like wow, OK, let's go. I think just the putt on 18 was a nice putt, right-to-lefter and down the hill a little bit. Went straight in the middle. That was a nice feeling.

**Q. This is a different kind of tournament with the ribbons you wear on your hat. Why is that?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** I think you're just playing for more than yourself and your family. You're playing for these survivors and people who have passed. I'm playing for someone who's essentially passed with a disease. You think of their families and what it's all about, it's a big deal. That's what it feels like, you're just playing for more than yourself.

**Q. Obviously it's going to be hot, but how are you dealing with the weather heading into the tournament when it comes to staying cool?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Yeah, stay hydrated. I like coconut water, that's the key for me to keep you hydrated. I love drinking that stuff. It's just kind of pacing yourself, too. Not practicing too much on the range in this heat, just getting ready for it. Then make a plan for the weekend.

**Q. Tiger Woods recently mentioned the possibility of joining the Champions Tour. He's turned 50. Is this something that you guys have talked about a lot on the range or when you're at dinner?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Yeah, the subject's definitely come up for sure. I think the PGA TOUR is preparing for it, or at least they've probably prepared for it. It will be great for our tour, it

really would. Even if he gets fit and plays four or five events, who cares. It would be just great to see him out competing again and see how the game stands up as well to his.

**Q. The Conquistadores helmet, how does that stand out among the other trophies that you've won?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Yeah, it's pretty cool. I just remember having a little celebration on Sunday night last year, wearing the hat around and taking photos. My daughter was wearing it last year. We have some neat photos.

It's totally different, it's kind of neat. I have it sitting somewhere. It's not in the bathroom, it's somewhere else, I can't remember exactly. To have two of those sitting on the mantelpiece, it would be pretty cool.

**Q. You mentioned how you felt like this tournament means more. Do you have any personal connection to colon cancer?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** I do, yeah. My mother's side, yeah. We've had some colon cancer in the family. We know what they went through and that sort of thing. As I said, we're just playing for more this week, that's what it feels like.

**Q. And to win it last year, does that make it extra special for you?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** Yeah, for sure. And having Jerry host the tournament, Jerry and Carol Kelly, with the sponsors we have this week, it means a lot. To win events like this, it's kind of special.

**Q. Do you remember what the weather was like the first day here last year?**

**STEVEN ALKER:** I do, yeah, I remember. Still drying out from last year with the rain. I had my beanie on. Yeah, it was nasty. I just remember it was really cold. The back nine walking off the course, it was cold.

But we're two weeks later and here we are in record degree heat. Just shows the difference in weather. Yeah, just prepare differently this year.