

BEN CRANE

Q. We're now joined by Ben Crane here at the Mitsubishi Electric Championship, the 2003 winner here at TPC Sugarloaf. How good is it to be back?

BEN CRANE: It's great. Just played with my pro-am team on Monday and was reliving a lot of the shots coming down the stretch. I actually got to play with Stewart Cink in that final round, one of my closest friends, so it was special. My first win on the PGA TOUR.

Was able to drive it down the hill on the last hole 357 yards and knock it on the green, make an eagle putt to win. My wife ran out, we were like, What just happened? So yeah, fun memories here for sure.

Q. Stewart was talking about that drive the day you had the press conference out here and how far you hit it down here. We were talking about it and he said, Yeah, I was playing with him that day. So what got into you that day?

BEN CRANE: I don't know. I just stepped up and I had a lot of adrenaline and I just decided to pull out driver and I hit it. I walked back over to my bag and didn't know it went that far, didn't know it went down the hill, didn't know any of that. But all of a sudden there was the parting of the people walking across the path and they were like whoa, there's a ball coming through here.

Was able to hit a 7-iron on the green, make the putt for eagle and yeah, start off a pretty amazing story. Very thankful.

Q. What kind of other memories do you have from that win?

BEN CRANE: Actually, I just actually went to Cabo with some couples, and Stewart and Lisa Cink were one of those couples since they're such close friends.

One of my memories is actually playing the week before at THE PLAYERS Championship and I shot like 80 the first day and I was just struggling so much, I didn't know what to do. I called Stewart just to ask for some advice and encouragement. He just encouraged me and just told me I could begin again the next day, just reminded me of our faith in Christ.

And it was so encouraging to me, I went out the next day, I think I shot something under par but it was like so awesome. I just felt refreshed and just encouraged by a fellow competitor and friend.

So then as God would tell the story, to be able to make the cut here the next week, I made it



by 1, shoot 64 Saturday and then I get paired with him Sunday and shoot 63, like OK, some God moments in there. Pretty -- yeah, that was one of my most potent memories, making a lot of putts but doing it with my buddy next to me.

Q. What do you like about playing this course?

BEN CRANE: They actually made it better. I mean the golf course is in incredible shape. The greens are perfect, they're firm. Fairways are pure. The bunkers are new and they're different, they've got the layers to them. It's beautiful. Not very often do we see redos and we're like, wow, it's better. This is really -- it really is better.

It's a really great track. You've got to hit a lot of different shots, and it's in perfect shape. Yeah, just love this golf course.

And this format will be fun. I think it will encourage us to be a little more aggressive and it will be a good week. This is the first time for this format, right?

Q. Yes. I was going to ask how you like the format.

BEN CRANE: I actually like the format. Stewart said they went through and did the math and over the last number of years it wouldn't have changed a winner. It would have taken one winner into a playoff, but other than that it's really the same results. Just one stroke is so important in this game.

It seems more volatile. Obviously Stephen Ames would have made 8 points when he made a 2 on 18, which would rocket you up even higher.

But two for a birdie, minus 1 for a bogey, minus 3 for a double, is that right? Yeah, 5 for an eagle. It's a super fun format. You kind of think similarly as a golfer but you might give your putts a little more juice or might tug your irons, try to get them a little closer to the hole. I feel that's slightly better for the fans, too.

Q. Zach Johnson was just telling us one birdie and a bogey is better than two pars in this format and in stroke play that's not the case at all.

BEN CRANE: Correct, correct.

Q. What did your win here do for your career? You went on, you've done some great things.

BEN CRANE: Yeah, I was working with Butch Harmon at the time and whenever we worked together he always said, "I don't care how it works on this range, I care if it works on the back nine on Sunday."

So I had a cool picture someone took from beyond the path of me hitting the last shot down



to the green and I signed it and I said, "Butch, it worked on the back nine on Sunday."

And it was just like, it's just people always say when do you know you're good enough to play on the PGA TOUR. I'm like, the day I made it. When do you know you're good enough to win on the PGA TOUR? I'm like, the day I won. You just don't know.

So to answer your question, what did it do for my career? It showed me that my best was good enough to contend in tournaments and to win out here.

Q. Stewart has made it known that he would love to be the next Ryder Cup captain. You played on the team, you know --

BEN CRANE: I have not played on the team.

Q. Oh, you have not?

BEN CRANE: Nope.

Q. You know what goes into that whole thing.

BEN CRANE: Yeah.

Q. How would you -- would you support his candidacy for that?

BEN CRANE: So Stewart is on a run winning four of the last six tournaments --

MODERATOR: Yes.

BEN CRANE: -- which is very, very unique, and I would love for him to be the captain as well. However, like you said, there's so much that goes into it that it's tough, it's tough to do both.

So I think whatever happens will be best for him. It would be super fun to have him be the captain, just respect him as a person, as a dad, as a husband. He's a man I want to be like. He's only a couple years older than me, but because he got on Tour when he was like 12 years old, it feels like he's been out here for a long time.

Anyway, **so I think it would be unbelievable and I think he would be a great choice by the PGA** as well. He's just so well loved in the locker room. You know, when do you ever hear something bad about Stewart Cink? He's an unbelievable guy and he's been great for the game and he's been doing that for 25 years.

Q. I just wanted to ask you about last week, runner-up finish at the Senior PGA. Breakthrough for you? Were you expecting that? What's your assessment of that week overall?



BEN CRANE: Yeah, I feel like it was a little breakthrough of just my fourth tournament out here. Excited to be out here. People say, What do you think of this Tour? I'm like, It's the best Tour in the world. You get to ride a cart when you want to. You get to play practice rounds when you want to. You can play one or two pro-ams. You can come in a day late. Generally three-round tournaments. It's more relaxed. Guys are more fun and friendly and more laughs. It's just a lot of camaraderie with the caddies and players.

And guys are still very good and it gets pretty serious once you tee it up on Friday.

But last week was a special week. Stayed with some of my best friends down there. A guy named Brian Roberts, who played for the Orioles, and his young boys were with me all week so I felt that was a sweet moment to -- they're young golfers, to encourage them, 12 and 9 years old. They were with me everywhere. All in all, just like a really special week.

Then to play with Stewart Saturday was super fun, and then to have a good Sunday when you want it most, to feel joyful and confident out there in the final round and play well was really encouraging.

