PGA TOUR Champions Learning Center

VO>> It was fire versus ice in a play off at the Dominion energy charity classic. This is 18 the first playoff hole between Doug Barron and Bernhard Langer. Langer’s play from off the green sets him up with a birdie possibility, putting pressure on Doug. Barron is in a virtual must make situation for par. And this one stays high, skimming the edge and opening the door for Langer. And the legend continues in a big way. Langer for birdie and the victory his 42nd on this tour, just three shy of the great Hale Irwin. Langer had been close with top 10 finishes in five of his six previous events before rolling home a win in Richmond. Our Billy Ray Brown spoke to Langer after the round for our winners tip.

OC>> Bernard Langer wins his 42nd PGA TOUR Champions in a dramatic fashion. Burny amazing job you become the oldest winner also on the PGA TOUR Champions to win an event. Talk about all the hard work you've got into this.

OC>> Yeah, it was a lot of hard work, as you know, you know, it's double seasons who proceeds in two years in a row and to be on top of the Schwab Cup standings again, means a great deal and there's so many great rookies that have come out the last, you know, year and a half and it's getting tougher and tougher out here to win.

OC/VO>> Well, the 18th hole here at the country club of Virginia, you certainly have had some dramatic finish here but the shot that you had in the playoff you're coming back up the slope against the green of the grass right here, then downhill as it went back down to the hole walk us through the process before you hit this putt.

OC>> Yeah, first I always look at the lie and what are my options you know, should I lobe it on there should I chip and run it but I felt the best way to do this was with a putter or two hybrid. And I saw the first part of the grain going with me which was helpful I think and then it was starting to go against me off but halfway and I practiced that putt and Chip many times this week and it's very sticky the grass here so the you know the deal was I had to hit that shot right otherwise I could have run this 20 feet by going downhill down grainn on the green. So I tried to try to just get it onto the green with a little bit of speed to nudge it up there near the hole and I did a pretty good job

OC>> you talked about that grain. Do you try to strike the ball in any different sections of the golf ball to get it up on top and take out of the grain?

OC>> Well if anything I don't want to hit it down on the ball so I might move it a little bit up in my stance to make it get on top of the grass not into the grass it's a very good observation so that's all I do but solid contact and just you know the proper speed

OC>> we know you’re money under pressure. Let's see it again right here

and that was what you were talking about right there how it was down grain first then back in grain and started to bounce the one in regulation didn't bounce as much but burning, incredible, credible victory here. historic day here. Now you move on to the next play off and now into the Schwab cup and it just increases your lead. How important is the Schwab Cup to win that cup at the end of the year?

OC>> Oh Billy Ray, it would be extremely special to win another Schwab Cup at age 64. Against all these all the famers and major winners that are out here now

OC>> You’re a hall of famer as well

OC>> well I understand but there's about 15 others or something and lots of major champions and, and they're much younger than me they hit it further so it doesn't get easier.

OC>> Alright Vince, thank you so much. Great day here in Richmond Bernhard Langer our winner

OC>> the Country Club of Virginia again served as a playoff Springboard with a six playing of the Dominion energy charity classic, in many cases, the survive and advance mentality for players for players who are living on the postseason edge. With more on Sunday's final round. Let's turn it over to the men who call the action Whit Watson and Lanie Watkins.

OC>> At this point we're running out of superlatives for Bernhard Langer, he is on route to potentially a sixth Charles Schwab Cup title. He becomes the oldest player ever to win on this tour. And he does it in dramatic fashion in the playoff. And he told you earlier this week Lanie that he thought he was going to have to win one of these playoff events to win the Charles Schwab

OC/VO>> Yeah, exactly. I talked to Bernhard Langer. And to Terry hold his caddy and they both said the same thing they thought he could they thought they could win the Schwab Cup, but they thought it was going to take at least a tournament win on one of these last three events to get it going and just great playing by Langer. He was right there all week long faced the pressure faced all the people who ran at him. There were some guys that had chances Bernhard Langer was the one that did not. He made some mistakes kind of milled around, bounced back nicely was in control at the end. That's where it counts.

OC>> Got to consider Doug Barron to be sort of an ancillary winner here too. I mean, he knows he can get into this situation already had a win during the season and moved up into the top 10 points.

OC/VO>> Yeah, he's had a very nice year. He's played very well. He had his chances also made some good putts down the stretch. Kind of a little excited maybe at 16 I think with the tee shot there hit a duck hook off the tee. And that probably cost him a good look at birdie at 16 if you will, he did play wonderful shots at 18 in the playoffs just the putt was a little bit too firm but Doug Barron someone to have to be looked at, you know, he could he could play

OC>> next playoff event two weeks timbertech championship in Boca, a place where Bernhard Langer has won before. What kind of player succeeds there?

OC>> Well, we saw last year a big player, Darren Clark, won there played very, very well. I'm looking all the sudden I've got my focus on Ernie Els. The fact that he closed the way he did in the last round here in Richmond. Maybe he's found something with his putter. He went lights out final round in Richmond, got a top 10, looking out for big Ernie down in Boca

OC>> Yeah, matching a tournament course record here with a 63 on the final day talking about Ernie Els, but a lot of eyes are going to be on Bernhard Langer when we get to Boca Raton in a couple of weeks.

VO>> Thank you, gentlemen. Langer has indeed put himself in marvelous position for a sixth Charles Schwab Cup Championship after the first playoff event, and someday that trophy may be named after him. But this page of contenders is an impressive one. Furyk and Els remain a threat with the double points formula. And this combined season continues to provide some thrills.

Langer is on top but the bottom of the Schwab standings after the first playoff event look like this. Tom Byrum with an eagle at The 72nd Hole secures his spot into the timbertech championship. Steven Elkers tie for fourth in Richmond moved him from 55th entering the week to 46 if he moved in, that means someone had to move out and that someone was Kent Jones

VO>> just been a frustrating year whatever. I put myself in this position just I've haven't played in a long time and just couldn't break out of it and no different this week. And so it's frustrating for sure. Yeah.

OC>> I really wasn't watching leaderboards or anything all week. But I knew the way I was playing that I was either getting lapped or, you know, I had to do something and then I got off to a terrible start playing bad. My caddy just told me to hang in there. Let's go make a birdie on 17 You know birdie on 18. But we went and made birdie Eagle. So here we are, you know, you're talking to me.

OC/VO>> I need to finish top 36 my categories probably going to fall out next year. And just because they're going back to 78 players to 71. So obviously I’ll be calling all the tournament directors and I'm begging for some spots, but it's good. It's just I just I just grind

VO?  
OC>> got this far. I didn't think I would start now. And who knows. You know? I don't know what I need, but a win would help. keep me going. Yeah.

VO>> Phil Mickelson doesn't have to worry about qualifying for the timbertech championship. His three wins this season have done enough to earn him a spot all the way to the Charles Schwab Cup Championship. Last week in Virginia. Phil was going for win number four, but shooting all three rounds in the 70s equated to Mickelson finishing tied for 47. Lefty is still in good spirits and is enjoying his time on PGA TOUR Champions.

OC>> Phil Mickelson with all the success you've had with each appearance on PGA TOUR Champions I kind of asked you this before but how has it shaped Your relationship, I would say with the tour,

OC/VO>> I have found that I enjoy it really enjoy playing these tournaments, not just because I've had success, but I really enjoy being around the guys here. And they've been so kind and appreciative and welcoming. And there's also the guys that I've known for decades that I've played against. And when I go into the locker room, we sit there and tell stories. I remember talking just last week when we were playing at Timiquana or two weeks ago, in the locker room, and we're talking about woody Austin and Aqua Man like, yeah, I was with him when he became Aqua Man back in oh seven. And it's like, wow, I was 14 years ago. I can't believe how fast it goes by. But there's so many great stories, because we've all lived it, and shared so many great moments together, that it's fun to be out here and talk about that. But it's also fun to compete, because these are guys that I've enjoyed trying to compete with. And for a long time, and I think I think we have a lot of fun doing that. But also, there's a lot of great camaraderie and stories there a lot of Ryder Cup experiences, you know, guys that Captain Layman and, and seeing Cory Pavan out here and kite and it's just really fun to be out here.

VO>> Why was it important to defend here at Dominion.

VO/OC>> I really liked this golf course, this is a great golf course. And this year, it's even better. And the reason it's better as the greens are firm and fast. And it brings out all the subtleties and nuances and creates a you have to have a strategy, you have to have great course management because you can hit good shots into a spot that you can't get up and down. And we didn't have that last year when it was soft and wet. So the golf course is spectacular. It's why it's held so many great tournaments here. But also, you know, like the other option was to go to Japan, I didn't really want to do that. And I wanted to come back and defend and I've been having fun playing these events. And I'd like to like to continue that.

VO>> Will you continue in the playoff situation, the schedule here on PGA TOUR Champions?

VO/OC>> I'm going to play in Phoenix, and I'm not sure about boca yet, I would say there's a good chance but I'm starting to play pretty good. And I want to try to test myself against the best again and not and these guys are playing great golf. But I'm talking about the young guys that are you know, hitting in miles and make a ton of birdies. And I think that I've had sporadic moments where I've been able to compete against them. I'm starting to see some glimpses of some signs of my game getting back to a really high level. I'd like to see where it's at.

OC>> What would going back to Phoenix and I know it’s Arizona your history there. Is it always special to go back and play?

OC/VO>> It is for me I've missed the last couple years at the Phoenix open and I have so many friends there and so many great relationships. I'd love to go back and play so this is giving me another chance to do that outside of the Phoenix Open and it's at a course it's really fun. Phoenix Country Club is very fun golf course to play. There's a few holes where I can kind of use some length and try to take advantage of some of the par fours and so forth but I enjoy getting back there and I'm looking forward playing.

VO>> If Mickelson decides to continue his playoff run next week, it would be in the timbertech championship in Boca Raton, Florida, where Darren Clarke is the defending champion. Then a field of 36 players are off to Phoenix, Arizona for the Charles Schwab Cup Championship, the final stock in this 39 event wraparound season, bringing to a conclusion our long journey home.

Still ahead, Lee Janzen represents why they play on PGA TOUR Champions, a two time major champion still finding the joy in preparation and after a long wait, victory.

Here's a reminder of the field size by events in the playoffs. Top 72 players in the Charles Schwab Cup standings qualified for the Dominion energy charity classic. 18 players were eliminated on Sunday. And now we are down to 54 who move on to the timbertech championship. One man who's hoping to make it all the way to Phoenix for the Charles Schwab Cup Championship is the feel good story winner of the SAS championship. Lee Janzen I caught up with lee ahead of last weeks stop in Virginia.

OC>> Lee Janzen went six years, eight months, two days between victories on PGA TOUR Champions. Congratulations on the win at the SAS. What drives you? What keeps you working in those periods between wins?

OC/VO>> Golf is frustrating. The other guys inspire me, you know Langer's inspiration the way he performs week in and week out. The other guys that win that have only won once or twice maybe it's their first win, you know, I'm like, okay, they've been waiting a long time to win. Doug Barron, Brett Quigley are two that waited a long time to win. It's very competitive, hard to win. And I would have said that two weeks ago or three weeks ago that it's very difficult to win and I still say it now.

OC/VO>> How do you keep the demons away because you're such a great player eight wins PGA Tour and of course the two US Open victories as well. How do you go you know I am good. This is this is who I am and stay in those moments.

VO/OC>> Well, ultimately, so the physical part of the game, everybody's pretty close out here. And after 30 something years of professional, we should have a pretty good understanding of our golf swing and what we're going to do and you got to make putts. But I think ultimately, the five guys or the 5% of guys that win all the time are the same. And it's more of a mindset. So they show up at a tournament they expect to win they expect to perform. And when they do perform, they just reinforces it. So you know, I when I watched Jim Furyk Steve Stricker, Ernie Els, those guys, Bernhard Langer, I'm leaving off some guys, but they perform consistently, you know, it's not a surprise to them, they keep doing it. And I really thought what I was missing was my mindset. Not that I wasn't trying or didn't want to win, but I needed to just be more comfortable. Shooting good scores. And getting in contention again, I've had a lot of weeks where I hit the ball great. And if I just putted anything, I could have had a chance to win. And then last week, I putted it, you know, as well as I've putted in years. And I hope it's not a one week thing, I hope it's here to stay. But you know, the two putts I made on 18, you know, kind of ridiculous. The second you think I have to make this, you're putting something on yourself, it's just another putt. Yeah, I've had 54 holes, to shoot better, whatever, you know, I'm just trying to make this one stay in the present. And I did a really good job of ignoring that actually. I think I had to birdie 18 to get into a playoff even though it was to go in the lead at the time. But so all I did was walk around, read the putt, and then assess exactly where I wanted to hit it. And I just got locked in on that spot. And that's all I did was aim at that spot and do my best to hit it right over that spot with the right speed. And executed.

So this is a downhill putt. Probably faster than what I had, it's gonna break a little right. So you know, you can see a little blemishes in the green or whatever, just a little marks. So that's why I was trying to pick something three or four feet out aim at and just get, make sure that I don't lose that.

And then, you know, then once I'm lined up, I'm thinking, okay, execute the stroke and what I'm working on. So for me, I feel like I'm pulling it inside and closing the face, which I'm not. That's just what I'm feeling

OC>> oh, that's a good roll. That's a very good roll.

OC>> Yeah, well, I didn't go in that time. It was perfect speed right behind the hole.

OC>> No, that's great. And what would it mean to you to go to Phoenix and really make a run for this thing?

OC>> well, it'd be playing with house money, wouldn't it? I already feel that way a little bit. Because a couple of weeks ago, was the first time I looked at how far behind I was 36. And I thought, well, that's gonna take a win, and I haven't even been close to a win. So let's just get in Boca. I thought maybe three top fives in a row might get me close. But now here I am at 37. So really a good week this week and I can actually buy a flight.

OC>> underplaying it again, one of the great guys on the tour. You’re the first guy I talked to in Phoenix too, you probably don't remember that. You know what your quote I said gee Lee It's great to talk to you and it's so calm and relaxed. I can get right to you. Would you say?

OC>> I forget.

OC>> You go, we’re over ourselves

OC>> We are.

OC>> Thank you so much.

VO>> When learning center returns, Bernard Langer reveals one of the secrets to his continued success. Yes, Bernie. We will still need you. When you're 64. That's ahead. Stay with us.

Phil Mickelson called him the gold standard of PGA TOUR Champions. ever the worker and our most recent winner at the Dominion energy charity classic among these greats, Bernard Langer has posted the highest winning percentage on this tour. Who better to help your game, this with a long iron. He's the subject of this week's What's your edge

OC>> Hi everyone, I got a four iron here today and my four iron goes about 195 yards and some people asked was it better to long iron or a hybrid? That depends on how good a player you are. Hybrids are definitely easier to hit. They have a rounder soul. You can use them in the rough better than a four iron and out of fairway bunkers and all that but many of the pros still and you know prefer the iron to hit especially from the fairway and off the tee. So on a four iron my salts are very similar to any other full shot. The Ball position is very important. It's slightly forward off center. Not quite to the left heel that's more where the three would and the drivers And I'm more of a sweeper of the golf ball. So there's diggers and sweepers, like, you know, diggers, they dig into the ground, they come in very steep, like, Parnevick would be that when you watch him, it balls on the range, it's, it's a lot of divots, you know, deep divots, that's not me, I sweep the ball off. So my sought is to make a full backswing load up into my right side, transfer the weight, and don't take a big divot, I'm more or less, sweeping the ball off the ground. So take a couple of looks, relax everything and make a full turn back and a full turn through. I like how balanced I was on this one, which is always a good sign. And you could see, I didn't even touch the grass. I had a good lie, which obviously helps. One thing I noticed often in pro AMS is when we play par threes and people tee up the golf ball and tee it up like this with an iron, which I think is way too high. Even this is way too high because you now have a tendency to hit that ball high on the face and it goes nowhere when you do that. So when you tee up the ball, I would always recommend to just have it off the just a little bit off the grass like that. Like you would almost hit it off the ground. So you don't have to change your swing because if the balls teed up too high you have to come up on it. So same thing everything else same full turn nicely back into your right side and through as well. Because for me, it's always better to hit the ball slightly thin then too high on the blade. It goes a little further that way hope it works for you.

VO>> Hale Irwins all time marker 45 PGA TOUR Champions wins seemed unbreakable, until Bernhard Langer began his relentless pursuit. While he trails Irwin, Langer became the oldest winner on this tour last weekend at age 64. There's no reason to believe that success won't continue for years to come.

OC>> And that's going to do it from our first playoff venue in Virginia. And now we follow the sun to the playoff semi final in Boca Raton, Florida at the timbertech championship, followed by the Charles Schwab Cup Championship at Phoenix Country Club. I'm Vince Cellini. Thank you for joining us and we'll see you next time on Learning Center.