VO>> PGA Tour Champions Learning Center

VO>> In a field full of star power the reigning PGA champion was hitting bombs and hit the mark the at inaugural Constellation Furyk and Friends.

VO>> Phil Michaelson made it three wins in four starts on the PGA tour champions, firing three rounds in the sixties at Timiquana Country Club to post a two shot victory with a fifteen under par total. Lefty came saw and conquered.

OC>> It was a hard fought battle I really enjoyed it I'm enjoying playing out here and I need to work on a few things like that mistake on five but I'm having fun doing it.

OC>> Welcome to Learning Center I'm Vince Cellini and over the weekend one of the strongest fields in PGA Tour Champions history competed in a sparkling new event on the tour schedule the Constellation Furyk and Friends and the Sunday finish did not disappoint. I mean how could it. With a recap of Sunday's final round let's go to the man who called the action Whit Watson and Lanny Wadkins.

OC>> Vince, In the days leading up to this inaugural event in Jacksonville we had talked Lanny about the strength of field and it was indeed a worthy champion, a member of the world golf hall of fame as a matter of fact one of nine in this field this week, Phil Mickelson who pulled off the win. Combination of his typical aggressive play and on the final hole on Sunday playing things a little bit more down the middle.

OC>> Well he went and put it in the fairway finally but he fought the driver all week, I mean for as fine of golf as Phil played he played out of the trees a number of times. I thought got kind of lucky a few times to have swings, have shots, saved pars on the places he put it. He even lost a ball on the fifth hole today so he was fighting the driver but when it came down to the end he did put that two wood in the fair way to eighteen but a wonderful nine iron in there.

VO>> Let’s take a look at the highlights from Sunday in the final round starting off with Mickelson for birdie at the twelfth.

VO>> Yeah good shot in here and just a beautiful little putt down the slope. Really well done there for Phil.

VO>> He was only one under par to that point that got him to two under for the day and thirteen under for the week

VO>> Miguel Angel Jiminez trying to put some pressure on at fourteen.

VO>> Yes things had gotten close they were sitting here he's only two back Miguel had the tee and hits a wonderful shot into about eight, ten feet. Just a beautiful shot.

VO>> Jimenez would make the birdie there and they were tied for the lead at thirteen under. Mickelson made a birdie at fifteen, Jiminez could only manage a par there. This was the second shot from the middle of the fairway at eighteen.

VO>> Yeah Miguel had hit the very poor second, Phil just six feet. It looks like it's over but you have to wait for everything to happen and Phil had two putts from here to win.

VO>> Jiminez long birdie putt grazed the edge. Mickelson had two putts like you said didn't need it. Made birdie at the last and fifteen under par is the winning score at the very first Constellation Furyk and Friends. Miguel Angel Jimenez with a sixty eight on the final round as well. Steve Flesch finishing five shots back. The tournament host Jim Furyk part of a tie for fourth at minus nine. Mickelson three wins on the PGA tour champions in four starts. Vince we'll send it back to you.

VO>> Thank you, gentlemen. The updated Charles Schwab Cup standings roll out this way. Five times Schwab Cup champion Bernard Langer still on top finishing T-7 in Jacksonville. Tournament host Jim Furyk and Jerry Kelly giving chase with one regular season event remaining, the upcoming SAF championship in North Carolina. With the win Mickelson joins Fred Couples as one of the fastest players to get to three wins. Each did so in their first four starts. He's enjoying the course set ups and the different vibe on the over fifties circuit and it shows. Mickelson's broken par in eleven of twelve rounds on the PGA tour champions. Last week I spoke with the six time major winner about this flashback feel.

OC>> Wow. These events are really fun to plan and it's a kind of golf that I really enjoy where they're not putting pins two and a half paces from the edge of the green and trying to make it tricky. It's like we're playing our club and we're testing each other challenge each other and competing against each other again and so the course set up in the environment is very much like what I experience in the nineties when I was growing up for the tour just getting started, a lot of the same guys I get to play against and see again and a more similar set up where you can be aggressive. You can get up and down if you miss a green on the short side right. So I've really enjoyed playing competing in these even though I haven't done a lot of I hope to do more

VO>> We love you out here. At fifty-one you're still a great player obviously but how do you see yourself in in other roles like I see you almost as a golf ambassador to a certain extent to is sort of spreading the game of golf I mean where do you, where do you see it that's the external look

OC>> I'm not sure I haven't really thought of it in that light I've been trying to figure out like what it is I want to do in this next chapter in the next decade and I know how important golf is to me because it has allowed me to have something very positive in my life to focus a lot of my mental thoughts and attention to that I simply can't shut off like I just my brain is constantly going and it's going towards something healthy I'll be up at night thinking gosh I wish I did this to a club or what if I swung at this way or try this to my swing so it's been a very healthy thing for me if I don't have that what is it that wanted it that's going to replace that purpose and direction that I have and so that's challenging for me to see so I'm appreciative of some like the Champions Tour because if I'm not able to play or compete at the highest level on PGA tour having something like this is still very fun and meaningful.

VO>> Look for more from our interview with Phil Mickelson next week in the Charles Schwab Cup playoffs preview. Phil Mickelson was an assistant captain in last month's Ryder Cup to Steve Stricker. It was the captain's first event since lifting the Ryder Cup and it was another solid performance as tied for seventh finish wasn't enough to bring home the trophy at the Constellation Furyk and Friends but he didn't go home empty handed.

OC>> Always a pleasure to spend time with Steve Stricker the victorious U. S. Ryder Cup captain and I'm gonna quote a former president and say our long national nightmare is over. This guy's in U. S. hands again so yeah about that how does a travel with you? How do you take it around? Too big for a keychain.

OC>> Well goes in a nice metal box that we take everywhere it seems like lately but it's been fun to have around it's been sitting on our kitchen table this last week quite a bit and my daughter was doing homework and she had it plastered right in front of her computer screen so it's definitely a family thing and it's been great to have around.

OC>> You know you've been such a great player and an ambassador of the game. I wonder how much of this Steve in the process was sort of giving back to the game a little bit and what exactly your tribute maybe to golf through this.

OC>> Oh boy that's had to tough one I mean I don't see it that way I guess I feel like I was brought on to help you know and being from Wisconsin you know I never thought I'd be a captain you know let's put it that way you know I mean they had the rule having to win a major to be a captain and they put that by the side so I was just lucky and blessed to be able to do it in my home state. The team came together so well they got they got on board real early in the steel and they bought into everything and I was just so happy and tickled to see how they came together as one just to try to win this to bring this back home

OC>> The young guys in being Ryder Cup rookie players was a really big talking point going in and as it turns out you were spot on with those guys getting them in the mix and why was that why did that recipe works so well?

OC>> Well there's they're good for one they're really talented and really good and they've performed in big tournaments and they've showed that they can handle the pressure and there's nothing bigger than stepping on the tee for your country in the Ryder Cup.

VO>> Know you talk about conversations sort of behind the scenes I wonder if you can share with us maybe a moment or two it took place off camera behind the scenes that that really help maybe defined this moving forward. Was there a moment or two?

VO/OC>> There was a lot of them really but I think the biggest thing that we did was Monday, Monday evening I called each of our groups and we had laid out what the pairings were going to be on Friday. So we knew exactly on Monday what to expect on Friday. We had confidence in every single player that they were playing well and our goal was to get everybody out there. They knew that going forward I think that helped in the preparation of the rest of the week. We also left open the saying that things could be different on Saturday but if we go out strong on Friday with that morning pairing expect that same morning pairing come out Saturday because why mess with it right. And that's what happened they came out three one so we just rolled that right back in on Saturday and they did it again three one. It was a great week.

OC>> Was their consideration of possibly pairing Bryson and Brooks together?

VO/OC>> It came pretty close. It came really close. The week prior to the Ryder Cup our analytical team that we use Brooks and Bryson was one of our strongest teams. So I told Bryson that during the practice session there ten days out and he's like I'll do it I'm in I'll do it and that's before Brooks even knew the stats part of it unbeknownst to all of us Brooks you know coming out to the course when they just realize that Hey if you need me to play with Bryson I'm all in. And that circulated around the team, I told all the assistants we had that in our back pocket if we wanted to and it never materialized but they were very willing.

OC>> Now through bringing these young guys and you've really set the foundation for future Ryder cups. I mean these guys are set to be strong for a long time, aren’t they?

OC/VO>> Potentially that it’s, there right? I mean they've got this under their belt already a positive experience winning the Ryder Cup you know. Obviously, the challenge is going to be the next time when we go overseas to play over there. That's always a challenge but they're so extremely talented and confident and nice guys our atmosphere our team room was so casual laid back everybody got along they'll check their egos at the door it seems like to me and they were willing to do anything.

VO>> We saw some of the celebration on camera, so I bet that was fun. I mean it really escalated quickly.

OC/VO>> It was a little too quick for some of those rookies they didn't they didn't see very much later on in the evening but they sure had a great time and that's what that's what cool. I mean some of these guys are so young you know they don't even drink and you get a quick got a couple drinks of alcohol in a minute turn south pretty quickly so but it was it was great fun and it was a magical weekend so lucky and fortunate to be part of it

VO/OC>> It's great to be on the Champions Tour with guys you’ve played with for a long time but I can't imagine now how this is even strengthened friendships that you have with Davis and Fred and Phil and Zach you know those guys.

OC>> Yeah I had Davis and Freddie and Jim with me at the President's Cup when I was a captain there so to have those guys be a part of this Ryder Cup Tiger was in the wings, talked to him a crazy amount of times leading up to the Ryder Cup he was instrumental in providing some his support and guidance obviously. Phil being new to this yeah I think it was a good learning experience he's going to be a captain I'm sure someday and then Zach too so it was a treat to hear some of the things going through my earbud from Phil Mickelson I'll tell you that stuff I can't repeat on air. It was so cool and he was so fired up, they all were, they were extremely important to have on this team and they provided a great foundation for all the guys

OC>> Alright well the trophies here, you're here and congratulations once again on a job well done.

VO>> Stricker's competition in the Ryder Cup and last week as well was Padraig Harrington who made his PGA Tour Champions debut. A tie for fifty fifth is not the start key players Padraig Harrington was looking for as for the European Ryder Cup captain he still had to answer a few questions as to why the U. S. team was so dominant in last month's competition. Saying essentially the Americans adopted the euro strategy

OC>> Everything that we've tried to do over the years they're doing it. Right down to it you know even right down to the stats you know where they try to play their weakest team against our best team so they’re trying to get their one two and three against our two three and four and which is you know the smart way to getting the most results out of four matches and you know you could so I could see everything there was nothing yes they were well prepared. There was nothing that we're doing in Europe, there's no secrets and no we did it we did everything we could in Europe the team really pulled together and I think all the way to the team I couldn't ask more from everybody in the team and that's not just players, the caddies were brilliant and the wives to the immediate family, everybody with the you know under some tough circumstances everybody was pulling in the same direction so you know we can't second guess our performance just Europe did a sorry U. S. did a great job and all the way through and you know they got their stats right everything like that day in terms of picking you know every everything they did was spot on with they learned from us.

VO>> It appears the U. S. squad did their homework. Still to come, would you like to get up and down from the sand over fifty percent of the time? If so you should take a piece of advice from a player who does just that. When learning center returns the Big Easy with some big information.

VO>> Starting this Friday it's the thirty sixth and final regular season event of the 2020-2021 PGA Tour Champions season. The SAS championship at Prestonwood Country Club in Cary, North Carolina. The three event Charles Schwab Cup playoffs begin next week.

VO>> Ernie Els is the 2020 SAS champion, he defeated Colin Montgomerie by one stroke to earn his second PGA Tour Champions win in his rookie season. Els began the final round three strokes back and was one over par through five holes of the final round but Ernie birdied seven of his final thirteen holes including number seventeen and eighteen. he made this 40 footer on eighteen to ultimately win in style. Ernie Els is the subject of this week's, what's your edge?

OC>> Okay we find ourselves in a bunker yeah, quite a deep one you know with quite a high lip. I've got about twenty five thirty yards to my target although a greenside bunker shots a long bunker shot I'm using my sixty degrees sand iron and as you can see here guys ladies and gentlemen is we've got the nice bounce on the club here. you know you here your teachers talk about the bounce of the club while it's pretty important we want to use the back of the club meaning the back of the club is going to be making contact with the sand preferably like off an inch short of the ball. You don't want to be hitting on the ball you also don't want to be free feel like you're trying to lift the ball out of the sand. You really want to hit the sand really pretty hard with the back of the club your hear that nice thumping sound the only way you’re gonna get that is you make a big swing. So open the club face a little bit so we can feel that bounce of the club at the back of the club a move in my stance a little bit because I got twenty five yards to go so open it up hands behind the ball a little bit and I'm gonna make a nice big swing and the back of the club's gonna hit the sand. Going to come out nice and high you’re gonna get a bit of spin but remember use the back of the club very important.

VO>> Jesper Parnevik has made twenty one starts this season but he won't be competing anytime soon. the Swed underwent hip surgery last week in Vail, Colorado he said his hip quote has been bad for years and now looks forward to feeling great once again. Here's hoping for a speedy recovery for Jesper. When learning center continues they sing and swing an all access pass round of golf with major performers Jim Furyk, Darius Rucker and Scotty McCreery. It's note worthy.

VO>> Last week's Constellations Furyk and Friends, country music stars Darius Rucker and Scotty McCreery put on a concert benefiting the Furyk Foundation prior to that these gents played a round of golf with the host and self learning center brings you inside the ropes with this V.I.P access.

OC>>The thing is the golfers want to sing and the singers want to golf.

OC>> That’s my partner I think I’m able to get a par from there.

OC>> Definitely play golf better than I sing I know that.

OC>> I agree with that.

OC>> You look like the pro in this group right now.

OC>> Yeah right.

OC>> That’s my partner right now.

OC>> But I started playing seriously in my twenties, I started to play seriously. To get away to go play golf before on a show day or something like that, takes you away from all the work you have to do, makes it fun. Makes the day fun. Not sitting around doing nothing. Go in.

OC>> Darius, met him back in the Hootie days got to know him a lot better as a country singer we played our very first Furyk and Friends eleven years ago. Just amazing this is now his third time back at our event.

OC>> One up Scotty, one up.

OC>> Right out of the gate

OC>> How does it feel to hit a golf ball like that?

OC>> That one felt really good.

OC>> Tapped into some unfound power here.

OC>> I have. I’m hitting the ball further than I’ve ever hit it.

OC>> Found out your secret I need to do that late in life myself

OC>> Go

OC>> Man I just want I want to hit one as good as Darius.

OC>> Yeah right.

OC>> So smooth

OC>> I realize you don’t play a lot of golf but if you gave me a mic and put a camera in my face and said hey sing the first verse, I’d be [EXPLICIT] my pants right now.

OC>> Alright its time to wake up Scooter. One of the Rascals just got here.

OC>> Is that fighter jets?

OC>> That's NAS Jax. It looks like a top gun show here for a lot of days.

OC>> Golly the rascals are still in bed.

OC>> Look at this. Good birdie.

OC>> I spent a lot of time not caring about being good then I got into my probably twenty five twenty six when I said okay it’s too fun a game to be bad at so I finally started practicing. We got a little better still not all the way there. This allows me to do what I do and there’s so much time during the day if you get lost you also stay up a little too late the night before it gives you good reason to get to bed and get up in the morning it's a great place to clear your head.

OC>> Get in. Get in. Great par. That was a workingman's five right there.

OC>> Fluff do we call that par that Scotty made?

OC>> That’s a Furyk five.

OC>> That’s like the most back handed compliment I’ve gotten right there.

OC>> So with Jacksonville behind us and the SAS Championship ahead, we look forward to next week when the playoffs begin. And we have a one hour special that will set you up on everything you need to know It's a Charles Schwab Cup playoffs preview that comes your way Tuesday October nineteenth at eight PM eastern that's gonna to do it for our show I'm Vince Cellini and we'll see you then.