VO>> A champion. It's more than just a title, it's a feeling, a spirit they fought for it, they earned it, and they embody it. A champion’s work is never finished, champions always have something to play for there's still a title up for grabs. This is their last chance at victory this season. This is the Charles Schwab Cup championship.

PGA Tour Champions Learning Center

OC>> hello and welcome to the road to the Schwab Cup special, I'm Vince Cellini and what a season it's been in fact what a double season it's been and it reaches its conclusion this week at the Charles Schwab Cup championship. The highlights during the season were many, so let's take a look back at the best winning moments from all thirty eight events.

VO>> ((announcer calls)) and there it is Miguel Angel Jimenez. Brett Quigley wins here in morocco. Beautiful playing by Scott Parel. Win number 41 for Bernhard Langer. Ernie Els in his third start on the PGA Tour champions gets his first victory. Jim Furyk becomes the 19th player in PGA Tour Champions history to win in his debut. Jerry Kelly is the winner of the 2020 Bridgestone Senior Players Championship. And there it is, Shane Bertsch. Phil Mickelson becomes the 20th debut winner in the history of the PGA TOUR Champions.

OC/VO>> The competition here is really strong and it was fun for me to compete.

VO>> ((announcer calls)) Miguel Angel Jimenez. Jim Furyk is a champion at Pebble Beach. Ernie Els buried it wow. Phil Mickelson is undefeated on the PGA TOUR Champions. Darren Clarke finally hits the winner's circle. After nine playoff holes Kevin Sutherland is the winner. Kevin Sutherland wins the cologuard classic.

OC/VO>> It's tough to win anywhere and I'm happy to get it done

VO>> ((announcer calls)) Mike Weir wins for the first time on the PGA TOUR Champions. What a putt by Alex Cejka. Dickey pride is the winner of the Mitsubishi Electric classic.

OC/VO>> It's huge now one on all three tours, which is something I always wanted to do.

VO>> ((announcer calls)) First ever to win his first two Senior Major starts. and he pours it in how about that. Steve stricker is your 2021 Bridgestone senior players champion. Cameron Beckman has won the 2021 Dick's Sporting Goods open. Jim Furyk has become the eighth man to win the US Open and the US Senior Open Championship. Take a bow, Steven dodd. Doug Baron for the second time a winner on the PGA TOUR Champions. A big sigh of relief for Joe and a great win. David Toms is the winner. Darren Clark, takes the Sanford international. KJ Choi has his first win on the PGA TOUR Champions. Fabulous Phil a three time winner on the PGA TOUR Champions. Oh man did he pour that in. Win number 42 for Bernhard Langer. Steven Alker for a two shot win how about that, Steven Alker a first time winner on the PGA Tour Champions.

OC>> When it comes to winning moments, Bernard Langer has had enough for three or maybe four different careers on the over 50 circuit. He joins us now Bernard, great to see you as always. Right out of the box, are you more proud of the numbers or the longevity of your career?

OC>> Probably the longevity is probably harder than the numbers. You know, some people get really hot for a number of years. But to be good for four decades is not easy.

OC>> Almost five now. Just a reminder, I want to ask you to fill in the blank, please. Winning a sixth Schwab Cup means

OC/VO>> a great deal just because the time is ticking. And I know it could be the last one. And it's, you know, it's something nobody's ever done before. And that's what we all strive to do out here.

VO/OC>> You know, you inspire the other players and that's not exactly a question but so many guys look at you and see that you continue to pursue this with such passion. And it is really inspirational out here. How important is it to, to give back and inspire and to really cherish these moments on PGA Tour champion.

OC>> I appreciate you saying that. But again, I'm very blessed and fortunate to be doing something I enjoy doing. And I try to be somewhat inspirational, not just to my colleagues out here but to all golfers aging golfers let's put it that way without putting a number on it. And don't ever forget the ball doesn't know how old we are.

OC>> How long can this pursuit of excellence go? I mean have you have you thought about the finish line at all? Or is it just staying the moment

OC/VO>> I think more about the finish line than ever I'm certainly in the back nine of my career maybe the last three holes I don't know but you know, it's certainly more on my mind than ever before but whenever that time is hopefully I know the right time to call it quits. And still you know finish strong with whatever I'm going to do in the future.

VO/OC>> And some numbers you're in total you finished in the top 10 in 68% of your events, top three and 36% of your starts, 11 senior major championships is a record. And as we talked about before, and I know you're not necessarily a numbers guy, but as you've moved closer to the all time win mark, is it important is it important to check that off the list.

OC>> Not necessarily not for me at this time. You know, I could have gotten there if I hadn't lost a few playoffs or finished second a number of times but it just shows how special a player Hale Irwin was to win that many times is very exceptional. And I always said it's unlikely for me to get there. And if I do wonderful, but I'm out here day by day just trying to do the best I can and you know if that leads to W fantastic if it if it's 15th finish or 20th, so be

OC>> you turned pro in 1972 at age 15. So this is almost 50 years of being a professional player and I just wonder if once and for all you have an opportunity to tell the world that you are indeed an Android, you're not a real human being, this as your chance

OC>> that had to come from fred funk I think.

OC>> No, it's really, it's really incredible. And as you look back on that, I mean, do you have time to reflect in kind of those moments of quiet and peace?

OC/VO>> Every once in a while. I don't go there too often. But every once in a while, I pinch myself and say, wow, it's unbelievable. You're 64 now and you've been doing this on tours since 76, which is what's that? 45 years on tour alone. So it's, yeah, it's something I would have never dreamed of growing up in a tiny, you know, small village in Bavaria, where golf is nothing. And here I am traveling the world playing with kings and queens and royalties. And, you know, meeting people like you and just living in Florida never dreamt of any of that.

VO>> No one has won more Schwab cups than Bernard Langer. Perhaps someday his name will also adorn the trophy, his first came in 2010 at age 53, he won three in a row from 2014 to 2016, and most recently in 2018.

Jim Furyk’s road to the Schwab Cup finale started in August of 2020, capturing his first two events on the PGA TOUR Champions. What are his goals moving forward? We will hear from him next, stay with us.

When Jim Furyk won the US Senior Open in July, it was his third career win on PGA TOUR Champions. With a victory he also joined Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, Gary Player, Lee Trevino, Billy Casper, Hale Irwin, and Orville moody, as the only eight men to win both the US Open, and the US Senior Open. Talk about select company. I spoke with Jim about his experience as a player and event host.

OC>> Tell me about your year and really the double year that it was and kind of this journey.

OC/VO>> Yeah, I really don't. I don't have anything else to compare it to. Does that make sense? So I like to say that the champions tour you know, our events feel more like a track meet where PGA Tours four rounds a little longer week. That feels more like a marathon each and every week. This is more like a track meet but I guess the season was a little bit more like a marathon with the wrap around more like a year and a half, you know, closer to two years than one. But I really don't know any no any different. I don't have anything to compare it to in the past, I went through a lot of events, with no fans not a lot of build out. Now I'm starting to kind of on the tail end of this. We'll say wrap around on the tail end of the season. I'm starting to see some events kind of in their usual and a little more fans a bigger build out just more enthusiasm at the golf course. And it's been a lot more fun.

OC>> What's it like to be a rookie again, and given thought to possible rookie years? Longest rookie campaign ever

Crosstalk

OC/VO>> You know, for me for Ernie, for, you name it a bunch of guys Mike Weir, KJ Choi, so a lot of us hitting a rookie year. You know, it is a little bit like being a rookie again. And that I don't know where the golf courses are, you know, need to play an extra practice round kind of get used to things. So there was a little bit more prep work. I got the tournament's maybe a little bit earlier that first year than I would have maybe for the rest of my career. Now that I know the golf course is in getting into this late part of the season at SAS at dominion. Here at timbertech. I've played these golf courses before, so it's nice to come back to a comfortable place. And somewhere I've been

VO/OC>> Have you thought about this rookie of the year honor thing?

OC/VO>> Yeah, I mean, we're coming down at the end of the year. So there is a rookie of the year. There is a in that fact, there's also, you know, Player of the Year and the Schwab Cup. And, you know, that's kind of the time of the year where, you know, it's the playoff season. Everyone's kind of jockeying for position.

VO/OC>> You're beyond a player, you actually hosted your own event this year. And you and Tabitha did a wonderful job in Jacksonville. And I was just wondering when you had a chance to kind of come up for air from all of that, how satisfying that was and how different it was for you in any capacity in golf.

OC>> it's definitely different. I've played in my home event before say the players, but to actually be the host to see the work that Tabitha put into it that our team put into it and then see that come to fruition and there's a lot of fun and I won't lie it wasn't a lot of work for me on the build up, the week of was a lot of work. And so a lot of functions, a lot of things off the golf course that I usually don't see. And so, but it was a fun week. It was a fun week exhausting I took a couple days off afterwards and took my time to get up to carry for the SAS. And I didn't go in there until Thursday morning to be honest with you. So just want to spend a little time at home and decompress. And we feel very blessed. So we got a lot of positive feedback.

OC>> It was a glamour event.

OC/VO>> And everyone says, first year is the hardest. And so I hope, I hope that's correct. But it gave us a great platform now we can build on that we can, you know, I don't know if make changes is the right thing. But we can nip and tuck we, you know, I think we have a great platform to build on and we can make that event better and better each year.

OC>> Hell have a run the Charles Schwab Cup. And I'm just wondering, you know, how excited you are to really get your hands on one of those, you know, or multiple trophies as well.

OC/VO>> Well, what you see it's a season long race. So we're trying to win, I'm trying to win and everyone is trying to win as many golf tournaments as you can as many major championships as you can. But, you know, one of the highlights definitely of my career was winning the fedexcup on the PGA Tour, you know, I got crowned Player of the Year that year in 2010. That's a great memory of mine and something that I really cherish and it was a reward for having a great season. So you come out to the champions tour, you're trying to do the same thing you want to win the Schwab Cup and win that season long race so again, this year is a little bit different. It's kind of a two year season super season. Maybe you should get maybe the winners should get two schwab cups this year.

OC>> Sure. Book ends. Thanks so much. It's been great having you out here. Thank you.

VO>> When we return a closer look at whose game is peaking, and who has the edge to win the final event of the season, the Charles Schwab Cup Championship. By the time we get to Phoenix, it's on.

Welcome back to road to the Schwab Cup. And the road ends here at phoenix Country Club. A classic course in the heart of the city, where accuracy off the tee is essential. It has history and looks to add even more this week.

So how did we get to this point, the top 72 in the Charles Schwab Cup standings made it to Richmond, Virginia for the first event 18 players were eliminated, which meant a field of 54 competed in the timbertech championship. And now we are down to the final 36 and one man will walk away with the Charles Schwab Cup at the end of the week.

OC>> No one knows more about PGA TOUR Champions and the double season than these gentlemen, John Cook and Billy Ray Brown. And guys, you lived it. So Billy, start with you. I mean, this has been quite a journey home hasn’t it?

OC>> It's certainly been when you combine, you know, last year in this year, and now you have just an epic battle coming down the stretch, you know, this final week here in Phoenix. it's anybody's game. But what we've seen for the first time, the dominance of some of the rookies players coming out that we haven't seen in past years, and that's been the big key for me.

OC>> Yeah, part of that new wave, I guess.

OC/VO>> Yeah. What I'm impressed about is, you know how they supported the tour the PGA TOUR Champions, Jim Furyk played almost every event Ernie Els played almost every single event to have those guys commit to this tour and play as well as they did is just says something about PGA TOUR Champions.

OC>> Did you think it was going to work out this way? When they talked about combining the seasons, be honest

OC/VO>> It’s just it's long. It's a long, it's a long haul. But you know, I think we've seen the best of everybody. We've seen Bernhard Langer's played every single event Ernie Els is committed. Jim Furyk is committed, Retief is committed I mean that the Hall of Fame names have committed to this tour for the long haul. It's been it's been great. Great to watch

VO/OC>> ever since I've been doing this show. I mean, it's all about Bernhard Langer. It's really incredible. And I don't even know where to start. Obviously, he's leading but to win at 64. You were there.

OC/VO>> Well, you know, there's a lot of questions you know, by everybody at the start of the year can Langer continue to play well, and there's a lot of doubters but you know, two weeks ago in Richmond he answered a lot of questions you know, even myself was starting to think okay Bernie this year and last year put himself in position almost multiple times that he had a chance to win and someone came back and beat him he didn't lose it but for him to win in Richmond and add to a Schwab Cup points lead amazing to me

OC>> cookie he's has to be one of the all time all time greats

OC/VO>> all time grinders yeah, I think he just out works. Everybody out, prepares everybody he's in on Tuesdays or Mondays. You know, he and terry are charting the course. I mean, he takes it like a business like he wants to do this forever. And I'm not gonna doubt that guy. He might do this forever.

VO/OC>> And Ithink that's been a big key for him the doubters, you know, okay, I'm gonna prove you wrong because when you win number 42, 42 Champions Tour wins is three behind now of Hale Irwin I believe, and that's the thing. He answered a lot, a lot of questions, but all he needs is a little motivation just a little bit because he's already you know, so prepared when he goes into a tournament

OC>> is he again, the story of the year sixth, you know, Schwab Cup nobody's had more than two

OC/VO>> Yeah you’d have to think that there's a lot of stories out there but Bernhard Langer leading the Schwab Cup going into, you know, into the playoffs, then winning the first event, you know, having won after 33 events of not winning and having the wherewithal and the fortitude to come back and win, you know, 33 events later it has to be a story of the year.

OC>> Well, you know, you talk about it to John, we get a lot of phone calls from guys from the PGA Tour. They're locked in on this too they want to see Langer do this again, because it's just not our little group from the PGA Tours champion. It is golf in general, it's a golfing world and our tour back here PGA Tour. Definitely the younger guys are watching what Langer does.

OC>> Rookie of the Year this year.

OC/VO>> Oh, you can throw some names in there. Phil, obviously with three wins and five events. If he played a little bit more, maybe he'd be more of a name for rookie the Ernie Els certainly has had a great rookie season winning multiple times. But Jim Furyk there each and every single week, no backdoor top 10s. He's right in the mix. Every time he plays,

OC>> in my opinion, hands down Tim Furyk.

OC/VO>> Alright, so let's just put a final touch on this Phoenix Country Club this week, winning this particular event, you guys have covered many of them. I mean, what does it mean to win this capper and to finish the season?

VO/OC>> Well, first and foremost, it's uh, it's number one on everyone's goal, you know, want to win the schwab cup, but also to win the tournament itself, right. So really, we have two tournaments going on at the same time, but to actually hold the trophy for winning the tournament, but also the schwab cup. That's number one on every player's goal on the PGA TOUR Champions at the start of this long year and a half race that we've had. So it will be something that will stick in the trophy case it’s gonna be front and center.

OC/VO>> Wonderful, wonderful golf course. Great venue. Phoenix Country Club has been part of the PGA TOUR Champions for, you know, 50 60 years of professional golf. So to get back at a great club at the Phoenix Country Club, right downtown. It's right there. It's a golf course on about 110 acres. I mean, it's very tiny, but it's a beautiful golf course. It'll be in pristine condition. You know, the weather is gonna be great. It's gonna be a great week.

OC>> So this is really the end, right? This is it.

OC>> So they say.

OC>> As far as we know, as far as we know I cannot imagine us not crowning a champion Sunday night.

OC>> Billy Ray Brown, John Cook. Thank you very much, guys. Great insights

VO>> And that will do it. I'm Vince Cellini, and this has been the road to the Schwab Cup. Thank you for coming along for the ride. The big finish is next.