**PGA Tour Champions Learning Center Show 41 Transcript**

VO>> Welcome to PGA tour champions learning center. I'm Vince Cellini. This week is the second of three playoff events in the chase for the Charles Schwab Cup. The old course at Broken Sound will take center stage beginning this Friday with the opening round of the timber tech championship. Bernard Langer he just keeps rolling along and enters this week leading the Charles Schwab Cup and fresh off his playoff victory in the Dominion Energy Charity Classic. The win was his forty second overall on this tour. And he is now won at least one event each year for a stretch of fifteen consecutive years. At sixty-four years one month and twenty-seven days, Langer became the oldest winner on the PGA Tour Champions. His victory snapped a winless streak of six hundred two days dating back to the 2020 Colorguard Classic. At thirty-four starts it was his longest drought between victories on this tour. If Langer is to win again this week, he'll have to go through the defending champion Darren Clarke. Who won in 2020 although the event was not a part of the Charles Schwab Cup playoffs it was Clarke’s first career win on the senior circuit. Since then, he's added two more victories. Clarke is a force in play and in personality.

OC>> It's always fun to spend time with Darren Clarke and Darren I always think of you like a pitcher in baseball you want to lead the league in wins. And you know what that might happen but not only are you winning but it seems like you're winning and you're happier. All the way from Hawaii to Sue Falls.

OC>> Yeah but it's been a very good year for me you know winning three times so far. And you know it's what I always wanted to do. You know whenever we bought our house on the Bahamas in 2004 and it was always my plan from then to play Champions tour. Touch wood. The place I best myself there and commute in and out of there. And you know as we just said there just before we started you know when a plan comes together, they don't always come together but this one a sort of come together so far. So, you know I pinch myself sometimes because I'm lucky I'm living in the Bahamas (INAUDIBLE) Winding Bay having a beautiful time coming out and playing golf. And I'm this year I’ve been playing nicely.

OC>> We're so happy for your good fortune there too. And Darren it seems like you're more settled in your game at least from the from the outside because your kind of a tweaker right?

OC>> Yeah.

OC>> Little bit?

OC>> Yeah yeah yeah.

OC>> But you're settled in your game now you feel good?

OC>> Well I am, you know I've been working. A bit of work with a guy called Rob Watts back home in the U. K. when I was over there for the open and then the senior open. And then I've been working with Jason Bale and Lance Skill out of Jupiter hills. And little bit of TPI stuff quite a bit of TPI stuff still from Lance. And Jason's the swinger. And you know it's amazing because you know you think as you get older you want to come out here and be a little bit more chilled about it and what have you. Which to some extent we are but at the same time if you're not working somebody else is. If you want to win you you've still got to put the hours in. You know these guys are flat out good we know their flat out good. If you don't, if you're not playing well if you're not putting well if you are not chipping well, you're not going to have a chance to win. And at the end of the day as it appears, I am a happy go lucky guy most of the time but the professional golfer inside me still wants to win still want to compete still wants to win. So you know I still work my rather large rear off to try and get there.

OC>> That's why we're out here, you are out here to win no question about it. How much feedback did you get on the putter place in Sue Falls.

VO/OC>> That was one of those scenarios where what I grew up playing links golf in Ireland or links golf in the UK. So, putting from that distance away from the hole that’s no biggie that's standard. Keep the ball on the ground use the ground and let that be your favor. And that particular flag was just above a ridge a big ridge of the slope so. If you nip a low wedge it gets to the top it’s just going to come all the way back down. If you don't nip it enough then it goes into the just past the flag. So, I was playing a percentage shot that I felt comfortable with. And I thought right okay well I can putt this. This is because it was right at the front of the green. And the first time I hit a decent one, regulation based on the second hole. Got up there just a little bit short come back down and holed it. Second time hit driver up there again, a little bit of the stubbornness came in. And I had to putt it again. And then the third time when I go up there again people in the crowd were shouting putt it. This guy's shouting chip it, this guy shouting putt it. This guy was shouting chip it. I reach for my lob wedge hey, I reach for the putter hey. But you know I hit the exactly same putt from twenty minutes to go in regulation play. So you know it's Americans American golf for the most part most American people see a low wedge in the air. European see a little bit more on the ground and I saw that one on the ground. And I'm trying to take the spin out and it was just a question that I got my speed right. Took me three goals but I got it eventually.

OC>> No you got it was wonderful it was wonderful to watch and that's who you are. Speaking to who you are and who you work with, Sandy Armors on your bag and not to disparage anybody else who ever worked for you at all, but I just wonder about that relationship and how that has factored into your success.

OC/VO>> Yeah Sandy started working for me almost a year ago to the day. He’s a wonderful man you know because he's been a professional golfer himself. And you know spent a lot of time out playing different tours around the world. Happy for his brother for a very long time. And had a very successful spell with Oldham Brian. And you know I was very fortunate that you know I got a conversation with Oldham. And Oldham said you know I’m winding a little bit. Because he knew that I liked Sandy, I got along well with him. He said if you want to ask Sandy then please do and I did. And you know he's been a great companion to have on the golf course. Caddies are more than just carrying the clubs you know they got to understand and sometimes the players quirkiness should we say.

OC>> They have to know how to push the right buttons or say at the right times or not say at the right time?

OC>> At the right time yes. And Sandy’s gotten to know me I think the first time I sort of got a little bit pessimism he was like oh. But he's gotten to know me and he understands me. You know he's brilliant. And that he’s there on the range with me. He wants nothing but good for me as most caddies do. But Sandy’s a very genuine man and I'm very fortunate to have him on the bag. As well as (INAUDIBLE). He’s a great man and he's a wonderful caddie.

OC>> Can I get personal with you?

OC>> Yeah sure okay. Not too much but (LAUGHS).

OC>> Don't worry don't worry. I know you work to try to manage your weight.

OC>> Yeah, I’m up and down.

OC>> That's manageable for you so what's the optimum and what is your goal in that regard and how does it affect your play?

OC/VO>> Well I have four wardrobes Vince. I've got not bad, dodgy, and then bad, and oh I don’t really want to talk about that one. That one’s not good. And it was edging toward this wardrobe right here, so I figure I had to do something so. Vijay has been on to me, I play quite a few practice rounds with Vijay and Vijay was onto me. He said you got to try this you got to try this. So, he ran into a guy called GMC (INAUDIBLE) who owns a company called Hyperbody based out of London. So, it's like a neoprene suit you put on and it comes to here and here, but it's covered in electoral panels. So, I connect a little battery pack to it. I connect to that he connects to my phone and we work out of via zoom. So, he watches me at work. So, he's controlling the intensity of the suit so I got to be careful I don't use too much bad language to him because he puts up the intensity of the suit up all the time. But it's very good it's a very you know you have days when your muscles, fine working on your muscles you got all the stuff going through you so. It's been very good, but you know as well it's for my own health as I’m getting too big. I've always been that way sort of when I get too big then I go full wack the other way. I'm sort of a little bit that OCD gets involved. And yeah, I saw myself at so many of the, at the senior British and I thought man this is no good. So, it was time to make a change and that’s what I’ve tried to do so.

VO>> Darren Clarke HAS joined some pretty elite company this season. Only three men have won three times this year, Darren Clarke, Jim Furyk, and Phil Mickelson. All major champions all raising the level of competition on this tour. When learning center returns short game advice from one of the season's rookie of the year contenders. It's been a process even for some of the best.

VO>> Welcome back let's check in on the Charles Schwab Cup point standings and Langer has indeed put himself in marvelous position for a six Charles Schwab Cup championship after that first playoff event. But this page of contenders is an impressive one. Including Mike Weir, who in his rookie season has one victory, four runner up finishes, and twelve top tens overall. Weir is enjoying life off the course as well. His relationship with Michelle Money who has appeared as a contestant on the television show The Bachelor is as strong as ever. Now I'm not sure if Weir is the kind of guy who sends roses or not but we do know he's happy to give a lesson or two. Viewers Mike when you're ready.

VO>> What are you working on today honey?

VO/OC>> Well so funny you ask. I’m working on my attitude.

VO>> That's always a good thing.

VO/OC>> I believe in myself.

VO>> I have to fix ya’.

OC>> Babe I just started.

OC>> I got to fix your hat. Its more fashion.

OC>> Oh thanks Babe.

OC/VO>> Mike is the best. He is the best best best and all the best and he puts up with me. One, two, three, four, get your woman on the floor. Got to get up to get down.

OC>> Really?

VO>> That’s the tempo.

OC>> Okay.

OC>> Its Coolio.

OC>> That was it, okay hey if that works go with coolio.

OC>> One, two, three, four, get your woman on the floor.

VO>> That was really good.

VO/OC>> Look at that! That was awesome. That was maybe one of the better ones I've seen you hit.

OC>> Maybe I’ll hire you again.

OC>> Well.

OC>> Let's see what you got Weirzy.

OC>> You want me to do Coolio?

OC>> Yeah you got to get the beat first so get the song in your head first.

OC>> One, two, three, four it's a little slow for me.

OC>> Come on focus. Okay one, two, three, four get your woman on the floor. Got to get up to get down. Got to get up to get down. Nailed it.

OC>> Yeah. I don’t know if I’m going to add that to the pre shot routine this week.

OC>> I can give you some options.

OC>> Okay give me some other songs.

OC/VO>> If Julio is not your song, we can find something different. I think with so much anxiety and kind of stress going on the last few years you kind of lose yourself a little bit and I think it was really therapeutic to just step and hit balls. And then as you get better it's fun and then it’s like more about like a challenge. And for me to be able to spend time with Mike and kind of understand his world a little bit better has been really helpful. So, there’s been a lot of pros that have come out of this, a lot of good. And then when you're in your back swing and you are trying to shallow. In the shallow. Its little Lady Gaga action.

VO>> Do you know what shallow means in golf terms?

OC>> Yes.

OC>> Steep Is like this. Shallow is like this.

OC>> Oh that's why this hasn't been translating.

OC>> Yes.

OC>> So I didn’t know what shallow was.

OC>> Right.

OC>> Why am I just learning now?

OC>> I've talked to you about this.

OC>> No we haven't (LAUGHS). In the shallow.

VO>> There you go.

OC>> Shallow.

OC>> I'm super proud of her. I'm super proud of like that she's really gotten into the game and for her to identify that you know in the game of golf. Taking some of those intimidation things away and getting girls out there I know you get feedback from your event in Utah. That oh they didn't really realize this is what it was all about and you know and then it's less of a inhibitor to you know go out to your local public course and go out there and know where to go and know what to do. And know that there's other women out there that at want to play.

OC>> Thanks babe.

OC>> Yeah, it’s true that's true.

OC>> I love you.

OC>> I love you too.

VO>> From one rookie to another. Two-time major champion Alex Cejka has four top ten finishes in his last six starts. Part of the reason he's playing so well this season is his short game as Cejka gets up and down about two thirds of the time. This week in the timber tech championship in Florida he will be chipping out of Bermuda grass. And to avoid bogeys in Boca Cejka tells us it's going to require hitting a few extra range balls.

OC/VO>> I've been trying to tweak a little bit the technique on different grass. On different clubs because I always was chipping more with lob wedges fifty sixes. But when you have grass like this into the grain I have to go down on the lower club. On a pitching wedge and nine iron and kind of trying to like scooped the ball a little bit did not take that much turf. So, it's helping me. I'm trying to get ready for the short game on the Bermuda grass. So, I've been really tweaking and trying to find different like into the grain and where it's nippy where you have to nip it. And I don't swing like the fifty-six or fifty-eight with a sharp edge. I'm trying to go down on the loft where I can use the bounce and not basically the leading edge where it digs into the into the grain. So that's why I'm literally fiddling the last couple days here with different clubs nine irons. So, I'm literally trying just to nip it without almost you know I'm getting better slowly.

OC>> That you look good. That look good.

OC>> But it's you know and it's a constant fiddle as you said. We all tweak you know some guys right now tweak with drivers you know I tweak more because my long game is pretty good. I'm tweaking more around the around the green so I’m going to chip like Bernard because he always makes up and downs

OC>> Well the work always continues, and no one works harder than you Alex.

OC>> Thank you.

OC>> Best of luck down the stretch.

OC>> Thank you very much.

VO>> Still to come on learning center when a PGA professional is not an option should you rely on a training aid? Darren Clarke chimes in. But first Tom Lehman with a lesson on getting clean contact from a bad lie in the rough in this week's what’s your edge.

OC>> You know I find this hybrid to be an incredibly versatile club. Obviously off the fairway for me it's so useful. Two hundred fifteen yards in the air nice and high and soft that's the shot that I can hit with this club. I hit it just like a three wood so it's really no big deal no big secret you know. But produces the ability to kind of fill that gap between the four iron and the three wood. With a way that I can actually stop the ball on the green with some spin so very very useful. But what I also find even more useful is when you get a bad lie in the rough. You get a bad lie in the rough and say you have two hundred yards or one hundred ninety yards, even do one eighty to the pin. And the lie is so bad that you can only get maybe a nine iron out of it or a pitching wedge and you’re just kind of hacking it out that maybe goes a hundred and twenty so you're leaving yourself sixty yards or seventy. This hybrid tends to be the kind of club that you can carry further from a lie like that, and you get some rolls so you can almost always get it up there near the green, on the green, in the bunker off the edge where you can actually chip and putt you know. So, if the strategy that you have is wanting to get near the green where you can chip in part of a bad lie in the rough than this hybrid again, I think is the club that you want to choose. And this is very much just like hitting an iron. So, it's rather than in the fairway sweeping like a three wood this is more like hitting a seven iron you know so I just simply play the ball a bit further in my stance. I get a little more down on the ball that way. Let the ball kind of just fly and it’s not going to fly you can expect it to fly like it does in the fairway because it doesn't. It'll come out a lot lower it's going to come out with a lot less spin. But it will carry further than an iron it's going to roll some you know. So that's the whole strategy is the kind of just kind of gouge it out. Let it carry a hundred and thirty or forty yards and they let it run the rest of the way so that's what I try to do. So, a bad lie in the rough I just play it like a seven iron which is back in my stance. Make a swing and watch it go and watch a roll. I think most players feel way more comfortable trying to chip or hit a bunker shot or from somewhere near the green or around the green to get it up and down than they do from fifty or sixty yards out. So, this hybrid I think in that situation works really really well.

VO>> When Darren Clarke won the Timber Tech Championship in 2020 it broke a nine-year winless streak. His win in Boca Raton was not as emotional as winning the claret jug in 2011 but that win last year proved that he could get the job done again. He has since added two more victories Clarke’s trophy collection in the last year is the result of a lot of time on the practice range.

OC>> You know everyone could use a little help no matter what level of play even if you're a past champion golfer of the year like Darren Clarke. And Clarke we're going to talk about training aids. Some of the things maybe apparatus that you use to make yourself better and even try to get to a next level at this point in your career.

OC>> I have every (CROSSTALK)

OC>> I know that. That’s the word.

OC/VO>> Nearly got everyone’s. Poor Sandy got to carry the bag and it’s heavy with all sorts of stuff in there but. This past while I’ve been maxing out a little bit too much. Right here is very easy to play golf swing and not play golf. By that I mean relying a lot on training aids and then you do this and trying to make a perfect swing all the time. Golf isn’t about making a perfect swing all the time but sometimes I find myself going too much down the tactical route to help. So, what I've been doing started last week was trying to I got alignment stick pointed out here and besides towards my target that I'm trying to go at. I’ve got a nine iron. I do it all the way through the bag. I try and hit a draw around the stick, and I try and hit a fade around the stick. And I try and change my trajectory so that's having a little bit of fun with it. That’s playing golf and not playing golf swing, I know that sounds a little bit-

OC>> And does it not feel as much like practice when you do that?

OC/VO>> Exactly. There’s way more fun way more fun. So, you know because you know because I've got a burning desire to get better all the time even though even at my age then I got into too much technique all the time. So, I'm trying to hit little draws and little fades. Now I'm just I'm just out here trying to hit a little draw around this stick here Vince. So, this one will start out right of the stick and go towards our pole.

OC>> Yes it did.

OC>> Just over there a little bit but and that’s one and then I go. Go the other way. Start it left of the flag and hit a little cut going back towards going back towards the pole again so. I'm using a little bit of feel and just moving the ball about a little bit as opposed to trying to swing perfect all the time. You know we get all these tips and all the training aids, and they all help but that's going to try and make something perfect all the time in this game isn't about being perfect.

OC>> And you don't seem like the kind of guy that can focus completely on just hitting a thousand balls out here you have to stimulate yourself.

OC>> Exactly you know, and I’ve been that guy, I’ve gone down that rope you know. I got my track man out looking at figures and going into well why is that figure not right and why is that figure not right? Then all of a sudden you get caught into the technique technique. Don't get me wrong technique is very important everybody out there should have a lesson from their local pro or whatever and get their technique down a little bit. But there's also a time and a place for okay just stand there and hit some. Hit a little draw, try and hit a little fade. And find which one you're more comfortable with and that’s your go to shot. As opposed to trying to make a stand there and have six seven swing thoughts as I say a lot of amateurs do especially for (INAUDIBLE). Oh, what are they trying to do? I'm trying to start it right, so you got a swing to the right club face a little bit closed off your path and hit a little draw. Or conversely swing half left and club face a little open to that to hit a little fade but just try and have a little bit more fun with it instead of just technique technique technique all the time.

VO>> Darren Clarke is among the fifty-four players remaining in Boca Raton Florida for the Timber Tech Championship. That will do it for this week I'm Vince Cellini and we will see you next time.