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[00:00:31] >> From Sioux Falls, South Dakota, it's first round coverage of the 2022 Sanford International. Minnehaha Country Club was formed in 1905. The club moved to its present day location 105 years ago. That was in 1917. Now for the fifth time, it's playing host to the Sanford International. This layout becoming a favorite on the PGA TOUR Champions today. We're seeing just ideal scoring conditions for the opening round. A lot of low numbers out there. The course record of 62 has been matched. Could that be in jeopardy?

[00:01:09] >> Davis just off the right-hand side of the fairway.

[00:01:11] >> The lie is good, the breeze freshening just a bit. That makes the shot a little more dangerous, just another yard closer is all than Couples. He's a bit closer than Couples. 196 there.

[00:01:24] >> Davis staring it down.

[00:01:26] >> Why wouldn't you after that?

[00:01:27] >> On top of the flagstick, just underneath. Beautiful shot there for Davis.

[00:01:36] >> All right, John, let's check out some of the early first round highlights. We pick it up with Darren Clarke just off the green on the par-3 6th. 169 yards today, the par-3 6th. Just off the left edge of the green, chose a putter and chose wisely. Clarke to two under par. Same hole, Fred Couples, even at this point in his round, for birdie.

[00:01:56] >> Form the other side of the hole. Down the hill. Let's see if Fred can get his round going, and he does.

[00:02:07] >> Just gets that one to roll out. Couples 1-under through six. More from Fred on the par-3 8th.

[00:02:14] >> 153 yards today, the par-3 8th. Just a 9-iron for Fred. Staring it down. Why wouldn't you? Right on top of the flagstick. He'd go on to make that.

[00:02:28] >> Davis Love III, same hole for birdie.

[00:02:30] >> Left of the hole, little left to right breaker. Good putt there for Davis.

[00:02:36] >> DL III was off to a quick start on that front nine, 2-under at that point. Over on the back nine, Ernie Els for birdie.

[00:02:43] >> It's a tough par-3, number 10, 201 yards today from the center of the green, big right to left breaker. And Ernie negotiates it perfectly.

[00:02:51] >> Ernie to 3 under par. Robert Karlsson on the 17th, already at 6-under.

[00:02:56] >> Yeah, breaker from right to left and back to the right. Robert Karlsson, good round of golf. He would birdie the 18th as well to finish 8 under par.

[00:03:07] >> Miguel Angel Jimenez on the 12th green for eagle. We've seen some good shots here on the 12th. Jimenez from the center of the green, down the hill. Count it. The leaderboard as it stands right now at the Sanford International, Robert Karlsson with that 8-under 62, that ties the course record here at Minnehaha for the Sanford International. Kevin Sutherland at 7-under 63, great playing out of Steve Flesch as well, opening with a 6-under 64. You see Ernie Els still on the course, 4-under through 12 in a tie for sixth currently inside the top ten.

[00:03:51] >> This would be huge for Davis Love III.

[00:03:57] >> Not much to this. Does go uphill.

[00:04:01] >> Eagle number five on the day on the 12th. 15th green with Bernhard Langer to push it to 4-under on his round.

[00:04:13] >> Saw that nice little wedge shot from Bernhard, takes advantage of it.

[00:04:17] >> Walking it in. Bernhard was just one off the lead going into the final round last week at the Ascension Charity Classic, wound up finishing solo fourth. Just two wins away from Hale Irwin. Defending champion Darren Clarke at the 14th.

[00:04:31] >> Second at the 14th. Just a layup there for Darren, trying to put it in the right spot. He does, and takes advantage of it.

[00:04:39] >> Take a look at the upcoming schedule on the PGA TOUR Champions. This is the 21st of 27 events. After this, we have an even amount of events left in the regular season, as well as playoff events, three more regular season events to go. We'll be at the Pure Insurance Championship next week at Pebble Beach. I mean, you've got to say that's one of the best events year in and year out on PGA Tour Champions.

[00:05:03] >> I think it's the most important event on the PGA TOUR Champions, as you're playing with first tee kids, incredible young men and women getting involved in this game.

[00:05:15] >> Up on the 15th green, Steven Alker trying to move to 2-under.

[00:05:19] >> This putt does swing from right to left pretty good. Enough speed. Yes.

[00:05:25] >> Up to the par-5 16th, this is a hole that you hope to make birdie on. Bernhard Langer able to get the job done.

[00:05:33] >> Yeah, Bernhard not able to reach the green in two, but makes birdie the old fashioned way, a three-shot hole.

[00:05:41] >> Great look from behind the green here on the 15th as we're going to see that pin tucked all the way in the back of this green. On the fairway, Davis Love III.

[00:05:51] >> George, it's a small little shelf back there. Very easy to go long here, which is a tough up and down. 135 yards for Davis. Little wedge coming, slight breeze down.

[00:06:01] >> The pin is 35 on, four off the left-hand side.

[00:06:04] >> Yeah, it can get over this green quickly. But how about that control there, big? Talk about check and hold right at hole high. That was outstanding.

[00:06:22] >> Rocco Mediate hooping it from hole high.

[00:06:26] >> Birdie on 17.

[00:06:27] >> 174 yards today, and past champion Rocco Mediate loves Minnehaha.

[00:06:38] >> Steven Alker to get home in two to the 16th.

[00:06:42] >> Just from the first cut of rough. This is a dangerous shot over that penalty area.

[00:06:47] >> But Steven Alker, never a doubt.

[00:06:48] >> He's not number one on the the Charles Schwab Cup list for nothing.

[00:06:55] >> Birdie putt now for Steve Stricker on the 15th green.

[00:06:59] >> Yeah, this definitely has some right to left break to it.

[00:07:07] >> Just walk on.

[00:07:07] >> Third birdie this side, Stricker 3-under on his round.

[00:07:16] >> Nice bounce back from Davis Love III after bogeying 14, birdies the 15th. Davis to 3-under on his day.

[00:07:33] >> Bernhard Langer on 18.

[00:07:35] >> Takes advantage of that good tee shot, second shot over top of the flagstick. Bernhard, nice round of golf.

[00:07:49] >> Second shot, Miguel Angel Jimenez left side of the 18th.

[00:07:53] >> Hole location to that back shelf today. Have to either fly it back there and control it or run it up that slope. And he hit it right into the slope there, George, and just killed it perfectly.

[00:08:05] >> Back one to the 17th, and it's Ernie Els trying to get within three of the lead

[00:08:10] >> Yeah, one of the better tee shots of the day, just right of the hole location. This should go a little bit left. Kind of big easy's it into the hole.

[00:08:24] >> Never hurried, never rushed.

[00:08:27] >> Never.

[00:08:32] >> Darren Clarke for a round of 63.

[00:08:35] >> He's not letting this title get away from him too easily. Turn left, right in the center. What a nice round of golf, Darren Clarke.

[00:08:44] >> DC jars it. Gotta have great vibes coming back to a place that you just won the previous season.

[00:09:01] >> Miguel Angel Jimenez on the 18th green. You know, if this goes down, little bit of a celebration.

[00:09:07] >> That crafty little shot from the left rough, and that was not a good effort there form Miguel.

[00:09:14] >> Not his best.

[00:09:15] >> No good.

[00:09:16] >> No bueno.

[00:09:17] >> No good.

[00:09:22] >> Let's go to the other side of the course, front nine, Rob Labritz, final hole the day for birdie.

[00:09:29] >> Didn't get it up that slope, now it goes up the slope and into the hole.

[00:09:32] >> That's a way to close it out. Bingo. 3-under 67. Another round in the 60's. How many are we totaling up so far?

[00:09:40] >> 52 rounds.

[00:09:47] >> Right side of the fairway, Ernie Els second on the 18th.

[00:09:49] >> Going to take it up high in the air. Has to be as good as you look, right behind the hole location.

[00:09:56] >> Yeah, it is.

[00:09:57] >> Great shot.

[00:10:02] >> Over to the front side once again, same group, David Bradshaw, his final hole.

[00:10:06] >> Yeah, 3 under par, pretty good breaker from left to right, goes down the slope.

[00:10:11] >> Oh, get out of here. They're making it from everywhere. Branshaw one better than Labritz.

[00:10:17] >> That hole location, not that easy on that little plateau, that little slope.

[00:10:22] >> With a 4-under 66.

[00:10:30] >> Steven Alker.

[00:10:32] >> Little more speed. Had it right in the center.

[00:10:35] >> Birdie misses on 16, 17 and 18 for Alker.

[00:10:40] >> He would like that -- he'd like that 16th hole back. I think he probably makes one more after that. If he two-putts for par at 16, I think he makes one of the last two.

[00:11:02] >> After a good tee shot here for Strick, Phil, a little sloppy with the next two. He's going to need this.

[00:11:08] >> Yeah, very surprising, both shots coming up the hill here, breaking to the right. Keep up the steam or it'll fall off. Stay up, stay up. Yep. Oh, no.

[00:11:20] >> Left it short.

[00:11:22] >> No. Hanging over the edge.

[00:11:26] >> Yeah, he knew it.

[00:11:30] >> He is not pleased. He can get hot.

[00:11:31] >> Bit of a sour note to finish on.

[00:11:34] >> Steve Stricker's face will get a little red. He won't be happy with that finish.

[00:11:41] >> But with how hot Steve has been, and he's coming to a place where he's won before and had so much success. 2-under 68 when the scoring average right at 68, not what we were anticipating out of Steve Stricker. He's six back of the leader Robert Karlsson.

[00:12:03] >> Some low scores already out there for the second round of the Sanford International on what a September Saturday here in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Temps in the mid-80s. The sun is out. The wind will be a factor. We've been seeing gusts in the 15- to 20-mile-an-hour range so far.

[00:12:23] >> John, let's take a look at some of the earlier highlights. We begin with Robert Karlsson on the 4th for birdie.

[00:12:28] >> Par-5 4th hole, longish putt for birdie, but knocks it down.

[00:12:34] >> Karlsson to that point was 9 under par. Here's Steve Stricker on the 5th for birdie.

[00:12:41] >> Doing things that Steve Stricker does and that's make some long putts. Clank.

[00:12:49] >> Stricker to 7-under, just two back. He actually started his day off the 10th tee. That's how far back he was. But making a move. Ernie Els, par-3 8th.

[00:13:01] >> 153 yards today the 8th hole, and Ernie taking dead aim. Little check and hold right underneath the hole. We'll give him that birdie to get to 8-under.

[00:13:11] >> Paul Stankowski 13th, this his third.

[00:13:15] >> Seemingly out of position long left, but what a nice pitch and that got Stanko to 9 under par and a lead at the time.

[00:13:25] >> More from Steve Stricker, the putter hot today.

[00:13:29] >> Didn't we just see this putt just a little bit ago? How about the same result there for Strick? Don't look so surprised, Strick. You do that a lot.

[00:13:41] >> Rocco Mediate now on the 12th, the par-5, this his third.

[00:13:45] >> Yeah, just short of the green. Takes it upstairs, flies it on top, little check. What a nice shot that was.

[00:13:52] >> How pretty was that?

[00:13:53] >> Beautiful pitch shot.

[00:13:55] >> Mediate to 9 under par. Steve Stricker in with a 6-under 64, low round turned in so far. Stricker part of that big group of players currently in a tie for second, a shot back of Rocco Mediate. This man is about to stand over an eagle putt, Robert Karlsson.

[00:14:16] >> He had a good opportunity to watch the part of Darren Clark, so he knows exactly what it's going to do. Now can you do it?

[00:14:29] >> We've been waiting a couple years for Robert to break through. Just a wonderful player, a Ryder Cup player in Europe, won 11 times over there.

[00:14:41] >> The 13th, Bernhard Langer for birdie.

[00:14:44] >> And not many made on the 13th hole. That's only the eighth birdie of the day.

[00:14:56] >> Robert Karlsson can take the outright lead at 9-under par. Making quick work of this par-5 as they make their way to the challenging par-4 13th next.

[00:15:12] >> Super flop time for Padraig Harrington.

[00:15:14] >> Yeah, off the 18th tee, what can he do with it? Almost hole it.

[00:15:19] >> Spectacular.

[00:15:21] >> How about that shot, George?

[00:15:23] >> Wow.

[00:15:36] >> And creeps that wone in the left-hand side. That's a nice little birdie there for the Hall of Famer.

[00:15:41] >> Ernie Els to 8 under par. Hall of Famer Fred Couples with a solid round. Today we're going to take a look at some of the highlights from Freddie. On the tee at the par-3 10th.

[00:15:57] >> First swing of the day was a pretty good one.

[00:16:04] >> I mean, you got to start it up like that, you got to knock it in.

[00:16:07] >> Yeah, you do. Hit way out there to the right and let it loop in.

[00:16:15] >> So how about that start on ten. Birdies 10, par, par birdie, birdie, birdie, birdie on 13, 14, 15 and 16. He made the turn at 5-under 31, even on his back nine, which is the front. A 5-under 65, there's a chance on Sunday Fred Couples could be in the mix.

[00:16:43] >> Walk that one in.

[00:16:44] >> How good is that putter? Back-to-back birdies on 13 and 14, Langer even on his round, three off the lead. Clark Dennis for birdie on the 15th.

[00:16:57] >> Hits it way out there to the right. See that.

[00:16:59] >> Drips it in.

[00:17:00] >> Arcs right in there, good putt there for Clark.

[00:17:10] >> Miguel Angel Jimenez on the 18th, a closing birdie on the last. Keeps him in the distance. Does 6-under still have a shot?

[00:17:20] >> Oh yeah, absolutely.

[00:17:23] >> To the 15th, and it's Robert Karlsson now, the coleader on the tee.

[00:17:29] >> Something maybe just inside the drip line of that left-hand tree over there would be ideal. Trying to skirt it by those bunkers. It's got in pretty low.

[00:17:43] >> Low bullet here.

[00:17:44] >> On a good line.

[00:17:45] >> On, it caught on the downslope of that that cross bunker there, Phil, got right up just short of the green. Good play.

[00:18:01] >> On 16, this for eagle and a share of the lead.

[00:18:02] >> After a great tee shot, second shot exactly where he needed it. And that nice little -- should be an easy tap in there for Ernie. Little bounce back birdie.

[00:18:19] >> But with Ernie's length, you've got to be kicking yourself that you bogeyed 15.

[00:18:23] >> Just out of position. You can't miss it to the right there at 15 when that hole location is over there. We saw what happened with Darren Clarke. Nice two-putt there for Ernie and a birdie.

[00:18:44] >> We are back on the 15th, just short of the green, second for Robert Karlsson.

[00:18:48] >> Pretty lofty club here, plenty of green to work with. Going to play a little low bumper, try to judge the speed, have a little check on it the second hop.

[00:18:55] >> Yeah.

[00:18:55] >> Nice grab there.

[00:18:58] >> Nice form right there. Hands ahead. Pitches off the ground.

[00:19:07] >> On the 17th, and it's Rocco Mediate's turn.

[00:19:11] >> Might have got a little bit of a speed read and a break read off of Ernie's putt. Does break pretty good right to left, and it's slow.

[00:19:30] >> Robert Karlsson for birdie to get to 10 under par.

[00:19:42] >> Let that hole catch the ball, nice birdie there. Aggressive off the tee, paid off.

[00:19:50] >> Let's go to the 18th hole once again, second for Rocco Mediate.

[00:19:53] >> Rocco hit himself a beautiful tee shot down the right side of the fairway, right over top of the flagstick. Well done.

[00:20:02] >> Pretty. Rocco loving it. Saw Ernie Els bogey 15 and bounce back with a birdie on 16. Would love another one here on 18.

[00:20:16] >> Ernie from right in the middle of the fairway, just an absolute go time, control the spin. Well done.

[00:20:27] >> Toss it back to the 16th with the leader Robert Karlsson.

[00:20:30] >> A little slow the first two-thirds of this putt, may be a little bit quicker the last eight or 10 feet, something he needs to watch out for.

[00:20:38] >> We've seen some putts hit pretty well by from this same position.

[00:20:48] >> Absolutely, after that tee shot, five is not a bad score here. That could have been much worse if that ball had ended up in the water or behind some trees. Get out of there with a par, it's okay.

[00:21:04] >> Rocco for birdie and a share.

[00:21:05] >> We saw three good shots in here from this group, hoping Rocco doesn't take advantage of it.

[00:21:13] >> This game can be cruel sometimes. On the 17th tee, Darren Clarke in that final group.

[00:21:21] >> Well, this was a beautiful swing here coming off that short miss at the last. Check this one out.

[00:21:26] >> Yeah, fourth hardest hole today, Phil.

[00:21:29] >> Working that draw in there, wow.

[00:21:32] >> Only four birdies, and that will be a golden opportunity.

[00:21:35] >> How good is that from Darren Clarke?

[00:21:37] >> Getting better and better. There you go, DC.

[00:21:47] >> Good holing speed for Ernie Els on 18, and not the case.

[00:21:50] >> That needed a little more speed.

[00:21:52] >> Wow.

[00:21:54] >> Rocco and Ernie both let two golden opportunities go there at 18.

[00:21:59] >> 64, 68.

[00:22:11] >> He's got to aim left edge.

[00:22:14] >> DC birdies 17.

[00:22:17] >> I think that putter might last one more hole. If that had missed, I'm not sure it would have lasted up to that 18th green.

[00:22:24] >> Clarke battling back to even on his round, four birdies on the back nine.

[00:22:32] >> Jeff Maggert for birdie and a share on 18.

[00:22:34] >> Just in the first cut of rough on the left-hand side, second to here, now down the hill. Looking good for Mag.

[00:22:39] >> Jeff Maggert buckets on the last.

[00:22:43] >> Hasn't been around the lead in a while, so good to see Jeff.

[00:22:48] >> 64, 66. In 19 starts this season, Jeff Maggert with just one top 10.

[00:22:54] >> That's very unlike Jeff Maggert.

[00:23:09] >> So Steve Flesch to 8-under with 18 holes to go.

[00:23:19] >> With any speed at all, this has got to be pretty straight. Also an important part here for Robert to stay in the last group. If he misses this putt, Rocco Mediate will get in the last group. Now this will keep him in the last group, no matter what. Because he'll be at 9-under. Well, that was a very confident looking stroke, right in the center.

[00:23:44] >> Nice save by Karlsson. 62, 68 coleader with Jeff Maggert at 10-under.

[00:23:59] >> This might be the last putt we see of this putter for Darren. Wouldn't be surprised if he just hands it to somebody as he walks off the green.

[00:24:12] >> Second round 70 for Darren Clark, the Senior Open champ earlier this summer at Glen Eagles.

[00:24:23] >> He's staying in touch. You know, 6 under par is only four back.

[00:24:26] >> My how things have changed for Robert Karlsson. His three-ball yesterday, 21-under. Three-ball today, 1-under. Tougher conditions when you're in the final group, but this group just really couldn't get any mojo going.

[00:24:39] >> Stuck in neutral.

[00:24:42] >> The lead at 10 at the Sanford International as we are winding things down here in a beautiful Saturday in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

[00:24:58] >> Beautiful tee shot there by Karlsson, only 167 left here, the hole cut right on the front of the green. And the green slopes severely from left to right, so something a little right of this hole so you putt back uphill would be great.

[00:25:12] >> Looks like he's chosen a club that is choking down on it just a little bit. It's out there just a little to the right. Let's see if he can hit a quality shot. It's going left. Is it going to be enough the clear the bunker? It is. That should get a little bit better.

[00:25:31] >> It's going to catch that slope and come on back down. That's going to be good.

[00:25:37] >> It's going to end up in pretty good shape. It's going to be putting down the hill, slick putt but quality golf shot there for Robert.

[00:25:43] >> Eagle putt upcoming for Karlsson to potentially take the lead. Let's take a look at some of the earlier highlights. Par-3 6th, Steve Stricker.

[00:25:50] >> 153 yards today, George, front left hole location. Trying to use a little bit of the slope and he does, well done, underneath the hole.

[00:26:00] >> Stricker would go on to birdie, move to 9-under, trailing by three at that point. Ernie Els up ahead on the 9th for birdie making the turn.

[00:26:09] >> Tricky pin position here at the 9th. Ernie putting from underneath the hole. That putter starting to heat up a little bit.

[00:26:17] >> Yeah, Els keeping it going, par-3 10th.

[00:26:22] >> 206 yards today. Ernie sends it way up in the air, and look at this shot.

[00:26:28] >> Spectacular. Birdie, birdie for Els, moving to 10 under par. Steve Stricker final hole on the front nine.

[00:26:37] >> Putting up that slope from the proper level. We've seen Steve Stricker do that a little bit.

[00:26:44] >> Steve Stricker to 10 under par, two back. Ernie Els to make it three consecutive birdies.

[00:26:49] >> Pretty good breaker from right to left. Has to feed it down the slope. Here we go.

[00:26:56] >> Els would also go on to birdie the par-5 12th, Robert Karlsson at 12-under, this for par.

[00:27:03] >> Comfortable start to Robert's day, two birdies through the first eight holes, but a little misstep there, three-putt at the 9th.

[00:27:10] >> So Karlsson falls to 11-under. One back, Brandt Jobe to get to 11 under par on 17.

[00:27:16] >> Way ahead of the leaders there at 17 to get to 11 under par himself.

[00:27:20] >> Let's take a look at the leaderboard. Els with that one-shot lead. Brandt Jobe in the house with a 6-under 64, great close to his week. Paul Stankowski, Steve Stricker, part of that bunch of four players in a tie for second. Jeff Maggert is just a couple back. Miguel Angel Jimenez who won here just two years ago in a tie for seventh at 9 under par. On the second page, Stuart Appleby, final round 65. 8-under has you inside the top 10. Rocco Mediate hasn't been able to get any momentum going today. He's 1-over on his round on the par-5 12th. Let's fast forward you to the par-3 17th. Miguel Angel Jimenez 3-under on his round.

[00:28:01] >> Hole location in the center of the green, it's a little tougher than it looks. A bunch of little levels and all, but that is as good as you can do right there without making a hole in one.

[00:28:14] >> Jimenez throwing a dart in there on the 17th. Steve Stricker for birdie and a share.

[00:28:22] >> Just get out of the 13th with making a par. Strick now goes up the slope. We have seen Steve Stricker make some putts this week, George. I mean 30-, 40-, 50-footers. That one good solid 30 feet up the slope.

[00:28:48] >> How good is that from Stricker? Now at 12-under, three tied atop the leaderboard. Ahead to 14, Steve Flesch has this look for birdie.

[00:28:58] >> Yeah, didn't like his approach shot. But he likes the result.

[00:29:02] >> Seeing putts drop from all over the course. Steep Flesch now to 10 under par. He's two back. On the 12th, Jeff Maggert with this uphill birdie putt.

[00:29:17] >> I think with the number of players who are now at 12-under and ahead of him, this is approaching must make right here.

[00:29:24] >> A lot of players in between he and the lead. And he answers the call right there.

[00:29:34] >> Zoom all the way to the 18th green, David Toms closing out his week.

[00:29:38] >> Yeah, slow putt going up the slope, turns right to left. Good finish there for DT.

[00:29:43] >> Drips it in. All three rounds in the 60s this week. 14th fairway, coleader Steve Stricker, second.

[00:29:55] >> Middle left hole location here. Strick can use a little bit of a slope, doesn't have to take it right at it.

[00:30:02] >> A little baby draw in there.

[00:30:04] >> That needs to hold on, and it does. It'll get a little better and right at hole high.

[00:30:14] >> Bouncing around the action on this back nine, Jeff Maggert now to make it four tied for the lead.

[00:30:22] >> Swing just a bit to his right here maybe.

[00:30:27] >> Jeff coming off of two birdies in a row. How about three? Just catches that left edge there, Phil, and goes in.

[00:30:34] >> Maggert heating up.

[00:30:37] >> They made that hole round for a reason.

[00:30:48] >> Can Steve Stricker break free? Really good luck here on 14th.

[00:30:53] >> Yeah, right from hole high. He didn't like that one. Too close. Too close. He needs it in his range, 25 to 50.

[00:31:04] >> Par on the card. Stricker not too happy with that. Bernhard Langer to par the last.

[00:31:15] >> That was quick. Looked like the ball hit the inside of the putter face there. Disappointing finish there for Bernhard.

[00:31:25] >> Bernhard will fall outside the top 20 this week. On the 15th, Steve Stricker missed the fairway off the tee, looks like some potential tree trouble to contend with, but we'll see if he can find an angle.

[00:31:37] >> Let's see what he can do. Maybe turn it around that tree to get back to this left hole location.

[00:31:43] >> Wow.

[00:31:43] >> What a golf shot there for Steve Stricker.

[00:31:49] >> To the scene on 18, Fred Couples for birdie.

[00:31:52] >> Got it on the proper level. That goes uphill, slow putt. Will he finally make one? Yes.

[00:31:58] >> Oh.

[00:31:59] >> Took a while.

[00:32:00] >> Couples giving something to the fans to close out his week.

[00:32:08] >> Teased him there for a minute.

[00:32:11] >> How about this on 16, Padraig Harrington, this for birdie to get to 8 under par. Harrington, first hole of the day, drove it on the par-4 and three-putted for par. Kind of the day that he's been having.

[00:32:25] >> Yeah, takes advantage of the par-5 like he normally does.

[00:32:29] >> You see Padraig's card. Had an eagle on the 12th.

[00:32:33] >> Probably hit wedge in there on that hole.

[00:32:35] >> And he's 1-under through 16. Steve Stricker for birdie and the lead.

[00:32:45] >> After that brilliant second from the left rough, takes advantage of that outstanding play and takes the lead.

[00:32:51] >> Steve Stricker with two wins already this season on the PGA TOUR Champions, trying to become the first player ever to win the Sanford International multiple times. Robert Karlsson's second over on 15.

[00:33:08] >> What a great look here into a little breeze. 133, good line in the fairway. Just don't spin this ball back too much. Get it in there, just kind of a check and hold, not one coming back. He's driven it in low maybe trying to accomplish that.

[00:33:22] >> Check and hold right at hole high. Great call there, Phil. That's exactly what he did. Fast forward you to the 18th hole, Darren Clarke trying to get to double digits.

[00:33:35] >> That got left early. Didn't have a very good day yesterday, cost him quite a bit.

[00:33:47] >> 68 today. Valiant effort in his title defense, but it'll come up short. Steve Stricker second to the 16th.

[00:34:03] >> Taking a go at it, back left hole location, looking at something towards the middle of the green.

[00:34:09] >> Aggressive line by Stricker.

[00:34:10] >> It'll go just through.

[00:34:17] >> Back to 15 we go, Robert Karlsson for a share. On the 15th, another birdie opportunity though ahead on the par-5 16th.

[00:34:45] >> When you're, you know, three holes from the finish line, even the best in the world get a little bit nervy on these. But Steve has been so great for so long. I'd be shocked if this isn't in there, gimme range. Kind of jib to the right a little bit, and not his best. Kind of got a little funky little kick there off the first bounce.

[00:35:11] >> On the 17th green, Ernie Els who's currently tied with Steve Stricker. This would give him the solo lead.

[00:35:17] >> Big breaker from left to right, and just hung on the left. Good speed though.

[00:35:30] >> While Ernie will stay at 13 under par, one hole behind him Steve Stricker with a close look at birdie. This birdie putt would give him the lead by one. And if he can close out this week, that would go a long way to his ultimate goal. Chaser Robert Karlsson on the tee at the par-3 17th.

[00:36:07] >> This is right at it. If it's the right one.

[00:36:10] >> On a great line from Karlsson, and in there close.

[00:36:13] >> Quality golf shot right there at the absolute opportune time.

[00:36:21] >> We are back on 18 with Ernie Els, disappointing finish to what has been a solid final round with a bogey on the last. It's a 4-under 66. Another top 10 finish for Ernie Els this season on the PGA TOUR Champions. That is number 10 in 18 events.

[00:36:47] >> This is difficult. Really slow right there and crests perfectly. What a nice pot there for Mag. He's looking at that crest, needs to get past that crest of the hill by about a yard or two. Get it on the proper level. He does. What a nice golf shot, exactly well executed. Exactly what he needed to do. Little fist pump, he knows it.

[00:37:19] >> So Stricker for the time being leading by one. So unbeknownst to Steve Stricker, Robert Karlsson who's one back, five-footer to tie the lead.

[00:37:36] >> He's really looked good over the putter all week.

[00:37:38] >> Two tied at 14 under par. Get your popcorn. This could be decided on the 18th. Back-to-back birdies for Robert Karlsson. He's 3-under on this side. You know, if this pot drops, it will be quite the scene on 18. For Stricker to birdie the last and post 15-under.

[00:38:17] >> Just a scotch high. Beautiful speed, great pace. Just missed his mark by just a little bit.

[00:38:26] >> He thought he had it off the face.

[00:38:28] >> Really good effort. Now it's up to Robert Karlsson.

[00:38:32] >> Stricker, will throw a mark on that inside three feet. Assuming he pars the last, that would be a final round 64, post 14-under and give Robert Karlsson something to look at back in the fairway.

[00:38:53] >> What a weekend for Steve Stricker. 64 on Saturday, 64 on Sunday. The coleader in the clubhouse at 14 under par. Birdie to win for Robert Karlsson. Big, did you get a look at this lie?

[00:39:11] >> Yeah, John, you were right. This ball's in the back end of an old divot. Not a fresh divot, but an old divot sitting down, a lot like the lie that he had back on 14. He's going to have to go down in and get this. Could be really hard to control his distance. If he gets this on the back tier, that back level, it would be a tremendous shot. 133.

[00:39:33] >> That back tier is only 30 feet deep. You can see how that ball is sitting down. The good thing is he's a steep swing and goes down after it pretty nicely. Need to control it correctly. It'll get just through, just into that first cut. Now depends only on the lie and what he wants to do with that. He's going to have to be careful though. That's not an easy up and down.

[00:39:54] >> All comes down to Karlsson's short game. Hole this to win. Up and down, we have a playoff. If things go haywire and he bogeys, Steve Stricker wins outright.

[00:40:10] >> Wasn't a good catch, but he's going to get away with it. It's going to turn out great.

[00:40:13] >> Turns out just fine. He's going to have a couple feet to get into a playoff.

[00:40:27] >> That heartbeat can ease up just a little bit for Robert Karlsson.

[00:40:30] >> Just a little, not much. It's still going, I promise you.

[00:40:35] >> It had been a last season for Jeff Maggert going into the Ally Challenge. Top 10, I mean, even top 25s were hard to come by. Finished solo third that week. Now this week, another really good performance at 12-under right now. He is tied for third with Ernie Els, would love to drop this and stay there.

[00:40:57] >> Boy, he just has not made anything after that little birdie run starting the second nine. That putter went cold on him. Wow. Easily could have gotten to 14, 15-under.

[00:41:06] >> Yeah, that is for sure. He left a few out there.

[00:41:11] >> Had birdie misses on 14, 15 and 16. 1-under 69 for Maggert.

[00:41:21] >> Jeff Maggert right there was projected inside the top 36. That bogey would have dropped him out. And for Robert Karlsson, he'll project well, well inside that top 36 for all of you at home. Gets you in the Charles Schwab Cup Championship in the playoffs. It goes 72, 54 and then to the top 36.

[00:41:46] >> Yeah, speaking of 72, disappointing final round for Rocco Mediate with that 2-over 72 that he will sign for. Just two feet separating Robert Karlsson from a playoff with Steve Stricker.

[00:42:20] >> He used all of the cup.

[00:42:21] >> Used it, but all's well that end well. A playoff it is, 4-under 66 for Robert Karlsson. Two tied at 14-under. It will be Robert Karlsson and Steve Stricker. That is coming your way next at the Sanford International. Back-to-back years we've had some bonus golf in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Last year it was a three man playoff won by Darren Clarke. Who will emerge this year between Steve Stricker and Robert Karlsson? Playoff time, what the fans would hope for at the Sanford International. Robert Karlsson and Steve Stricker, they are going back to the 18th tee. If you look at their numbers this week, Robert Karlsson has played the 18th 1-under, Steve Stricker 1-over. But who would you give the advantage to in the playoff, John?

[00:43:13] >> Robert Karlsson is more fresh off the green. Steve has been off, finished his round a little bit earlier. Really there's no advantage. No advantage. They're both playing wonderfully. How did they get here? They both hit a lot of greens. They both hit a lot of fairways. They're both accomplished as far as winning goes. Steve Stricker obviously has won more recently than Robert Karlsson. Therefore, I would give Steve Stricker a slight edge just because of his experience recently. Robert Karlsson is no joke. He is an accomplished winner on the DP European tour, 11 times.

[00:43:52] >> DP World Tour winner.

[00:43:53] >> It's been a while. It's been a while.

[00:43:54] >> His last DP Tour win was at the World Championship in 2010.

[00:43:57] >> Yeah, it's been a while. Yes, it has.

[00:44:02] >> Phil Blackmar, what's the line for this tee shot, as Steve Stricker once again pulling driver?

[00:44:07] >> Well, Steve is a fairly long hitter as well, just like Robert. He needs to take it up the left center. It's all about putting the ball in the fairway. Here the breeze back into the players' face now here at 18, just a little bit. Had to wait for somebody to get out of the way down here in front of the tee.

[00:44:27] >> Big, I think that the breeze blowing in their face kind of widens this fairway, because the turn is out there about 270, 275. And going into the wind, that plays pretty long. So up the right hand side doesn't come in quite as quick as it would.

[00:44:42] >> Well, the rough on the right hand side is some of the deepest on the golf course.

[00:44:50] >> Tries to aim it up the right. He does. Trying to turn it from right to left, and does a really nice job. That's a quality, quality tee shot. Puts a little pressure on Robert Karlsson now to answer.

[00:45:00] >> Beauty from Stricker.

[00:45:05] >> Robert has made nothing but good swings off the tee here coming in today. Beautiful swings. Even the one here on 18, it just got through the fairway just a bit. As you mentioned, John, the same line now into this little breeze. It might stay in the fairway, but I'm sure he'd rather have it on the line Stricker put it on.

[00:45:24] >> He hasn't been there in quite a while. So you don't forget how to win, sometimes you forget how to get there.

[00:45:30] >> Great job by our stats team crunching the numbers. 11 years, nine months since Karlsson's last win over on the DP World Tour.

[00:45:37] >> Yeah, he's not aiming as far right this time. That starts right and it is cutting. It's his worst swing of the day.

[00:45:49] >> Couldn't have happened at a worse time for Robert Karlsson.

[00:45:54] >> Well, it's a doable shot, but it's a degree of difficulty very, very high here. He's got to really make solid contact and get this trajectory just right. His window just underneath the tree branches hanging out in front of him there about 35 yards, 40 yards in front of him. He's got to keep it more than somewhere about 15 feet or less off the ground at that distance.

[00:46:12] >> Yeah, and that slope up there short of that green can kick this ball to the left. So to get this ball on the green would be a job well done. He's going to have to hit a big cut.

[00:46:26] >> Well, and you think that the safer play would be left, because there's more green from there. But because of the slope, I think it's harder up and down from left than it is if you put it in that right hand bunker.

[00:46:36] >> Yeah, I would agree with that. Don't have as much slope to go up to get to that second level from that right hand bunker. From that left would be a very difficult shot. He's going to take it nice and low, try to hit a cut, run it up there. Solid contact.

[00:46:58] >> Will it chase?

[00:46:59] >> It does. What a golf shot.

[00:47:01] >> Won't get all the way up to that second level, but that was a high quality golf shot right there to get into the center of the green.

[00:47:11] >> It'll fall back off the slope into the middle of the green. Stricker in the fairway getting ready for his approach.

[00:47:20] >> 144 yards gets on top, but he's looking at that 148 number is pretty much where you want to land this. Has been in great control of his irons, great distance control today. Taking dead aim.

[00:47:42] >> On a good line.

[00:47:43] >> Started out to the right and kind of drew it around there, and basically the same putt he had in regulation.

[00:47:53] >> Steve Stricker, a past winner of the Sanford International. It was actually the debut of this tournament in 2018. What a week it was for Steve Stricker. He was able to enjoy the walk up to the 18th. A little less stressful as Stricker won by four. One of those weeks where everything came together.

[00:48:24] >> I think, John, under pressure, one of the most difficult parts that you can have to control your distance is when you put up and then over a ridge. Anything inside of three or four feet here would be excellent.

[00:48:35] >> Yeah, that's correct there, Phil. I'm sure practice rounds or pro ams he hit this exact putt, so he kind of knows what he does. Kind of go back into his memory bank. You really have to slug it up this hill. It's so steep.

[00:49:06] >> Birdie roll on the way for Karlsson.

[00:49:08] >> How about it? How about it?

[00:49:09] >> How good is this?

[00:49:11] >> What great pace. And that had his attention for a long time. Had ours, I know that. What a great effort.

[00:49:21] >> The stage is now set for Steve Stricker who will have this for birdie and the win. And Phil, you weren't with Stricker's group, but he had a very similar plot in regulation. You think he's got to be very comfortable with this line.

[00:49:35] >> He's already seen it so he knows what it does. He's coming down the hill so he's got to be a little careful with the pace but he knows what the pace is too. So nothing's going to catch him by surprise. And now it just comes down to see if he can execute it.

[00:49:50] >> In regulation, Phil, he missed it just high. A lot of players missed this low. He had it aired out on the left, played the high line and almost dripped it in. Let's see what he's learned.

[00:50:11] >> Stricker to walk it off. This for birdie and the win.

[00:50:27] >> Stricker buries it! Take two for Stricker at the Sanford International.

[00:50:38] >> He learned well. Identical putt to what he had in regulation. You give Steve Stricker two chances at a putt, I guarantee he's going to make either both of them or one of them.

[00:50:48] >> The first two-time winner in tournament history here at the Stanford International. A little more stressful, as this one came in a playoff over Robert Karlsson. But how clutche is that? Stricker with his third win this season jumps up to third in the Charles Schwab Cup standings, trailing just Padraig Harrington and Steven Alker. How good was that, John?

[00:51:15] >> I mean, it's Steve Stricker. You give him a chance at putting -- we saw him make miles of putts this week. We saw make 60-footers, 70-footers, 50-footers. You know, that length right there, he never missed a real short one. So fantastic.

[00:51:31] >> Final thought for the viewers?

[00:51:32] >> Well, ball striking wins golf tournaments on Sunday. And Steve Stricker hit 17 of 18 greens. And we know what he can do with a putter. He only missed a couple of fairways all week. And when you can do that, and put that putter in hands like Steve Stricker, that's a recipe for a win.