**PGA TOUR CHAMPIONS LEARNING CENTER SHOW #8**

VO > PGA Tour Champions Learning Center.

VO > It was a special week at The Woodlands, Texas. The 20th playing of the Insperity Invitational took place at this Lonestar showdown. A magnificent field and impressive list of past champions all gathered to make more history at one of the PGA Tour champions premier events. This was how it shook out Sunday.

VO > Defending champion Steven Alter opened the final round with a three shot lead and kept the pedal down an impressive bogey free 66 Sunday, including a 31 over his final nine to make it back to back titles at The Woodlands. Just the second player to accomplish this and to win in each of his first two starts at the Insperity Invitational. That is career victory number six for the reigning Charles Schwab Cup champion. Bob Papa and Lanny Wadkins recap the final round in this week's winning moment.

VO > Thank you, Vince. The Woodlands Country Club playing host to the Insperity Invitational. And now in its 20th year, Steven Alker trying to go back to back, had a three shot lead going into the final round. Steve Stricker trying to make a run and Lanny his second into the ninth and Steve Stricker throwing a dart.

VO > Yeah, it looked like he was in trouble, but his natural shot is to pick it clean. And what a play there by Steve Stricker at number nine.

VO > After a birdie at the eighth, he would birdied the ninth that would get him to seven under. Alker made a big par save at ten and in front nine one under then attacking the flag…

VO > Then his iron game took over and it was something to behold he just stuffs it here at 11, goes to 12. And after Matt Gogle had hit the flag with his second Alker goes flag hunting again. Look at the quality shots he keeps throwing in here. Great play.

VO > He going to make that that would get him to 12 under par and he was maintaining a three shot lead and then his second into the par 5 13th.

VO > Yeah huge tee shot this just a seven iron to the par five. He doesn't carry the front by a long way but it's good now and just two plays from there for another birdie.

VO > And that would get him to 13 under par and really was in cruise control. Steve Stricker, he tried to put the pedal to the metal and at least keep pushing and this was his third in the 15 setting up a birdie.

VO > Couldn't get there in two, but played a quality wedge shot. And then Steven Alker got through the bunker, hit a great chip through about six feet here at 15 and makes birdie himself.

VO > And that would get him to 14 under par. And then at the dangerous difficult 17th playing his second.

VO > Had a number he really likes to want to take dead aim. And again the iron game is just spectacular great shot in the 17.

VO > Because up ahead Stricker had birdie 17 Alker makes birdie there for shot lead. Then his third shot at the 18.

VO > Got a little too conservative here at 18 but that's already had a long pitch and run this is textbook here what a way to finish off.

VO > For the second year in a row Alker shoots 66 on Sunday. For the second year in a row, he shoots 31 on the back nine. And for the second year in a row, he beat Steve Stricker by four shots to win the Insperity Invitational. Here's the final leaderboard. Steven Alker with a four shot win over Steve Stricker, David Toms and Colin Montgomerie share third place at eight under par. Let's hear from the champion of theInsperity.

OC > It's huge. You obviously see the emotion on 18 there. But I just saw a sea of orange today and just reminded me of Sam. I mean, I have my son on the bag. I mean, it doesn't get any better than that.

VO OC > Yeah, it's just it's great to be another one. And I haven't defended a championship. That's just I had a whole bunch of reasons today to try and win this golf tournament. And it worked out.

VO > With the victory. Alker jumps into the top five in the Charles Schwab Cup standings, while Steve Stricker is runner up, puts him at the top, displacing David Toms for number one. Following Alker last week's winner, Mark Hensby and Ernie Els round out the top five in what promises to be a tremendous season long race.

VO > Also from The Woodlands, a very special and touching tribute to the late Sam Workman, Alker's former caddie, who passed away earlier this year after losing his battle with cancer. Workman's friends and family attended the event. Dressed in Houston, Astros jerseys symbolic of their late friend's passion for that major league team. Well played by everyone all around.

VO > Sam Workman would have been proud of his replacement on the bag. Steven Alker son Ben made his debut looping for dad and both brought home the hardware. Another emotional moment for families and team Alker as the New Zealand star just keeps rolling along. And what a debut for Ben, who drew praise for his work while grabbing some quality bonding time with his father.

OC VO > I didn't imagine myself I've ever caddying my dad's, let alone caddying for him, winning him, defending a championship in the hometown of his old caddie, which is, you know, very near and dear to our hearts and one of the peaks of his power. It's genuinely overwhelming. I will remember and he will remember for the rest of our lives. And it's something that I'll always be able to hold on to.

VO > Coming up on PGA Tour, Champions Learning Center Padraig Harrington shows you how to hit it faster and be more accurate with the driver. A mini Patty Clinic is next.

VO > Bernhard Langer captured his first career win on PGA Tour champions at the oh seven Insperity Invitational at Augusta Pines, which is about 15 minutes away from the Woodlands Country Club. Langer now has 45 wins and is tied Hale Irwin for the all time tour mark. While having career win number one and a record breaking victory number 46 come at the same tournament would have been nice. It was not meant to be this weekend. Despite that, Langer still has 46 and an even higher number in his sights.

OC VO > It's a little bit on my mind, but it's not so much when I play golf because I try and focus. I what’s at hand. You know, the next shot, the next hole, the next round, that kind of thing. But you guys remind me of it all the time, so it'd be hard for me to forget it anyways.

But it's an honor for me to have tied Hale Irwin's record out here with 45 victories. And we're good friends. You know, I never thought this could be his his number of victories could be caught, but I was fortunate enough to do it. And yes, I will try and, you know, beat the record and go a couple better if possible.

VO > Perhaps win number 46 could come in one of the next two events. He will have a shot at winning the Mitsubishi Electric Classic ten years after his first victory there in 2013. Two weeks from now, it's the region's tradition, which Langer won in 2016 and 2017.

VO > Since last season, no one on PGA Tour champions hits the ball as far on average as Padraig Harrington, his driving distance and swing speed. Two of his biggest advantages and what propelled him to the 2022 Rookie of the Year award. Harrington is always trying to perfect his craft, and while testing a different driver, he shared one method of getting instant feedback. And Patty includes a disclaimer.

VO OC > We train different drivers…Driver. You know, You see that…you to see the ball strike now. Great. It's too warm. It was low. Didn’t come up. I need something a bit greasier. Yeah. Sunscreen. Dario.

OC > What are you trying to figure out with these drivers?

OC > Two things are they ball speed the same. And then do I like it? How it set? This would be highly illegal on the golf course. Guys, I just want to see I want to see the strike point. Don't do this at home. Do it at home, don’t do it on the course. So now you can see you can see the dimple pretty much there.

VO > Another big hitter, John Daly, celebrated his 57th birthday this past Friday, the two-time major winner and 2017 Insperity Invitational champ celebrated Thursday evening surrounded by friends and enjoying some Mexican cuisine. It's been two and a half years since Daly was diagnosed with bladder cancer. The beard is his reminder you can live and grow.

OC VO > I pray for everybody that has cancer because, you know, as you grow up, you don't think you're ever going to get this disease. And although mine is not as big as most, but it's still the same, he's still got to check it out and and get the checkups. I'm benign right now. Thank God I go back in May and do that again, which is not the most fun. But yeah, I'm not doing my doctor says because I'm still smoking. But, you know, it's a hard thing to quit. But I just pray for all all the cancer people out there. And one of my dearest friends, Toby, you know, he he may not like me sharing that she had stomach cancer. Toby Keith and legendary singer, one of my best friends, has three more treatments. And he he beat it, right? We're crossing our fingers. I pray for him every day, but pray for anybody with cancer. Because let me tell you something. If you don't know much about it, it's brutal.

VO > J.D. remains a top draw on PGA Tour champions. We pray for his continued health and the health of others in a constant battle to overcome cancer.

VO > When Learning Center returns, the reigning senior PGA champion is preparing for his major championship defense later this month. Steven Alker gives us his first impressions of PGA Frisco. And a two time winner last season Steve Flesch tells us about a life changing moment as he shares his romantic side.

VO > 2022 was a true breakout year for Steven Alker. Four wins, including his first PGA Tour champions, major at the KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship. One week ago Alker was present for senior PGA Championship Media Day in Frisco, Texas, and had an early look at Fields Ranches. And here is his take away this year's major venue and what to expect given the sometimes wicked Texas winds.

VO OC > I actually enjoy the golf course because it was a golf course that the more I played, the more holes I played, the more I enjoyed it. It kind of grew on me as I went along, so that was a really good sign. And you know, it was only blowing about 15, 20 at times and I can see it blowing harder out there. So it's going to be an interesting test to be interesting to see what they do with the golf course. Callahan has got plenty of room off the tee because it's going to be so windy out there. He knows, you know what, what's going on. But I think more of a second shot golf course because the Greens have got a decent they've got good size to them. But you get little portions where you have to be careful and yeah. And there are some big bunkers and you just got to have an all round game for the week. It's just that kind of golf course.

VO > At month's end, PGA Frisco will host its first major events the 2023 KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship, the senior PGA is just one of several big events already lined up for the new first golf course. The women's PGA will be held there in 2025 and then again in 2031. And the PGA Championship will make its way to Texas in 2027 and again in 2034. And there are hopes that one day it will host a Ryder Cup as well.

VO > Next week's Mitsubishi Electric championship in Duluth, Georgia, is the final tuneup before this year's first major, the Regions Tradition. Last year, TPC Sugarloaf scoring average was over par, making it the eighth most difficult course the Champions played all season yet, and still a left hander left with the hardware.

VO > St3ve Flesch was night and day in rounds two and three. The 73 Saturday was quickly wiped away when Fleschy opened his Sunday round with birdies on holes two through six, closed with a 65 and won his second event on PGA Tour champions and second in Duluth, Georgia. There was also one very big adjustment made.

OC > Steve Flesh set to defend in Duluth at the Mitsubishi Electric Classic. And, you know, winning that last year was a great win for you, but it didn't really start out like a winning venture for you. Would you say that weekend?

OC VO > No. But, you know, I kind of caught a rhythm there. I've always played well at that golf course, but, you know, that place always looks good to me. So I knew if I just hung in there and kept playing kind of the way I knew how to play the place, I'd be all right, you know, somehow I birdied the last, you know, seven, the 17th hole and in the final round to get that lead finally.

VO OC > It was a tremendous rally on Sunday. And so let's let's talk about that, how you kind of put it together. And this was through a change in equipment, right, that weekend.

OC > Multiple changes in equipment.

OC > You do that.

OC VO > I do that. And I don't care what people say. I just it's me. I mean, if I feel like if I have a better chance of playing well with these different set of clubs or different putter or whatever driver I throw it in, they're all on waivers to me. But I switched round. I switched irons going into the final round.

OC > Now why can you do that and commit to it? And some other guys just say, There's no way I could ever do that, pull that off.

OC VO > You know, because what I'm playing, I don't feel great with some like, well, if these feel better to me on the range or the night before the morning of it's a confidence thing with me. I play by feel a lot and I play on a lot of momentum. And to me I felt like, you know what, my short irons weren't that great with the set I was playing, but I knew what these short irons were going to do. I just threw them in. And then on the 17th hole, you know, the 53rd hole of the tournament, I hit an eight iron in there 12 feet and made it, so something worked out.

OC > The proof is in the pudding. So you're kind of like a would you say, is it fair to say a technician maybe with your game? I mean, I know it's feel. Is there a technical component as well?

VO OC > I think there's just a lot running around in my head. I mean, it's honestly, I you know, I'm constantly thinking how how can I get better? What can I do? And a lot of times I know my golf swing needs a little bit of work, but sometimes I believe that your equipment can make up for something going on your golf swing. So to me, it's a vicious cycle. It's like a hamster on a wheel. But I've always been this way and people are like, You need to pick a set and just stick with it. I'm like, But then I would I would be bored. I'd go down, I wouldn't be happy. And that's not how I kind of run my my business. So I just do it how I want. It's worked out great at times and other times it's been a flop, but I'm willing to take the chance.

OC > So. So how important was it to win there again and what did that mean even later in the year when you go to Pebble in the Pure Insurance?

OC VO > Vince It was a funny year because I really hit it cruddy all year, putted pretty well. You know, I had a great finish in the Schwab in the Schwab Cup at the end of the year to like, you know, overall for the year 11th, I believe I was. But really the year before I played way better had more chances to win. Hit it good. Putted it good. But it just didn't work out. Last year was weird because I hit it bad all year and I putted it good twice in Atlanta and Pebble Beach and I won. When I won Pebble Beach, I didn't putt good either, so I didn't hit it good either. So, you know, putting made up for a lot of my mistakes last year. But hey, I'm still looking for that just that perfect set of clubs.

VO OC > Was how you finished at Pebble as well. You know, you go up and down and right. Give you birdie and then winning at all. So I want to talk about your personal life. Are you happy not to dig too deep like, you know, Oprahish? But are you are you happy? And I understand that recently engaged.

OC VO > Recently got engaged about six weeks ago now. Okay. And we got engaged in Scottsdale and it was a lot of fun. I missed my chance in Sedona because it was it was more touristy than I thought it was going to be. So I was like, That's not the right vibe. So then we pushed it. We went to Scottsdale for the latter half of that week and I had to figure out something. So I came up with, you know, getting engaged on a hike, which is a lot of fun. But I think it threw my fiance off because she's like, why does he want to go hiking? This guy doesn't hike it, you know? But anyway, I caught her off guard cause she's hard to surprise. But that worked out well. So, you know, had a lot going on in my personal life. Lost my mom a few weeks ago. But, you know, the engagement is great and dad's doing okay now. So, you know, just it's that time of life where, you know, our parents get older and you might lose one, but got a lot to be thankful for.

OC > Yeah, and I know we love having you out here and talking with you. The other guys love having you out here because it's like, Goydos says nobody knows more about the swing than you do. You are always fixing people left and right and you add so much to the tour. So it's always been always great.

OC > So it’s a lot of fun to be out, isn't it though? Yeah, I, you know, I'm teasing with the guys in the equipment truck that maybe when I'm finished playing, I'll just be a third guy in there to help them work on clubs and do stuff. I just like it out here. It's a lot of fun and it's good people, so it's we're fortunate to do this for a living.

OC > I think it'll be funny. Like, you know, you're in there. Is that is that Steve Flesch? Does he work for you guys? No, he just comes in here and he likes to. Yeah, likes to just tweak things.

OC > Why not? Hey, it's my it's a hobby from. I don't know if it counts as a hobby, but it's my hobby. So that's all that matters.

OC > That's all that matters. Thanks, Flesch.

OC > You got it man,

VO > That's our time this week, PGA Tour champions moving into the month of May with plenty of great events, including our first major championship. I'm Vince Cellini. As always, we thank you for watching.