**2024 PGA TOUR CHAMPIONS LEARNING CENTER SHOW #9**

VO> PGA Tour Champions Learning Center.

VO > Week three of a four week stretch on PGA Tour Champions was a stop outside Houston, Texas. The Woodlands Country Club, hosting the 20th play of the Insperity Invitational. Loaded with star power and headlined by a pair of feel-good stories. One involved the winner, the other an impressive return.

VO > Both played out amid torrential rain that squeezed the event to 36 holes. Rain washed away Friday and Sunday play on Saturday. Players slosh through rounds one and two and in the end, Scott Dunlap walked away with the title. Bob Papa provide a rain-soaked recap.

VO > Thanks, Vince. The 21st playing of the Insperity Invitational from The Woodlands in Texas. After a washout on Friday and a washout on Sunday, this tournament was decided on Saturday when the players had to play 36 holes and Scott Dunlap shot a bogey free seven under par 65 in the morning, starting his second round at the 10th. Rolls this putt in for birdie at the 12th. Scott, who only other win came at the Boeing Classic back in 2014, was dialed in, rolling in another putt for birdie and playing with a lot of confidence. This was his birdie at the first, his 10th of the day, the par five taking advantage of it. His iron play was excellent and a lot of the par putts that he had were mere tap ins. Did make a bogey at the sixth, but then responded at the difficult par three eighth. And that would set up a birdie opportunity for Scott. And all the players in the field knew that you gotta put up your best score on Saturday because storms are expected for Sunday. Bounces back with that birdie that got him on a ten under par. And that was good enough for a one-shot win over Joe Duran and Stuart Appleby. Scott Dunlop, who was an invite into this tournament, winds up now earning an exemption on the PGA Tour Champions.

VO > Dunlap's win means another shakeup in the Charles Schwab Cup standings. Steven Alker is back on top, tied for fourth in Houston, followed closely by Steven Ames and winner. Dunlap leaps into the top ten, soaring 49 spots to number nine. As for the other feel-good story we promised, here he is, three months after tearing his left Achilles four time in spirit champion and the Tour's all-time victory leader Bernhard Langer returned. He has never missed a start in this event and made his second start of the season. And when play was over, Bernhard posted scores of 69 74 and a T31 finish at one under. But the real accomplishment was his super-fast return to the tour top.

OC > Here we are. Welcome back. Oh, this is good. Hello.

VO > You're supposed to be out for a year.

OC > Gotta be out for a year.

OC > I wouldn't remember my name if I'd been out for a year or something. You guys wouldn't recognize me. I might grow a beard like John Daly.

VO > All right. Machine heals a lot quicker.

OC > Ready. He told me a machine doesn't rust. I don't know, some went wrong. That's it. Anybody recognizes me and. There we go.

OC > Hi. Good afternoon.

OC > How are you, sir? Well, I see you. I've been waiting for you. We have waited so long.

OC > Appreciate it.

OC > Love it, love it.

O C> Thanks for getting things organized for us.

OC > Oh.

OC > He needs special treatment. This guy.

OC > I know, I felt bad. Had to turn him away.

OC > Not too much.

OC > (inaudible)

OC > Missed you in The Masters this year.

OC > Yeah, I was there, but not playing and reading that.

OC > Yeah. I figured that.

OC > Hey, what's up?

OC > Good to see you man.

OC > How are you doing? Nice to see you. Give me a hug man. Everything been good? How are you feeling?

OC > Much better.

OC > Much better.

OC > I'm upright.

OC > You look good.

OC > Used to be flat.

OC > Used to be flat. Now you're upright.

OC > you want a picture, absolutely. All right. Don't you kick me.

OC > It's all there. Good to see you. How are you doing?

OC > Good, good.

OC > Couldn’t stand watching us make money.

OC > No. I just saw you smiling. You know, register, ATM register cash machine. great to see buddy.

OC > Great to see you guys.

OC > You must really missed us.

OC > Good to see you.

OC > Good to see you. Welcome back.

OC > Thank you. Appreciate it.

OC > Just need 20 more yards. Where can I find that out? So, this is the injured leg, put some weight on here. Now push up with the toe.

OC > Invitational in the 7:21 starting time. Next on the team from Munich, Germany. He's a World Golf Hall of Fame member. Please give a warm welcome back to eight four-time champion Bernhard Langer.

VO > Bernhard Langer, the World Golf Hall of Famer making his first start since Hualalai, had surgery on his left Achilles in early February. Returning to competitive golf here at the Insperity Invitational and in round one, Langer started off two over through his opening five finished shooting a three under par 69. 36 holes I'm sure that's not what the doctor ordered.

OC VO > Yeah, that's exactly what I didn't need, so I'm thrilled that I made it through. But it wasn't easy at all, you know, I was hoping for flat, but I was up on tee boxes and down off the tee box and in and out of bunkers and stuff. but I made it, so just need some rest now. Put that foot up.

VO OC > So great to see him back, you know? And yeah, typical played great. You know, obviously a little rusty, probably, but but played great.

VO OC > You know, he's just an amazing athlete. He's been such a great player for a long time. And he, he's one of those guys that makes us all work a lot harder to try to to try to be as good as he is and to try to beat him. And it takes a lot to do that.

VO > Langer's last win came in June at the US Senior Open at Second World in Wisconsin. With the win, Langer earned an exemption into this year's U.S. Open at Pinehurst. However, due to the Achilles injury, Langer says he will not be participating in our national championship, taking it one step at a time.

OC VO >I've withdrawn from the U.S. open. I think it's too soon, too much. I would have to walk, you know, six days in a row, pretty much. And not sure I'm ready for that. Well, I know right now I'm not ready, and I don't know where it will be in a few weeks.

VO > Padraig Harrington is coming off his fourth start of the season on PGA Tour Champions. The Hoag Classic winner has dabbled on the PGA tour this year as well, making one cut in four events. We caught up with the soon to be World Golf Hall of Fame member during a practice round to see how he prepares and why his mindset changes, from the practice tee to the first tee.

OC > So, we don't want to cover the bunker here because I could reach the water at 326. So, a low one is what we want. If I if I hit it right, the bunker is actually going to save me from going into the water. So that camera is very much in danger. Right a low one.

OC > Okay, get into game mode, pick a target and stick with it. Down off the left you said. Okay. Exactly what it said in the ten low cut down over top of the hill. Can we leave that there for the three days of the tournament?

OC > So what do you do from that?

OC > Yeah, I got home. I've had three weeks off. So that means lots of tinkering, lots of practice. So, two main things looking I, I certainly I'm a little faster, I'm a bit better with my legs when I get left early in my backswing. So, at about this point I want to start pushing forward. So generally, I'm hitting a lot of shots. Am contemplating hitting on the golf course this way because I strike it better. I hit it a little further. I don't know if I really need to do it, but when I have that little step, a little, little shuffle, it's not this. It's a little shuffle left, as I said, just about that point there so I can do it without. So that would be it. I'm also just first trying to get not just esthetics, but I'm trying to get the club a little bit better on on line. So, for me, I have to exaggerate in my practice swing, as you saw there, it's quite an exaggeration trying to use the muscles, different muscles, rather than I get a bit that way which can loop it. So, I want to be a little bit this exaggerated. And then when I swing it would be much more on plane. so more lateral, a little bit more force in the legs, a little bit more laid off. that's about it. But then, you know, you do all that practice for three weeks, and then you come out to the tournament, and you have to shut it all down and try and get away from it because, you know, the last thing you want is any technical thoughts. For me, I just want to focus on the target. So that's why I play. I play two pro-ams most week weeks to try and get myself off the range, get myself on the golf course, start hitting shots, getting into it. I'm not I'm just not a very good practice. So, when I practice, I get cut open trying to hit the ball better and better and better. Whereas obviously when it comes to tournament play, it's it's not necessarily better. It's it's consistent is what you want.

VO > Harrington has been consistent with his playing schedule since becoming eligible for PGA Tour Champions. Each of the last two years, Harrington has played a few events on both the PGA tour and PGA Tour Champions the first quarter of the year but come major season he plays mostly for Charles Schwab Cup points. Harrington says that is the plan again for 2024.

VO OC > I play tradition next week, which is it is a Champions Tour major, then I play the PGA and then the following week I play the senior PGA. I had a couple of weeks off and then I'm back at it again. You know, I've got the I'm defending in Dick’s. I got the US senior open. Quickly back to Europe for the I suppose I got the Scottish Open, I've got the open I got the Senior Open. So yeah, it's busy time. A lot of tournaments to play well and that's kind of what I'm saying here is I've got to get my head in the game. you know, there's a time and a place for working on your swing, and I've got to accept what I have is good enough at the moment and try and get the best out of that for, you know, pretty much until all the way through the season, they're not going to try and add anything for the rest of the year. A lot of my practice will be done, you know, without a ball, a lot of practice swings, as I said, trying to get that thing laid off and trying not to spend too much time working on my swing, on the range.

VO > It is with great sadness we say goodbye to a highly respected player and broadcaster who brought so much to the sport of golf. Peter Oosterhuis passed away late last week, one day shy of his 76th birthday, this after a near decade long battle with Alzheimer's disease. From international tours to a television career, Oosterhuis also found time to play in nine PGA Tour Champions events from 1998 to 2002. Tall and stately, commanding on the course and in the booth.

VO > Paul Broadhurst turns 59 in late summer, but here, in springtime, his game has blossomed again, winning the recent Invited Celebrity Classic and finished tied for second the following week at the Mitsubishi Electric Classic. I recently caught up with Broady in Atlanta to discuss the changes he's made and to see how it might help your game as well.

OC > With Paul Broadhurst, who was a winner at the Invited Celebrity Classic in Dallas, and it ended a drought of about over five years for you. So, my question to you is how do you work and keep believing when you're when you're close? But maybe not not holding the hardware.

OC VO > Difficult, you know, put some put some hard work in the couple of weeks we had off before, Dallas, you know, I played pretty good this early part of the season. Third and a seventh. And then I found the previous 3 tournaments I have started really well and then just fell away at the weekend. So that was a concern. Luckily enough, my, sports psychologist is back from from where he lives in Qatar and, managed to meet up with him and we did some work, some focus in work. And my son's been helping me with my game. My coach back home, he's captain in the PGA Cup team this year, so he's quite busy. So sometimes when I'm at home I don't get the chance to see him. So, Sam's been sort of looking at my game and he just gave me a drill to work on the relay. And it's it's pretty simple. I tend to get the the club behind me in the back swing, and felt I was doing that too much in the wind, especially over the past few weekends. So, we just worked on the the the old towel drill where you, you know, you stick it underneath your arm.

OC > All right. Well, let's let's do that. We'll do the physical and then the mental. I have a question about that as well. But show us this.

OC > So, no I tend to get the club this way. So, if I can stay a bit more connected and feel that the club works this way, I would love to get it there. That's my ultimate goal. But normally it's there. But I can get away with that. But you know, ultimately if I keep working then I should get it here and it's a bit more of a one piece take away where I get a little bit handsy in the back swing, gets it inside early and I have to drop back and save it. So, I'm aware of what goes wrong. it's it's a case of me keeping it in Paul Broadhurst limits, you know, on the back swing, if I can keep it within my sort of safe limit. Then I hit it pretty good. And that's that's really all. Well, technique wise, that's all I've been working on.

OC > And you also mentioned not getting ahead of yourself. What does that mean exactly?

OC VO > Well, what I, what I found was that, you know, when I started, the previous three events started with eight under five, under four, and then I'm in contention. And Saturday and Sunday I've gone out and not played my best. Newport Beach, I mean, I started with five straight bogeys, you know, lying third in the tournament, last group out. And I know now still looking back that I got ahead of myself. Sports psychologist put that put that right. Gave me a few things to work on and just focus on the shot in hand and not get too far ahead.

VO > So you're saying golf is a mental game too?

VO > Absolutely, absolutely. It's a mental game. You know, like the confidence obviously comes from playing well.

VO > Sure.

VO OC > You know, if you're playing poorly then the confidence is low. And, you know, that's a mind thing. But so, it's a combination a little bit of technique and a little bit more focus on the shot at hand.

OC > Well, thanks for staying in the moment with us. Congrats again.

OC > Thank you. Thanks a lot.

VO > It has been one of the game's most enduring partnerships, but now that has changed. Jim Furyk and caddie Mike Cowan are parting ways after a 25-year run dating back to the 1999 Masters. Unlike many others, this split was amicable, with an injured Furyk encouraging Cowan to move to another bag, that of PGA tour player C.T. Pan. It's economics, really, but as far as the friendship that remains strong between Furyk and Fluff, it was simply time.

VO > Mike Fluff Colin and his trademark mustache. Certainly, one of the most identifiable figures of his profession, he's walked alongside some very big names, including one of the biggest in Tiger Woods from 1996 to 1999, before joining forces with Furyk. C.T. Pan has a man he can certainly count.

VO > When learning Center returns, looking ahead to this week's Regions Tradition, the first major on the schedule and where Steve Stricker has been a force. His fellow players reflecting on how Stricker has gone big in Birmingham right after this.

VO > Major season is here on PGA Tour Champions. This week it's Greystone Golf and Country Club and the Regions Tradition. The first major championship of the season. This ends a tournament run of four in a row on the schedule and means it's time to focus on the early favorite. Over the last four playing of the region's tradition, Steve Stricker has won lost in a playoff one, and then won again. Each of his last three wins he's finished six strokes ahead of second place. So, what makes the Greystone Golf and Country Club fits Stricker game so well? His peers, weigh in.

VO OC > He's got a great wedge game; got part a great wedge play and he avoids the risk. You know whereas I take some of that risk on and because that's my personality. He lays up at those par fives. He he he look Steve knows how to play golf. His greatest trait you can talk about being a good wedge player, good putter. He's got great course management great strategy. And he can work his way around the golf course. He knows what he's doing.

VO OC > There's quite a few holes where you got to draw it off the tee, which you know Steve does that very well. Obviously feels comfortable. you know, he putts well there, so that always helps. But he puts well everywhere. But for some reason he has pretty good feel around that place.

VO OC > The course itself. He's just a good player. It's not particularly suits him. But he he does make a few extra birdies on those five par fives. And they're you know it's certainly not a long golf course, but it's certainly one that you you got to use your, your, your head going around the and choose your, your, your choose your shots wisely. Choose choose where you take those chances.

VO > And that is our time. On this edition of Learning Center, we can collectively pause and catch our breath for. It's another major, the KitchenAid senior PGA Championship, staged later this month. I’m Vince Cellini. As always, we thank you for watching.