**PGA TOUR CHAMPIONS LEARNING CENTER SHOW #19**

VO > PGA Tour Champions Learning Center.

VO > Yippee ki yay! Golf fans. PGA Tour Champions spent the weekend north of the border in beautiful Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Not their first rodeo here. The 12th edition of the Rogers Charity classic Canyon Meadows Golf and Country Club, where the winner holds the trophy and wears the signature cowboy hat. In the end, this man was back in the saddle. Ken Tanigawa made a huge Saturday move, firing his career low round on PGA Tour Champions and course record tying 61. Then followed that up with more great Sunday golf birdies on five of his first seven holes, a closing 64 and 17 under total to end a five-year victory drought with more on the champion. The man who called the action, John Swantek.

VO > Okay, thank you Vince, and what a fantastic week it was in Calgary. And what a splendid finish on Sunday at the Rogers Charity classic. The second shot here at the sixth for Ken Tanigawa in the final round.

VO > Already three birdies on his card. A little short par four here. Lead up to the corner. Little wedge shot in a beautiful shot that would extend his lead to two shots at that point.

VO > He was coming off a course record tying 61 on Saturday and kept the pedal down, birding five of his opening seven on Sunday.

VO > And watch this putt. Looking to extend the lead to another shot to minus three. And he gets it to go.

VO > We're giving one back at the eight but still shot 31 on the front. And later in the round a couple of critical birdie pickups. This at 15.

VO > Yeah. The lead had gone the other way to Richard Green. That was huge. The hardest hole on the golf course. And he gets a birdie gets it going again.

VO > And Phil this was really the moment of the week here at 17.

VO > Absolutely tied for the lead with Richard Green. Tough par for long birdie putt and cans it. Gives him the lead that he would not relinquish.

VO > Green had a couple of late bogeys which gave Tanigawa a little breathing room, but still had to hold this testy little four-footer for his par at the last and a 64 on Sunday. Green still had to finish in the group behind, but it was enough to get the job done and return Tanigawa to the winner's circle. It had been five years since his last win.

VO > Yeah, it had, and he had questions. He was questioning whether he win again, and he did.

VO > Holds off Richard Green by two. Let's hear from our champion this week after his third victory on the Champions Tour.

OC VO > A little lost for words. You know it's been a long time since 2019 to to be in this position. And time goes by, and you wonder if he could win again and to be able to do it just just over the moon. It's just amazing to be out here and play and get to know the guys and the camaraderie out here, and to be able to play golf in these amazing places. I mean, it's a treat.

VO > Congratulations to Ken Tanigawa who moves up 21 spots in the Charles Schwab Cup standings. The top five in the season long race remain the same. Richard Green notched a third runner up finish this season. Els, Ames, and Alker all finished in the top ten in Calgary.

VO > Well, we just completed PGA Tour Champions lone Canadian event in just over a month. The Presidents Cup will be staged at Royal Montreal Golf Club in Montreal. Automatic qualifying is approaching as the United States team, led by Jim Furyk, has dominated Presidents Cup play since 2000. Canadian legend and international captain Mike Weir has a close eye on his countrymen as the selection process unfolds.

OC VO > This is crunch time for a lot of players. you know, we have six automatic spots off the world rankings and then there's six picks, with a lot of Canadians in the mix. So, they're open. They're going to really play well these next couple weeks. And, that I can I can pick them for the team. But as I've said all along, this is a you know, it's an international team. It's not it's not Team Canada. So, you have to be fair to everybody. I think if you look at the list, because it's the world ranking list, if you look from number ten through about 16 or 17, that's probably where you're going to find the guys, the picks. I mean, likely number seven and eight are going to make the team. You know, even though I have six picks, you know, be hard to go not pick seven and eight unless something you know is unusual. But you start looking, you know, for picks from, from that, you know, number nine through 16 spots. Let somebody these last couple weeks from behind, you know, gets in is in this week and wins or something could move right up. So, a lot can still happen, but I don't want to put a name to, to a dark horse.

VO > Four-time PGA Tour Champions winner Esteban Toledo was also in selection mode, wondering if he should try his hand at ice skating. Toledo and ex-boxer put his athletic skills to the test with former 1989 Stanley Cup champion and Calgary Flames standout Joel Otto offering advice. Esteban was born in Mexico and given the climate there, he may be more used to ice in his beverage rather than under his feet but gave it a shot as Otto stepped away from coaching youth hockey and Toledo slid into his class.

OC > Yeah, you just start skate and have fun. Oh, awesome. How about Jacks your brother. We'll see what happened today. I never skate before. I might look like an idiot, but I'm a fast learner.

OC > Have you ever play hockey?

OC VO > I never skate before in my life. So, that would be, a challenge, I guess, because I've. I don't know. So, being able to trust, just bending your knees and using your core more than anything else. It’s feet, ankles. Okay. and. Yeah, I know Mike, Weir, played good hockey. I hear he was a Canadian.

OC > All right, so what happened here?

OC > Get set. Go.

OC > Yeah. Awesome.

OC VO > I think I should take a good balance, but also, I think it's a lot of techniques. Obviously, it's harder than what I thought. I don't know how these guys can go, so fast, so good. It's just amazing. It's a great workout. But when these guys are so slim and it's amazing, it's amazing.

VO > Try not to let Mike Weir see this.

OC > Oops I was gonna tell Mike he was a hockey player. But we let's make sure Mike doesn't see this maybe.

VO OC > But that was 1989 here in Calgary.

OC > I'll give you a $20.

VO > This is this is a shrewd businessman. It's hard to win one of those is just amazing. It's a big team effort. That's the big thing.

VO > So, that one with Philadelphia?

VO > This was with Calgary. That's our flames logo there. You know?

VO > When did you win that one?

OC > 1989.

OC > 89. Oh, that's right.

OC > 35 years ago.

OC > Yeah.

OC > A long time ago.

OC > And I tell you years, go fast.

OC > They go too fast.

OC > Are you too fast?

OC > Way too fast.

OC > But I would thank you. Appreciate it.

O C> But of luck, I'll be watching this weekend. Appreciate it.

OC > Thank you. It was so much fun. Thank you, Rogers, to put this tournament together for all the kids, all the community. Awesome. Doing a good job.

VO > We love when a plan comes together. Coming up on Learning Center. Note of the game. The third gives us a few good arguments as to why we will see Tiger Woods compete on PGA Tour Champions once he turns 50. Fingers crossed.

VO > Tiger woods turns 49 on December 30th, one year shy of being eligible for PGA Tour Champions. But will woods play on the over 50 tour in 2026? This has long been a hot topic inside our circles. His friend and college teammate notably gave the third thinks the answer is yes.

OC VO > Tiger would be obviously a wonderful addition to it to any event, but I think, the the environment, the atmosphere out here would suit him well. Being able to play in a car would be a huge, I think, burden off of his mind. And he could actually just focus on, on the golf part of it, which I think would be a wonderful thing. It can actually be a benefit to maybe some preparation for the major championships. Come out here, get some reps in with the, you know, being able to to ride in the cart like many of us do. I’ll never take anything away from that guy. He's amazing. And, certainly the best that I've ever seen. He’s talked to Strick. He's talked to Freddie. He knows that it's, it's a great vibe. It's relaxed. Everybody just sort of, is has maybe dialed it down a notch from when you're playing, on the regular PGA tour, which is to be expected. We're all older or, you know, our kids are, you know, growing up where I've grown up and sort of, we're kind of closer to the end of our careers in the beginning. And so, I just think there's more of a sense of appreciation, not only for the golf and the opportunity to play it, but also for all the, your fellow competitors. You know, we've been friends for for decades.

VO > Padraig Harrington will turn 53 at the end of this month. The three-time major winner still dabbles on both the PGA tour and PGA Tour Champions, all the while giving expert instruction to those of us trying to improve our game here at. He dismisses a long-time golf axiom regarding head position during the swing.

OC > So, this is a Paddy's Golf tips from my caddie, Ronan. And it was it pretty much the last pro-am I was in over here. I think it was at Dick’s. So, I was struggling with this guy. So, he had a lovely practice swing. So, when I'm when he took a practice in, which is something I always recommend to people. If you start from a club forward. So, if you push to club forward and bring it back, you tend to stay on late. And he just had this beautiful practice thing. He was a pretty decent golfer. I think he was a like a seven handicap, so we knew we'd do it. Nice practicing. You'd have to go back there. And then when he got over the ball, he did this, and he really struggles. He was okay because he was a seven handicap. But the club just went out here. Really awkward. I'm back here. I'm with I'd be struggling with it because this was so good. Way to hell when the ball was in the way, did he go all over the place? It was actually quite simple. Ronan pointed it out. So, when he was practice swinging here with the nice movement because your feet, he let his head follow the club for a little bit. And when he got here, he was so obsessed to keep his head down. His head went like that. So once all he needed to do was just have a little bit of rotation with his head, and that set the club on the right line, make his backswing. So, you got to move your head in the golf swing, well, for most people you got to move your head. It's not good advice to try and keep your head still or keep it down. So, for a lot of us, you need a little bit of head movement and to be honest, it drops down a bit and it comes off a bit. So, my head is up, is operating freely. I'm not trying to keep it rigid or stale, and for that guy, it made all the difference to his backswing.

Vo > And now a powerful story authored by Calgary golf pro Steve Blake, who a week ago on his 56th birthday, received a sponsor's exemption into the Rodgers Charity classic. Blake competed while battling inoperable stage four lung cancer. He received the diagnosis almost a year ago, yet showed tremendous courage and inspired all around him, attacking the course just as he has his illness.

VO OC > Things sort of really started about this time last year. I developed a cough and, and it was just a nagging sort of thing. And my wife and I just thought, oh, you know, it's it lasted for quite a while. We just thought pneumonia or something like that. Go see my doctor, get some antibiotics, and days later we'll be fine. But it never really did clear up. So, we took an x ray, saw a bunch of fluid around the lungs, and thought okay, well, you know, if it gets any worse, let's get an emergency and let's let's get some drainage and let's check it out a little bit deeper or whatever. So, one morning I was going to go play golf, and I made a promise to my wife that, hey, if you know, if it does get worse, I will, I'll go in right. And it was that morning. It was sorry. So. Yeah. Went in 12 hours later, I was diagnosed with stage four. Yeah. So. just about a year was going to say a few months before, you know, as it sinks in, before you really start to, I going to call it pick sides, you know, which side do you want to be on. Do you want do you want to be, you know, the fighter, the guy that's going to beat this or do you want to be the statistic and you know and be that guy with they had given me the prognosis of 12 to 24 months. Again, very hard to hear. But but when you pick that side are you read about it. There are a lot of exceptional patients out there. You know, they're they're few and far between unfortunately. But there's a lot of that that beat it.

OC > All right Calgary. This is the one you've been waiting for. He’s a proud Calgarians and backed by the brute force and Blakers army, stamp your feet and clap your hands Calgary. Burn it down for Steven Blake

VO OC > This game has given me a lot. You know one of my messages. You'll see it on some of the t shirts that people will be wearing this week in support of me, and cancer is live life and love something, so my passion, my love, besides my family and friends and stuff is golf. That's what I like to get up to do. And you have that. So, you know, maybe it's gardening for somebody else or volunteering or whatever it is find. And if you don't know what you love, find something. Go out there and and again, it's it's just that it gets you out of bed. Sometimes it's difficult for sure. I go down, I go down the rabbit hole once in a while. Not very often now, which is nice. but I think one of the things that's helped, lately, I've had two checkups since, since this has happened and they've both been very positive, even even to the point where my oncologist has said this is extremely unusual to see these positive results. So that that's that gives me that, hey, this, this belief that I can beat this, you know, that I can I can beat your prognosis that I can live another five, ten, fifteen years. It's working. And it's it's the belief that my family and my support group, my friends, all have for me as well. So, when I get messages said, hey, we're praying for you, had prayed for sending positive vibes into the universe for you. Yeah. I believe and feel that it's working when I hear that. And if you believe that, if you truly believe that you can beat this disease, you will. And I and I believe that.

VO > Steve Blake's message resonates with us all. Coming up, players on the cusp of making the 2024 PGA Tour Champions playoffs the final stretch, and why it means so much beyond this season.

OC > So, Trevor, tell me, how does it feel to be the season long champion and take home the coveted FedExCup? Well, Jim, I just can't tell you. It's such a fantastic feeling and a true.

OC > Trevor.

OC > Hey Vij.

O C> You alright?

OC > Yeah.

OC > On the PGA tour the first playoff event finished on Sunday and in two weeks, another FedEx champion will be crowned following the Tour Championship. The idea for the FedEx playoffs began in 2006 and it started in 2007. While not a major, the FedEx champion receives a five-year exemption and huge $25 million payout at Eastlake Golf Club in Atlanta. It has certainly been quite the playoff evolution.

OC > They brought that to us in oh six and the guys at the Tour Championship, we had a meeting with Commissioner Finchem at the time and it just it sounded strange at the time. You know, we're going to this point system. And at that time, we were doing everything by money, right? Everything was a money list and draw.

OC > We got the playoffs coming up for the first time, got any advice.?

OC > Well, Jim, it all starts with the proper pre-game meal game.

OC > Pre-game meal?

OC >Yeah, yeah. You got to eat healthy real big. Jim Furyk will be a lean, mean golf machine,

OC > But I'm still going to be hungry.

OC > You're supposed to be hungry. It's the playoffs.

VO OC > You know, I think it's been great for for the tour. I think it's good for the game and a lot of exciting finishes from Billy Hos knocking it out of the water. You get guys like, Tiger or VJ or Rory, who have maybe dominated all year and then kind of carry it through. So, kind of a lot of different ways to win that event. And it creates a lot of drama.

VO OC > I think it adds a buzz to the end of the season, gives you something to kind of pace yourself toward and hopefully peak at the right time. And then the elimination of players along the way in smaller fields. I mean, as a player, as long as you're in those events, you like them a lot.

OC VO > FedEx has been a wonderful sponsor. They've been around the the tour for many, many years, for over 30 years. And when they came, with that plan, you know, the FedEx playoffs, you know, it was very new. it changed the season dramatically. You know, we used to finish in October.

OC > So, we've, we've got the playoffs coming up. You got any tips?

OC > Yeah. Ernie, it's it's all about preparation. Start with this. It's I black.

OC > What is this going to do?

OC > Well it’s not going to do anything. But it makes you look mean.

OC > The money that they infused into the tour, back in those days was incredible. And I'm not sure I never won the FedExCup, but I know Vijay and Jim and the guys won it. But for us, in those days, I think it was $10 million, bonus. You know, it was incredible money. So, that really was a game changer, especially in the United States. You know, it was just a big cash infusion and showed their support and willingness to grow the game.

OC > And the other thing, right before I go on the field, I'm banging my head against a locker. Sometimes I just really get me pumped up and fired up for the game.

OC > Of course, Ernie, I had a helmet on, and I did it.

VO > PGA Tour Champions is gearing up for their own playoffs. There’s only six events remaining for players to secure a spot in the top 72 on the Charles Schwab Cup standings. An all-important push, particularly for those players finishing in the top 36 and earning status for next year. This can be a career and a life changer.

VO OC > I look at it. Yes, I watch it, you know, up and down. I even as much worried about it is is I want to play well golf or good golf and understand what I'm doing wrong, where I can make myself better, but to me that's the hardest part of it. You know, the rest of it will come together. It's just trying to stay focused enough to play good golf and do my right thing. Do what my do my drills.

OC > The pressure is only put on you by yourself. I think at this point, because I want to do well, I'm a guy who likes to compete. I want to be in there, having a chance to win tournaments. And I haven't been doing that for the last couple of years, ever since my ankle surgery. So, the pressure is just for me putting on myself, trying to get back and play well.

OC > I feel like my game is really solid. And, you know, we have kind of like three marks, right? 72, 54 and 36. We always, all of us want to get to 36, be, eligible for Phoenix. But, you know, I did. You just keep playing. You just keep playing. And, you know, one week out here can change the whole dynamic. So, I feel like I've been right on the edge of playing well all year. It's just a matter of time.

OC > I've been doing it long enough. You know, the top 30 making Ryder Cup teams, Presidents Cup teams. You know, there's always something you're trying to make and worrying about where you're on the list is never going to help you. So, it's really just one shot at a time staying in the present.

VO > Until then, we say so long from the great white North, I'm Vince Cellini, as always. We thank you for watching PGA Tour Champions Learning Center. So long.