

**PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW: JOSE MARIA OLAZABAL**  
**August 31, 2017**

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**DAVE SENKO:** Jose Maria, maybe get us started, have you had a chance to see the golf course yet?

**JOSE MARIA OLAZABAL:** Yes, I played on Tuesday. I had a practice round on Tuesday, I played 18 holes and I think it's a great track, especially the front nine. I think they're very tight fairways, you have to shape the ball a little bit more on the front nine. And on the back nine, even though fairways in general are quite tight, they're a little bit wider than on the front. You can hit a few more drives on the back nine.

**DAVE SENKO:** How difficult is it for a player to feel comfortable on a new golf course? How many rounds would it take?

**JOSE MARIA OLAZABAL:** It depends on how good your game is, to be honest. Usually a couple of rounds will give you a pretty good idea about the golf course and how you feel on it and what you have to do, but mainly it's down to how good you're swinging the club. You might be feeling comfortable on the golf course, but if the swing is not there, you're going to struggle. The other way around, you might feel a little strange or not all that comfortable on the golf course, but if you're swinging good, you will produce good shots and score well.

**DAVE SENKO:** How would you evaluate your year, first year on this tour now playing a full season, look back on 2017?

**JOSE MARIA OLAZABAL:** Poor, period. Yeah, pretty simple. I know that I've come from some health issues from the last three, four years and it's been a slow start. As I said, I start with my game mainly with my driver. I haven't had the results that I was expecting. I'm working on it. We're getting to an end to this season, but hopefully next year when I come back my game will be better and sharper and I will have better results.

**DAVE SENKO:** How have you enjoyed the first year? You played with so many of these guys on Tour over the years. How has that been this year?

**JOSE MARIA OLAZABAL:** Well, it's been fun in the sense that I've played with players that I haven't played for maybe 10, 15 years. It's nice to get that feeling back when you go back, I don't know, 20, 30 years and you played with all these guys, and to see them again and to see the level they're playing at the moment, it's just amazing. I have to say that I knew that before coming to play this tour, I saw the results, but it's still amazing how low the scoring is out here, how great the level of the game is on the PGA TOUR Champions and it's been a lot of fun. I've been very warm welcomed to this tour. I've sensed that, and even though, as I said, I haven't played my best, I've enjoyed it.

**DAVE SENKO:** Questions?

**Q. Have you had a chance at all to experience Calgary or the mountains or doing anything since you've been here?**

**JOSE MARIA OLAZABAL:** Not really, not really, but I'm looking forward to it. Not this year obviously because we're starting the tournament already tomorrow, but I've been told that like an hour and a half drive from here there's a very nice place up in the hills there, up in the mountains. Next time around when I come I will try to find time to get over there and spend some time over there, sure.

**Q. Do you know much about the area at all?**

**JOSE MARIA OLAZABAL:** Not really. I mean, it's my first time in Canada. I really don't know much about the place. The town is really nice, I have to say, and we've spent some time just walking down the streets over there around the hotel and all that. It's a nice place. I'm feeling comfortable here and I'm having a good time.

**Q. Your decision to come here, was it based on the reputation this tournament has?**

**JOSE MARIA OLAZABAL:** Yes, mainly -- well, I talked mainly to Miguel. He played here a couple of years ago and during the season I talked to some other players like Jeff Sluman and so on, Fred Funk, and everybody says this is a must-stop tournament. The charity thing that goes behind it is amazing. And on top of that, Miguel told me, as I said before, that the golf course was a great golf course and usually he had a great time when he came here two years ago. He even cooked on Friday (inaudible) and things like that. So he had a ball and that's -- with information that Miguel gave me and the reputation of the event, that's why I'm here.

**Q. How hard would it be for a guy like Nick Faldo, who's basically a part-time player now and at the age of 63, for him to compete out here with the great players that are out here?**

**JOSE MARIA OLAZABAL:** Well, it's going to be difficult because, as I said before, the level is really good. You need to be shooting in the low 60s if you want if you want to have a chance to win the event three days in a row. I have to say that I played with Nick at The Open and he swung the club really well, he hit a bunch of great shots. But it's true that when you are away from the game, sometimes you miss that little touch around the greens or, I don't know how to put it, but it's more difficult to keep the scoring really low. But I have to say that the way he stroked the ball at The Open, he can really do well here.

**DAVE SENKO:** Thank you, Jose.

**JOSE MARIA OLAZABAL:** Thank you very much.