

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
August 29, 2018



DARREN CLARKE

DARREN CLARKE: Seattle was my first week and didn't really know what to expect. Got a little bit nervous as the week drew closer, but when I got there, it was fantastic. The guys, everybody was very welcoming and made me feel part of it straightaway. Players, caddies, PGA TOUR staff, everybody. It was wonderful.

I played quite nicely. I had a bad last four holes on Saturday, but apart from that, played very nicely. Obviously I've been watching all the scoring on the PGA TOUR Champions the closer I got to 50 and I was under no illusions how good the guys are. They really are incredible. People at home don't really -- myself included until I got out there and saw it. The golf courses, they're 7,100 yards, between 7,000 and 7,200 yards long with greens that are running between 12 and 13 on the stimpmeter. And you see the scores the guys are shooting, whatever, 18, 19, 20 under par and it's really incredible. The courses aren't that easy. The guys are just that good.

It's like a sprint. It's three rounds, it's a sprint as opposed to sometimes the four-round tournaments where you're positioning and trying to build on each day. Out here you've got to play and you've got to play well from the first tee shot. A lot of things, it was all very interesting for me last week and I think it's going to be the same again for me this week.

Q. Did you just get in yesterday?

DARREN CLARKE: No, I got in late on Sunday night from Seattle.

Q. So you've had a bit of time in Calgary then?

DARREN CLARKE: Yes, I have.

Q. How's it going for you?

DARREN CLARKE: The Guinness has been very nice in the few places I found it, so that's been good. The golf course today was the first time that I played. I practiced a little bit yesterday, but I went out to play on the golf course. That's where the rookies are like myself maybe at a little bit of a disadvantage. Guys have played here before, they know the golf course, they know how to get around it. For me today, first time out in the pro-am, I'm trying to learn the golf course really quickly, what slopes you can move the ball in from and where not to hit it if a flag goes over there. But the course is in wonderful condition. Really, really nice golf course, but you've got to be straight this week.

Q. Tree lined?

DARREN CLARKE: Tree lined and tight. The limbs of the trees go very low as well. Not that I'm not limber or anything and can bend down and get them, but those limbs are really low on some of those trees.

Q. We've had some good success up here on the Champions Tour, the Shaw Classic. Have you heard anything from your peers?

DARREN CLARKE: Yeah, all the guys were telling me how good the tournament is. Whenever I got out last week, are you playing next week, oh, you'll really enjoy next week, great crowds, great tournament, great sponsors, all that sort of stuff. So this is certainly, from all accounts, this is one of the guys' favorite events of the whole season.

Q. Final question. We were out there with you today and you really took some time to help some of the guys you were playing with. Is that important for you guys?

DARREN CLARKE: I think it's important for everybody, isn't it? The sponsors for every event, not just this event but the sponsors for every event put in an awful lot of money for us to play. They have their clients and they have their guests here and they want to have a good time. Sometimes whenever you're on the regular tours you're a little bit more into yourself and you need to do what you need to do to prepare, and sometimes when you're playing in pro-ams, and I've been guilty of it in the past, more interested in what I'm doing.

But out here, this is a different thing. You want to make sure -- the pro-ams are important to the PGA TOUR Champions and you have to give a lot back. The game's been good to us and you're out here, you're playing three rounds, there's no cut. It's just the way it is, you've got to give a bit back and make sure the guests you're playing with or the clients or whatever are having as good a time as you are. Certainly when it comes to the social side of things, that's right up my sort of feet. But it's easy out here to enjoy yourself when you have a great bunch of guys, and certainly I've been lucky to have a really good bunch of guys today, so I really enjoyed it.

Q. Are you back out tomorrow?

DARREN CLARKE: Yes, back out tomorrow I believe with the boss of Shaw, so I'll have to be on my best behavior and my language may have to be a little bit better tomorrow than maybe it was today in a few cases.