

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
June 6, 2018



ALFONSO RIBEIRO

CHRIS RICHARDS: You're no stranger to Iowa, you played in Zach Johnson's event, your wife is from Iowa if I remember right. So what's it like coming back to the state and playing a little golf here?

ALFONSO RIBEIRO: I mean, it's always great. I love coming back. You know, when you have family here, it's always a lot of fun to be able to come and see some of them, and I was able to have lunch yesterday with my brother-in-law.

But to be here, especially at the Principal Charity, to take care of these great kids. We have two great kids teeing off with us this morning. A lot of fun. I had Joe Sindelar today, which was great. I mean, what a great dude and great pro-am partner. It was just a lot of fun. So for me coming back to Iowa is always a good time.

Q. Have you been to Des Moines prior to this before or are you mostly out in eastern Iowa?

ALFONSO RIBEIRO: I'm mostly out in eastern Iowa, but I've been to Des Moines. Actually, many, many, many moons ago they used to have a car race here in the city through the streets and I came here for that maybe a couple decades back. But sometimes for us it's just flying in and out of Iowa, sometimes a little easier to get in and out of Des Moines than eastern Iowa. Not a lot, but a few times.

Q. Did you play in Italy or just catching up from that trip?

ALFONSO RIBEIRO: No play in Italy. When you go away with your wife, you leave the clubs alone, you leave them out here. You know, no playing. But I'm slowly recovering. It's hard to sleep past 5:00 a.m. right now, but yeah, had a great time.

Q. Are you used to the hills that Wakonda has to offer? I saw you walking a little bit.

ALFONSO RIBEIRO: Yeah, you know, I have so much that I'm doing here this week that I tried not to walk a full 18 and just kind of get a little bit of cart, a little bit of walking. You know, the problem always in any pro-am is it's long, so it's hard to keep the momentum going and a good feel so walking sometimes will slow the rhythm back down for me. When I start to get quick, I would walk holes.

Q. Do you ever get asked where your wife is from and then you say Swedesburg, Iowa, and they ask you where it's at and all that stuff?

ALFONSO RIBEIRO: I pretty much never say Swedesburg because 90 percent of lowans don't even know where Swedesburg is. I just kind of go north of Mt. Pleasant, south of Iowa City. It's the easy answer, I think, for everybody concerned.

Swedesburg, listen, her grandmother started the Swedish-American Museum there in Swedesburg, so it's a really cute little town and it's always nice to go back. I mean, listen, it's definitely different from growing up in the Bronx, but I enjoy coming back.

Q. How does a guy growing up in the Bronx take up golf and how long until you took up the sport?

ALFONSO RIBEIRO: I started playing at 18. Some friends of mine was like, hey, let's go to the driving range and hit some golf balls, and I was like, what's that? I didn't even know what golf was at the time. My first swings, I hit it straight over the fence in the driving range and they couldn't understand how I was able to do that. I didn't know how I was able to do it, either, but fell in love and continued playing. Then in my 30s I got serious about it.

Q. You were taking some pointers from Joey out there, too, toward the end of that round. Are you always fine tuning the swing out there?

ALFONSO RIBEIRO: You know, I think my coach gets angry at me actually because I'm the guy who listens way too much. He's like, sometimes you just need to forget what everybody else tells you and just keep working on the things that we're working on.

But when a great pro, a great ball-striker starts showing you something that he's seeing that's going on in your swing -- now, I didn't pick up a club before this for the last three weeks so I was very rusty today. What he was telling me actually made a lot of sense and so it's something that I do when I'm swinging well. His thing was know what you do and own what you do. If that is something you do, know that you do it so that you can always do it, so it made a lot of sense. Really all he was showing me was keep my right wrist kind of cocked throughout the entire swing and not letting it release, which is something when I do hit good shots, that is actually what I'm doing.

Q. Where do you find the PGA TOUR Champions appeal? Why is it appealing to you to be connected to it?

ALFONSO RIBEIRO: Well, I'll tell you, what I love about the PGA TOUR Champions is the history of the game in these players. The difference between these guys and the guys on the PGA TOUR is perspective. The before Tiger era, guys had to go out there and they had to grind and they had to -- to make it to the next week, you had to make the cut; you weren't automatically in the next week's field.

So these guys have such a great perspective and they have such a great connection with the fans and that's something that really rings true for me. I feel like it's so important when

you have the opportunity to really connect to the fans that are out there because that's what keeps the game going, it's what keeps your career going. At the end of the day, those are the people that are buying to allow your career to exist and these guys out here truly get that and they make it a truly enjoyable experience, especially for the pro-ams. I just feel like there's something really wonderful about that and the way these guys are. They're just great, great people and they have a love for the game that I share with them.

Q. It seems you kind of embrace the mentality with fans when it comes to your own career as well out here, people asking for photo ops, that kind of stuff. Do you make sure you don't take that stuff for granted most days?

ALFONSO RIBEIRO: You know, like I used the word earlier "perspective," right? So at the end of the day, years ago I had a very different perspective dealing with fans and never could truly understand it. As I've gotten older and gotten a greater perspective of their side and understanding the other side, what are they thinking, what are they feeling. You know, they might have one opportunity to meet someone that they enjoy watching on TV and why take that moment away from them? Why not give them that moment and allow them to enjoy it for the rest of their life and make a memory? It only takes a couple seconds out of my time to do that, why not?

Q. Have you been able to, you know, explore Des Moines a little bit more coming here, and just overall what did you think of the course today and what do you think of Des Moines so far?

ALFONSO RIBEIRO: I've been here obviously a few times. This is a fun golf course, it's definitely a tricky golf course. There are very few flat lies, so it really actually tests your game in a lot of different ways, I think one by never having really a flat lie. You know, is the ball going to do what the lie dictates or what I do to the ball, right? And there's this battle that you have through every swing. This course forces you to hit the ball in certain spots.

It really is a ball-striker's paradise, right? You can have some of the guys, like Daly would have a tougher time here because he would have to hit it to the same distance that Joey Sindelar hits it because that's the way the course has to be played and it really puts a premium on putting and ball-striking. I imagine whoever wins this week will be No. 1 in putting and No. 1 in ball striking.

CHRIS RICHARDS: All right. Thank you.