

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
June 7, 2018



SCOTT McCARRON

CHRIS RICHARDS: Scott, thank you for joining us in the media center at the 2018 Principal Charity Classic. What is it about Des Moines that you love so much? You won here in 2016, T2 last year. What is it about Des Moines?

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, it's got to be the pork obviously. I must like pork a lot. Pork chops are my favorite.

But I like this golf course. When I first came here it was a golf course that really fit my eye. You've got to move the ball both ways, left and right, right and left. There's a lot of blind shots, you've got to be very creative. And the greens have a lot of undulation to them, so you've got to put yourself in the right spot. It's just a golf course that fits my eye and so I played well here the last couple years.

CHRIS RICHARDS: You've been in position to win the last two years here. You've also been in position to win recently, Senior PGA. You were in position all four days. What did you take away from that week and what are you going to use this week from that experience?

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, I hit the ball pretty well that week. That was also a golf course tee to green I like a lot. Those greens have a lot of undulation, even a lot more than these greens, and you've got to put yourself in the right quadrant. I did a really good job the first three days. A couple bad breaks on Sunday. But Paul Broadhurst played wonderfully. You shoot 64-63 on a weekend, it's tough to keep up. I would have had to shoot 66 on Sunday to tie him and I just wasn't quite up to the task.

I still took a lot of positives away from that tournament. It was a lot of fun. Anytime you're in the hunt all four days, I was in the lead all three days until Sunday, you'll take a lot of positives from that.

Q. What has to go well for you this week to reclaim your title after last year?

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, got to shoot the lowest number. The biggest thing is to drive the ball in the fairway here. If you can drive the ball in the fairway, then you can attack a lot of these hole locations. If you miss the fairway, you're playing defense a lot, and playing defense out here is very difficult because the greens are very sloped so you can't hit the ball above these hole locations because it's so fast. And even if you're pin high on a lot of these holes, you have 10-footers that might break three, four, five feet. So you've got to be below the hole, try to be right in line with the hole so you have a lot of uphill putts and chances for

birdies.

Q. You say the rough is pretty long (inaudible)?

SCOTT McCARRON: Again, like I said, you have to drive it in the fairway here. If you don't drive it in the fairways, you're fighting to try to make par. And getting up and down on this golf course is difficult just because the greens are really sloped.

Q. What's it been like for you to see Brandt and the success he had last year and just going through that Champion experience?

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, it was good. It was a little bittersweet for me not winning. I had a chance to win the last hole or tie Brandt with about a three- or four-footer down the hill. But it was good to see Brandt finally break through and win. We play practice rounds probably every Tuesday. We were roommates in college, fraternity brothers, we've been very good friends for a long time. He's one of the best players that I play with when we're on the PGA TOUR and on the PGA TOUR Champions, so I was happy to finally see him get a win. I wasn't as happy because it was against me, but I was happy to see him finally get a win.

Q. He said you got him on a 20-footer on the last hole yesterday?

SCOTT McCARRON: I did. We play every single time for a little something and I did get him yesterday.

Q. What about the atmosphere at Wakonda Club during the Principal Charity Classic that makes it kind of more unique than some of the other venues you get to play at?

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, I think what makes it unique is we get so many fans out there. This tournament is supported so well. We raise a lot of money for a lot of local charities. After I won I bought bikes for some of the kids, and you get to meet some of these kids and see them year after year. Just the volunteer base and all the fans that come out really appreciate us being here.

You look at the finishing holes here, the grandstands on 17 are fantastic and it's so intimate on 18 when you get around there, it's got a great feel. 88,000 people here for the week, that's huge for us, so it's a really nice market for us.

Q. You're tied for the lead on the Tour in rounds in the 60s. Is that a bit frustrating you haven't won? You've had several top-10 finishes.

SCOTT McCARRON: Yeah, it's been a little bit of a mixed bag. Even though I've been playing pretty good, I've had some equipment issues. I had a driver, cracked face on a driver, cracked face on a 3-wood. I've got all new irons in the bag. Same type, just different irons. And I've had a putter issue where the airlines broke my putter a couple months ago.

So I'm having to get used to a lot of new clubs, but it's coming along. I just haven't really putted as well as I did last year.

Last year I was second in putting to Langer and I believe we had the best stats ever recorded ever in the history of the PGA TOUR and the PGA TOUR Champions for putting average and this year I'm 32nd, so that's a big part of it. You've got to make more putts, and getting used to a new putter, I just haven't quite putted as well as I did last year.

Q. Is it a conspiracy (inaudible)?

SCOTT McCARRON: Yeah, Brandt had his clubs run over. Again, our clubs are our tools and anytime you have to replace clubs, it's difficult to make that switch. Just ask Bernhard Langer. He's playing irons that are 45 years old, I think, that have no grooves in them and he's having a difficult time replacing those irons. Once you get a feel for something, it's hard to replace, so we're going through that process now.

But I'm very comfortable with the putter I'm putting with right now. I think I've finally got it all dialed in. Last week I did some work with another putter, and unfortunately being a long putter myself, there's not a lot of them. TaylorMade makes the one they make for me special, the center shafted post, so it's not like they can just go ahead and send me a bunch of new putters. But I did finally get a new one last week and it feels great.

Q. Today's pro-am you'll get a chance to see how the greens kind of are handling all that rain we had last night. Does that give you maybe an advantage going into the weekend with more rain expected overnight?

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, anytime it's a little softer, it's a little more advantage for the longer hitters, myself included. But again, I like this course to play fast and firm. That's when it really challenges you to hit fairways, hit in the right parts of the green. So hopefully it will dry up here over the next few days and we won't get any more rain.

Q. Talk about your comfort zone here. Do you come into an event knowing it's a course you can play well and does it give you that (inaudible)?

SCOTT McCARRON: Well, anytime you play well at a certain golf course or have some success, it gives you confidence coming here. I've played well at quite a few of our tournaments here on the PGA Champions and some of them that we played on the PGA TOUR we played well before. So anytime you come to a course that you've played well at, you definitely have some confidence coming in. It doesn't guarantee you're going to play well, so but coming here to Wakonda, it's a golf course that fits my eye.

Q. I think of you as a good putter and a guy who hits the ball a long ways. All around you're like third, so that's got to make you feel good, you're hitting on a lot of cylinders?

SCOTT McCARRON: Yeah, my iron play's been very good. I've been driving the ball a long ways and hitting a lot of fairways, too. I think I'm hitting a little bit more fairways this year than I did last year percentage-wise and proximity to the hole's been good, hitting a lot of greens. So I've been hitting a lot of cylinders, I just need to figure out the putting and last week I think I've got it.