

Production Transcript for 25INTCUTCH â€“ MITSUBISHI - MASTER.mp3

[00:00:40] >> The 2025 PGA Tour Champion season kicks off in paradise, the first of 28 events on the schedule. It is the Mitsubishi Electric Championship at Hualalai, a field of 42 competing in here in Week 1. The PGA Tour Champions proudly presents the season long race for the Charles Schwab Cup. Today from the Kona Coast of Hawaii, it's first round coverage of the Mitsubishi Electric Championship at Hualalai. In its 42nd year, the 29th year, that a Mitsubishi Electric Championship being contested here at Hualalai. And what a spectacular view as the whales have made their way just off the coastline. So much to do here at Hualalai, including some magnificent golf. Jack Nicklaus design, opened in 1993, a par 72, playing just over 7,100 yards. Let's say take a look at the early leaderboards. Stephen Ames, who won three times last year. Doug Barron won a major for the first time in his career. How about the ageless wonder, Jay Haas, 3-under through his opening 15 holes. Ricardo Gonzalez, a winner last year in Morocco. Miguel Angel Jimenez and Bernhard Langer, the only men to win the Mitsubishi Electric Championship at Hualalai three times, settling for a fun weekend. Well, over at the 7th, Bernhard Langer, who's won this event three times for his par. So Langer, who continued his streak of getting a win in every calendar year since turning 50. He's now got 47 wins of the PGA Tour Champions.

[00:02:33] >> There are not many records that Langer doesn't hold out here. And just the amazing one is Incredible. Now, we're at the 8th to par 3, Jerry Kelly. This hole is about 224 yards today, 229 downhill. It's just a daunting par 3. All you can want here, just get it anywhere in the center of the green, get three, and get on to the next hole.

[00:02:57] >> Yeah, the hole's a little bit favoring the right side, Lanny, in this vicious crosswind. From that far elevated tee, see if he can do it.

[00:03:07] >> Jerry Kelly shot 18-under and winning here at 2018.

[00:03:11] >> That's fine shot there by Jerry. As long as you don't go left. I mean, if you're right, you got to pitch back into the wind. That could not be any better right there at 8th.

[00:03:23] >> Good birdie there at 17.

[00:03:27] >> A well quaffed. Scott McCarron lost the long hair in the back.

[00:03:31] >> Lost the mullet.

[00:03:32] >> Well, that's a good thing, I believe. It's nice to see him back. He had a really tough surgery. Had to break his foot. Put some pins in the heel. What a nightmare scenario.

[00:03:47] >> Three-time champion, Miguel Angel Jimenez, for his eagle. Lanny, we've seen over the last two years just he gets something going and there's an uncharacteristic, unforced error. Then the putter goes cold and it's kind of robbed him of some chances. And, you know, once you turn 60, that gets in your head a little bit.

[00:04:11] >> Well, he's got a swing that moves around a lot, Bob. It's not really what you call right in a groove. It's kind of all over the place. But he's a good striker of the ball. And obviously --

[00:04:20] >> It's good.

[00:04:21] >> -- the putter working today. If he gets that going, then everything else kind of feeds from that. But great eagle three here at the 10 zone.

[00:04:31] >> Yeah.

[00:04:39] >> Now, Stephen Ames for his eagle.

[00:04:42] >> Three tremendous shots in here today. They must be driving it miles past that downslope, just hitting kind of medium irons at most, Lanny.

[00:04:50] >> Yeah. Well, the other two are pretty long. And then, it's still got some pop. Stephen Ames has what I call sneaky pop. He doesn't look like he's hitting it that hard, but he hits it very solid, and he's a pretty good sized guy. He gets it out there very well. Nice three for Stephen Ames as well. He's 6-under.

[00:05:16] >> Steve Flesch for birdie at 16. Holing speed.

[00:05:21] >> Definitely holing speed.

[00:05:25] >> Makes the hole bigger, holing speed.

[00:05:29] >> How about Tim O'Neal? He got his first win. He won the Dominion Energy in his second year on the PGA Tour Champions, and earning a two-year exemption here to Hualalai.

[00:05:41] >> What a good putt.

[00:05:48] >> Over at 18, Frazar for his birdie to finish off 4-under 68.

[00:05:53] >> That's a good read.

[00:06:01] >> World Golf Hall of Famer, Bernhard Langer, for his birdie at 10th. Get him back into red figures.

[00:06:08] >> Don't want to not get birdie here at 10. This is a gimme, everyone out here. Bernhard got that a little bit right all the way.

[00:06:17] >> Bogeyed the downwind or crosswind. Easily reachable par-5 7th too, Lanny.

[00:06:22] >> Yeah. So he's giving away minimum three shots on the two par 5s.

[00:06:27] >> Joe Durant for his birdie at 16.

[00:06:35] >> Joe Durant makes birdies in bunches when he starts making them.

[00:06:38] >> He's one of the most pleasant people to be around too, Lanny. Always happy when he plays well.

[00:06:43] >> Let's go back to 17 and see if Tim O'Neal can make this putt for par to stay at 5-under, just a shot off the lead.

[00:06:52] >> Coming off that nice birdie back there, the tough 16th hole. Get one back here at the short 17th.

[00:06:59] >> He's made seven birdies today, two bogeys.

[00:07:03] >> One of those putts doesn't have a lot of break. Just have to keep the pace up.

[00:07:06] >> Yeah. It's a round saver. He's got it. Wow, that's nice.

[00:07:12] >> He has holed out nicely from that distance in the last 6 months.

[00:07:15] >> Yeah, he might get wedged to this next hole, too, at 18.

[00:07:18] >> World Golf Hall of Famer, Vijay Singh, for his birdie at 13.

[00:07:23] >> Be a nice little birdie for Vijay if he could get this down. He's got it. Money dead center. We got Rob Lowe in the booth with us, Lanny, fist pumping on behalf of Vijay Singh.

[00:07:40] >> Couples played his eagle putt to here. So he has this for birdie.

[00:07:46] >> Pretty simple look here for Fred. This should be in the hole. Right center would be my guess from here. This green does slope back to front.

[00:07:57] >> Fred, who was warming up and only Fred style as he makes the birdie at the 10th.

[00:08:04] >> Let's go over to 17, John Cook. Ken Tanigawa for birdie.

[00:08:10] >> A little bit deep with his approach shot. Down the slope it goes. And will we see one.

[00:08:16] >> Holing speed, got in the edge.

[00:08:21] >> Good putt there by.

[00:08:23] >> A guy who was not the last guy out. Fred Couples for his birdie.

[00:08:30] >> He made it.

[00:08:32] >> Fred was talking to Rob Lowe on the range about potentially going to Japan to see the Dodgers play.

[00:08:38] >> I didn't realize that Freddy was that big a Dodger fan. No idea.

[00:08:43] >> Now, back over at 13. Steve Stricker for birdie.

[00:08:46] >> Great chance here, Lanny. Not a lot of movement. Anything today around the hole --

[00:08:53] >> No. If anything, this is probably top edge, left edge. It may want to try and get down. You can see, it's kind of shiny down to the front of the green.

[00:09:01] >> Man, when you hit a shot like he just hit, you want to pay it off so bad.

[00:09:07] >> Steve hits a lot of wedge shots. You'll see from being out here, he is far and away the best wedge player you'll ever see. Repeats that swing very, very well.

[00:09:24] >> It's awesome to watch.

[00:09:26] >> He's got great lines to start with. I think that one thing that helps him, Zing, is that, you know, when you line up properly, every single time you're starting in the right place.

[00:09:36] >> Miguel pours it in for another birdie.

[00:09:42] >> Three-time champion. Only he and Bernhardt Langer have won this event three times.

[00:09:54] >> This is a gimme, Lanny.

[00:09:56] >> Yeah, he's been pretty solid on these for a long time. Even when that stroke is so short and quick, they still go in the hole.

[00:10:06] >> One-under 71 for Bernhard Langer.

[00:10:10] >> Sure. I think Ernie -- not Ernie, but Vijay Singh, the late bloomer, kind of had a long, great career, but when he got to be 40 years old. Kenny Perry's another one I can think of that really peaked in his 40s. Alker peaking a little later than that. And a nice birdie down the hill for Ernie. Good finish.

[00:10:32] >> Eagled 14, birdied 17, birdies 18 to join that group at 5-under.

[00:10:37] >> Yeah. Got himself right in the middle of this movie. And so, Ernie will be a person to be contended with the next couple days for sure.

[00:10:45] >> Yeah. Here's another look, fresh in from South Africa. Twenty-six hours in the air to get here.

[00:10:53] >> Which way did he come?

[00:10:54] >> I didn't ask. He and Goosen both made the effort.

[00:10:58] >> Kite and I had to play the World Cup one year in Rome and w3 were playing in Kapalua, and the big question was, which way do we go? We're halfway around the world.

[00:11:09] >> Sure it's not flat.

[00:11:10] >> Pretty much.

[00:11:14] >> Well, Freddie with a good look too now. A nice whole high shot here, Cookie.

[00:11:18] >> Yeah, there's not much to this.

[00:11:21] >> Join that group at four under right now. Harrison Frazar and Darren Clarke are in at 4-under.

[00:11:33] >> Freddy, just amazing. Just keeps going around and keeps playing quality golf. Pours that in. Ripped it over the right front edge.

[00:11:44] >> So pure, Freddy. He was so cash this morning, warming up. And, you know, he always kind of lulled you to sleep if you weren't careful. If you get paired with Freddy, you think he's not trying, but he's destroying you in his mind. You're all nonchalant out there with him.

[00:12:07] >> Couples with two bogeys on the scorecard today at the 9th and 15th, with birdie 16 and 18.

[00:12:20] >> I wonder if Alker is one of those guys that just hit it right his whole life and never made a lot of putts, and now, all of a sudden, he's figured out how to putt it.

[00:12:28] >> Last putt of Round 1.

[00:12:30] >> That's too bad. I cursed him, if there's such a thing.

[00:12:33] >> Always the toughest putt making the last putt -- last player to putt for birdie.

[00:12:38] >> Yup. Well, he bummed about that. He had such a nice shot in there, a monster 3-wood.

[00:12:53] >> So Steven Alker, the defending champ, who shot 25-under last year, finishes Round 1 at 2-under par. Miguel Angel Jimenez, three-time champion, Ricardo Gonzalez, they post the rounds of the day, 7-under par 65s. Gonzalez was bogey-free. Harrison Frazar, runner up last year at 4-under 68. Darren Clarke, past champion, with a 4-under 68 as well.

[00:13:29] >> PGA Tour Champion season kicking off in paradise. The 42nd playing of the Mitsubishi Electric Championship. And for the 29th year, Hualalai playing host to this field of 42. Five World Golf Hall of Famers in the field, including Ernie Els, a three-time winner last year. Rolls in this birdie putt at the 4th. And this would get Ernie to 7-under par. Bernhard Langer, one of three men to win this event three times. He is hot on this moving day Friday. Rolls in this putt for birdie at the 12th. And Langer gets to 8-under par, 7-under on his round. Fred Couples has never won on this property. Five runner up finishes. He rolls this putt in for birdie at the 8th. And this would get Fred to 7-under par. Holing speed off the right edge for Couples. Jerry Kelly, a winner here in 2018, rolls in this putt for eagle at the par-5 10th. And that gets Jerry Kelly to 8-under par. Now, let's go back to Bernhard Langer over at the par-5 14th. Reach the front of the green in two, rolled this in for birdie. Langer now at 9-under par, 8-under on his round today. And we've got quite the leaderboard for you. Bernhard Langer, Ernie Els, Jerry Kelly, Vijay, Alex Cejka at 8-under, Stephen Ames, Miguel Angel Jimenez. Fred Couples lead that group at 7-under par.

[00:15:01] >> Today is Day 2. So this is kind of the moving day, where you got to put a number up. Here's Joe Durant over at the 9th where John Cook is.

[00:15:09] >> Had 3-wood into this green, and takes advantage of a nice little pitch shot.

[00:15:18] >> Now, Els trying to save his par at the 9th to stay at 8-under.

[00:15:22] >> Yeah, about 4 feet right center. And well done. That's a really nice up and down to keep the round going for Ernie.

[00:15:29] >> Now, over at the 8th. Playing with Jimenez, Cejka for his par to stay at 9-under.

[00:15:36] >> Wow, what a save. Wow, Cejka.

[00:15:39] >> Pretty good read right there. That putt was really quick, and the wind whipping off the right. That was well done.

[00:15:53] >> Rocco Mediate over at 17 for birdie. All the boys in Calusa finds Naples.

[00:16:05] >> Couples for his eagle attempt.

[00:16:14] >> Makes for an easy birdie for Fred.

[00:16:20] >> Couples just a shot off the lead. Ernie for his birdie.

[00:16:29] >> To tie him for the lead as well.

[00:16:33] >> So Els, birdie, Singh an eagle. Durant settles for par at the 10th. Ernie joins that group now at 9-under. It's Cejka, Els, Singh, and Langer at 9-under. A couple Hall of Fame fist bumps.

[00:16:50] >> Take you over to 17. Picturesque par 3 with the blue waters of the Pacific crashing down on the lava rocks.

[00:17:00] >> Clear today. You can see Haleakala over on Maui in the background. But little bit of haze today, not seeing it standing out as much.

[00:17:09] >> Steve Stricker who won here in 2023, was a six shot win over Alker, Clarke, Weir, and Tanigawa. Shot 60 in Round 2, which was a tournament record. Has this for birdie at 17.

[00:17:26] >> Yeah. Jumped off to a bad start, actually, yesterday. First nine holes after being up in Wisconsin for 6 or 8 weeks doing absolutely nothing. He knocked the rust off. Had a decent back nine and a good round today, Lanny.

[00:17:41] >> Yeah, he's got it going and that's surprising. I mean, if anybody's going to make putts on these perfect greens, you would think he would be Steve Stricker.

[00:17:50] >> Ricardo Gonzalez, who shot a bogey-free 65 yesterday, 1-over on his right today. Get some back here at the 10th for eagle.

[00:18:00] >> Bogeyed the first couple holes today, right out of the gate. Birdied 1 and bogeyed 7, or 2 and 3, excuse me. And then, another bogey at 8. So not a great day.

[00:18:13] >> Ricardo also making his debut, Mitsubishi Electric Championship at the Hualalai. The last debut winner was Darren Clarke in 2021. Jerry Kelly won in his debut in 2018. Over to 18. Not the best second shot by Langer into 18. He'll have this for birdie.

[00:18:31] >> Curious what this will do, Lanny.

[00:18:33] >> Yeah. And it is downhill, so it's got a little bit of pace to it. Got to be a little careful. He read it OK.

[00:18:38] >> It'll go right in the bottom.

[00:18:38] >> That's what it'll do.

[00:18:42] >> Holy smokes, what a birdie. What a round of golf by Bernhard Langer.

[00:18:48] >> Over at 17, Thongchai Jaidee has this putt for birdie. She had a rolling shot. Thirty-one on the front.

[00:18:57] >> Yeah. Should move a hair to his right, and he just bangs it off the flagstick.

[00:19:05] >> Joe Durant after that beautiful tee shot for his birdie.

[00:19:09] >> Yeah, for the payoff right here for Joe.

[00:19:11] >> He needs it after three putting 10. There you go.

[00:19:15] >> There we go.

[00:19:23] >> The defending champion, Steven Alker, who, yesterday, shot a 270, the first time that he had not shot in the 60s here at Hualalai. Nine straight rounds in the 60s. Well, he's going to be shooting in the 60s today with that birdie at 17.

[00:19:43] >> Fred Couples has a good look for birdie here at 14 to get to within one of the lead.

[00:19:50] >> Good stroke. Yeah, that's nice.

[00:19:56] >> We love our time each and every year here at Hualalai, as Ernie Els playing his third shot at 14.

[00:20:03] >> He could be pitching into a little bit of a slope downwind. Nice check and release. This is going to be really good. What a quality, quality golf shot.

[00:20:11] >> A lot of time out here pitching around, just doing what he does. Paid off there.

[00:20:17] >> Ernie will have that to get to 10-under. Steve Flesch has this to get to 8-under par, bogey-free.

[00:20:23] >> Little shorter version of what Bernhard Langer made. And Flesch did just the same. Although, Flesch's ball moved a hair right at the end, but it still got in the hole.

[00:20:33] >> Vijay's ball ricocheted off of Ernie's coin another 3 or 4 inches away from the hole.

[00:20:38] >> Yeah, nice little --

[00:20:40] >> No problem.

[00:20:40] >> Yeah, nice little two putt birdie there. Quality golf hole right there after that bogey back at 13. He's played here nine times. So, you know, some of these guys are used to the greens being a lot flatter, Lanny. They've had to kind of adjust the last couple seasons.

[00:20:57] >> That's one of the things they'll just put up with to be here in paradise.

[00:21:01] >> That's right.

[00:21:02] >> Change the greens on me, I don't care. I'm going to go play anyway.

[00:21:05] >> At Hualalai.

[00:21:09] >> Yeah.

[00:21:09] >> That's great up and down for Ernie Els.

[00:21:13] >> Yeah, he missed it in the right place. Sometimes, it's about the quality of your misses. And that was not a good second shot strike. But it was a perfect lead for him.

[00:21:23] >> Alex Cejka has this putt for birdie at 13. This would get him to 10-under par. And he curls that in.

[00:21:32] >> Not too bad. There's no gimmes out here, Lanny.

[00:21:42] >> No.

[00:21:42] >> I don't remember the commissioner ever conceding anything inside the letter.

[00:21:49] >> Zinger, you call this I'll finish. I call this a stay in the cart. I'll get it for you.

[00:21:54] >> Throw that back to me.

[00:21:55] >> Yeah.

[00:21:56] >> If you call the I'll finish in the air, it's worth an extra few dots. That's pretty impressive. He knew when he hit it, it was stiff. And there's Ernie now solo leader. Got him.

[00:22:20] >> Cejka for his birdie at 14. And that gets Jacob to 11-under, tied with Els. Rod Pampling, birdie had 18. This would get him to within two of the lead.

[00:22:36] >> You know, see if Rodney can get it on line here. Goes right a little bit. Oh, Rodney.

[00:22:42] >> Dead center.

[00:22:43] >> Sixty-six for Pampling.

[00:22:45] >> And he's right in this movie.

[00:22:52] >> Els for birdie at 16 to get to 12-under.

[00:22:55] >> Oh, if he gets there.

[00:22:55] >> Thirty-five feet and right in the center. Beautiful.

[00:22:58] >> Hello.

[00:22:58] >> How about those back to back birdies and two tough holes?

[00:23:01] >> Yeah. How about Ernie? He's got it cooking here. Three in a row and leading actually by one now. And really looks in complete control of his game. I mean, driving it long and straight, sliding irons like he needs to, and all of a sudden, look out, the putter's working.

[00:23:21] >> Saw Justin Leonard rolling that birdie putt at 17. He has this for birdie here at 18.

[00:23:27] >> Yeah, put him right the middle of this thing.

[00:23:31] >> It's 5-under to this point, Lanny.

[00:23:33] >> Yeah.

[00:23:33] >> Made some putts for sure.

[00:23:34] >> Yeah, just off the back edge of the green. This is quick, down the slope.

[00:23:39] >> Kind of. It looks like it goes right, but we've seen some guys have it just fall to the left, just behind the pin. That's a good putt.

[00:23:47] >> Yeah, that one looked right. That was a good read. He had that ball outside. That was well done.

[00:23:55] >> Clarke really needs to get this to stay in touch.

[00:23:58] >> Oh, yes. Yeah, he can't let this one get away. It's a big putt for him right now.

[00:24:03] >> He wants this tournament so badly. Really has worked hard. There you go.

[00:24:11][Applause]

[00:24:21] >> Big putt for Quigley here at 8-under. Again, right now, the lead is at 12.

[00:24:26] >> He's had this putter for years and years and years. He's one of the few that haven't gone to the mallet.

[00:24:31] >> Gets him out of a big log jam at 8-under right there. He'll get an extra hour of sleep with that putt.

[00:24:46] >> Final group of the day. Playing the 18th. Ricardo Gonzalez missed the fairway. Left his second.

[00:24:53] >> One-twenty-one, not a very good angle, but he could use that backstop if he gets it driving it in there low. Skips all the way through. Here we go.

[00:25:01] >> That's what we've been waiting on.

[00:25:02] >> Here we go.

[00:25:02] >> There we go, Cookie. Get a Sports Center moment here. Almost.

[00:25:08] >> He's going to have that for birdie.

[00:25:16] >> So Alex Cejka is going to have a putt for birdie, the outright lead. Cookie, did he learn anything off the Jimenez?

[00:25:24] >> A little bit. Maybe once it got onto the green, he could see how it rolled. But a little bit of a different angle. And Jimenez had more surround cut to putt through. Nothing about this is going to bother Alex Cejka. He does leave the pin in most all the time to putt. This might wiggle to the right just a little bit.

[00:25:48] >> Yeah, he's got a very simple putting stroke, I mean. And when it's on, it's really on. Not a whole lot of variation. Just kind of backing through.

[00:25:57] >> Don't forget, he's won three senior majors --

[00:26:00] >> Yes, he has.

[00:26:01] >> -- on this tour. He's not afraid.

[00:26:13] >> It did just trickle. Perfect speed. And he's in a great position tomorrow, John.

[00:26:22] >> I think Langer and Justin Leonard are the only two that figured that out from that back part of the green.

[00:26:27] >> Yeah.

[00:26:28] >> That's a weird break back there. We monkeyed around back there for a little while.

[00:26:32] >> We saw a couple putts. Pampling made one from over there.

[00:26:35] >> Yeah.

[00:26:36] >> Langer, Justin Leonard, let's see if there's one more too. But there's not many.

[00:26:41] >> Great round, though, for Cejka as he shoots 66. So it'll be Els, Cejka, and Langer in the final group, the final round on Saturday.

[00:26:53] >> That'll be interesting. It's a real dynamic of personality types going at it there tomorrow in that last group. Ernie is just so slick and smooth. Cejka is kind of like he's got a

bunch of bees in his pants or something. And, you know, of course, Langer is so steady. Question is, can anybody behind run them down? There are some good players back there.

[00:27:19] >> You know, Pampling --

[00:27:20] >> It's like Pampling, Justin Leonard, Quigley can get on fire. We all know Flesch can.

[00:27:26] >> Oh, right, yeah, he can light it up. I mean, I like the guys at nine, eight. Eight start getting a little far back. You've got to go really low if you're eight tomorrow.

[00:27:34] >> Well, Steven Alker played this golf course --

[00:27:36] >> Yes.

[00:27:37] >> -- 24-under over 45 holes last year. He's the defending champ. I wouldn't rule him out.

[00:27:42] >> No.

[00:27:42] >> And Jerry Kelly's won here before. And Jimenez has won here before.

[00:27:46] >> Take a look at some highlights. And Bernhard Langer got us all excited early. And then, he rolls in this putt for birdie at the 12. Langer shot 32 on his opening nine, including a bogey at the 9th. He eagled the 10th, birdied the 12th. And then --

[00:28:08] >> Here's the putt we were talking about. It decidedly goes to the right. He had it read perfect.

[00:28:13] >> He's a little up -- further up in the green. I think that's why. The guys who were more behind the hole, the ball moved harder to the right. Here's Cejka at 16. Beautiful putt.

[00:28:24] >> Yeah, with authority.

[00:28:25] >> He went on a nice stretch there.

[00:28:28] >> Yeah, he looks so confident. This was shot of the day. A little chiselly, little three finger, we call it. Just take something off it. Punchy 7-iron. Not a lot of players can do this, Lanny. You've been talking about his ability to take something off it all week.

[00:28:43] >> Well, he played shots. I think that's one thing that, to me, that really separates Ernie when he's going well. He plays the shot that's required.

[00:29:07] >> This was pretty slick as well on 16.

[00:29:11] >> Yeah. Dead center. Just a beautiful putt.

[00:29:17] >> And he told John Cook, being in South Africa, where his property is, it's along the coastline. So, similar conditions. Cejka for birdie at 16. And he pours it in after a wonderful second shot in. So Ernie Els and Cejka share the lead. Langer shoots 63. He's in at 10-under par. Rod Pampling, Justin Leonard, Steven Alker with 66s today. Leonard

birdieing in the last two holes to get to 9-under par. Steven Ames, Jerry Kelly, Miguel Angel Jimenez. Kelly with a 5-under par 67 today. In the flesh, Steve Flesch, 65 today to jump up the leaderboard. Steve Stricker with a 66 today. David Duval. Great playing from David as he shoots a 7-under par 65. Joe Durant shoots 1-under today. Stewart Cink, David Toms with 4-under. Rocco Mediate, nice day, 4-under par 68 today. Y.E. Yang playing here for the first time with a 3-under par. Lee Janzen, just one birdie today, no bogeys and shooting at 71. Past champion, Tom Lehman, shoots even par. Mike Weir with a 4-under 68 today. So the final group will have Ernie Els, Alex Cejka, and Bernhard Langer.

[00:30:42] >> PGA Tour Champions, first of 28 events for the 2025 season, beginning in style at the Mitsubishi Electric Championship at Hualalai. We take a look at some highlights here early in this third and final round. And Alex Cejka, who's playing in the final group today with Ernie Els and Bernhard Langer, his second shot into the 4th, And this was a thing of beauty.

[00:31:11] >> He's hitting a lot of quality shots, Bob. Driving it straight and leading the field in putting this week. So he is right there. Somebody is going to have to be contended with the rest of the day.

[00:31:22] >> Yeah. He'd go on to make that eagle putt using the backstop. That would get him to 14-under. Three-time champion here at the Mitsubishi Electric Championship at Hualalai. Bernhard Langer over at the 4th playing his third. He'd go on to make that for birdie.

[00:31:36] >> That's part of what Langer has done best really through the years is control his wedges. That was a beautiful shot.

[00:31:43] >> Ernie Els playing in this final group, rolls in this birdie putt at the 6.

[00:31:48] >> Yeah. Kind of stuck in neutral until right now. This might get the big man moving, but Ernie needs to get the putter hot if he's going to take these guys down.

[00:31:57] >> Miguel Angel Jimenez, a three-time champion at this event, led after Round 1, rolls in this long putt for birdie at the difficult 9th. That gets him to 13-under par. And then, just moments ago, Ken Tanigawa rolling in this putt for birdie at the par-3 8th. And this would get Ken to 13-under.

[00:32:19] >> Yeah. That's the hardest par 3 on the golf course, Lanny.

[00:32:21] >> It is.

[00:32:22] >> And that's a nice birdie.

[00:32:24] >> It is. And don't sleep on Tanigawa. He can get it done.

[00:32:28] >> Well, he's won a major on the PGA Tour Champions, as well as winning at Pebble Beach. Cejka by one with a bunched up leaderboard here in Hawaii. Now, Darren Clarke for birdie to get the double digits.

[00:32:41] >> Putting from above the hole. And it's fast past the hole. That doesn't get past the hole. Right in the dead center.

[00:32:53] >> Bernhard, not great history on this par 5. He's made some double figures on this hole, but he's a little overprotected on that second shot. Kind of cost him. He needs to make a birdie. He's got two birdies on his card so far today. Missed a golden opportunity back there at the 6th, but he can't let Alex Cejka it get too far ahead. Alex Cejka looks very comfortable. He also missed a good birdie opportunity at the 6th. He's got an eagle opportunity here at the 7th.

[00:33:22] >> And, you know, Cookie, I don't see any of these guys coming back. So, I mean, if you want to get the lead, if you want to get Cejka, and you're Langer, you've got to go take him down.

[00:33:30] >> Yeah, he needs this one badly.

[00:33:32] >> Also --

[00:33:32] >> Well, yeah, I mean, he's putting for birdie, and Cejka is inside him for eagle.

[00:33:37] >> Correct. Not much to this. Does have a little bit of speed.

[00:33:50] >> Big putt right there. Big putt right there.

[00:33:52] >> Go in the edges.

[00:33:53] >> Almost surely called him, but yeah, that was dead center. Holing speed, Lanny.

[00:33:58] >> Beautiful speed on that one.

[00:34:00] >> Yeah.

[00:34:01] >> There's no holes out here really where guy -- I mean, if you make pars, you lose ground for the most part coming in, other than with that -- maybe that hole location at 17 if you tug it today. But for the most part, there's not like disaster holes out there.

[00:34:14] >> Yeah. No, the only one really disastrous we've seen this week is number 5, and they're all past number 5. And then, we have seen instances of guys hitting their second on 7 in the lava to the right. Langer one year made 10 here. So has happened. But don't look for that to be taking place today.

[00:34:32] >> Well, from my observation, the course -- the back nine, the only two holes you have to skate through are 12 and 17, the two par 3s. And they're not playing very long. But there's lava lurking on both of those par 3s.

[00:34:43] >> Eleven can be with -- if the wind's in their face, pretty good. Eleven can be a good hole, too. So that's -- that does -- you know, can pose some problems.

[00:34:50] >> This is huge if Ernie could make this. You know, these guys can read body language and they know Cejka is confident.

[00:34:57] >> Similar putt to what Bernhard had. That was a big putt right there for Ernie. Kind of started slow. Couple birdies, though. Three birdies in his last four holes.

[00:35:09] >> Big par putt here for Ken Tanigawa.

[00:35:11] >> Yeah, back up the slope. Got to be bold with this one. And he was. That was really well done. Good two putt for Kenny. Keeps things right in the mix for him.

[00:35:23] >> Well, Jerry Kelly made an eagle at the par-5 7th. This for eagle at the par-5 10th. And Jerry Kelly is within two of the lead.

[00:35:49] >> Not a lot of super fast putts around here, Lanny, but this has the potential to get away from him. He has seen some beautiful putts made from up here, though.

[00:35:58] >> Yeah. This one, not only downhill, but what grain there is probably going down this direction. So he's going to be very aware of it. I would think he would be just trying to have this thing rolling, the whole perfect pace, dead weight. That's beautiful.

[00:36:12] >> Oh, my, yes.

[00:36:14] >> Look at this from Ernie.

[00:36:14] >> What a great bounce back there for Ernie.

[00:36:16] >> He's making the two putts. Wow.

[00:36:23] >> Now, Tanigawa, this for birdie after the eagle putt went off that ridge by the sprinkler heads. And --

[00:36:32] >> Look at Kenny.

[00:36:33] >> Ken Tanigawa.

[00:36:34] >> Hello.

[00:36:40] >> Let's go over to 17. As picturesque as you will find. K.J. Choi for his birdie. K.J. playing here at Hualalai.

[00:36:54] >> Haven't seen many surfers this week because of all the rocks around here, guys. But this morning, there was a guy just couldn't resist. The waves were too good.

[00:37:04] >> K.J. won the Senior Open at Carnoustie for his first major.

[00:37:13] >> Justin Leonard missed the green with his second, has this for birdie here at the 10th.

[00:37:19] >> Yeah. Had to be some play out of the dirt over by the cart path to get it to this place. And good try right there. Just flips out off the high side.

[00:37:31] >> Yeah. Now, have any realistic chance of winning. He really had to make that.

[00:37:35] >> Oh, yeah, yeah.

[00:37:36] >> Because the guys you're chasing, half of them are going to make birdies here.

[00:37:40] >> Steven Alker, who shot 25-under last year in winning by four shots, matching the tournament low with Loren Roberts, who said it in 2006, rolls that in for birdie.

[00:37:55] >> Well, he's on a little bit of a run now. A couple birdies in a row gets him just two shots off the pace.

[00:38:02] >> Now, Jimenez for his birdie at 13. And this would get him to 15-under in the solo lead.

[00:38:07] >> Yeah, probably needs this one. He gets it. So, going forward, now, he's looking at a par 5. He's got a great chance to get to 16.

[00:38:16] >> Over at the par-4 16th, Doug Barron has this for birdie. Doug got his first major last year, winning the Regions Tradition at Greystone Golf Country Club at Birmingham, one of our favorite spots.

[00:38:31] >> Let's go over to 13, where Jerry Kelly is playing his second shot.

[00:38:37] >> Jerry Kelly's on fire. Started the day 8-under, 5-under for the round, and only a shot off. And another one right straight at

[00:38:47] >> Yeah. He's got like any hole location on the left side of the green.

[00:38:51] >> You know, the perfect line would have been right through probably one of those two sprinkler heads. You know, even trying to fit it between them would have carried too much speed, John.

[00:38:58] >> Well, that's the problem. You've got too much speed coming off that slope. How do you stop it? And if it's probably the proper pace, it's going to go straight left. It's carrying enough pace to really get down to the hole.

[00:39:13] >> Meanwhile, Ernie, Cookie.

[00:39:16] >> Yeah, this putt could make those two putts look a lot longer. This for eagle. Coming off a nice bounce back birdie at the ninth.

[00:39:23] >> He knows the significance of this and what it would do to his opponents. You know, everything affects somebody, doesn't it? If he can make this.

[00:39:33] >> Go slightly to his left.

[00:39:38] >> And just never ended up high enough. Wonderful pace, though. Exactly the pace you want to be hitting it right now. Last thing you want is stress on a two putt, 3, 4-footer for a two putt birdie. Pretty simple there for Ernie.

[00:40:05] >> Well, Cejka's left himself a tricky one. This ball running down the hill, John.

[00:40:10] >> Yeah. And it's away from the mountain. So this has got a little more right, left to right, break in it than he might want to read. It could be, you know, top edge of the hole. Got a little bit of speed.

[00:40:22] >> Yeah. A lot of break out here is top edge, but maybe a ball out. That's a lot of break for this golf course.

[00:40:27] >> Yeah, there's not much more than that.

[00:40:29] >> No, for sure. He missed. You know, really hit a poor putt at the last hole for two putt. And now, just don't want to three putt two greens in a row. That just really wrecks your psyche. Just to stay tied with Ernie.

[00:40:54] >> That's big time. That's big time clutch for him.

[00:40:57] >> Yeah. That's a good reaction to a little bit of stress.

[00:41:00] >> He loves that. Look at that smile. Yeah.

[00:41:11] >> Now, back at the 10th, important birdie putt for Langer.

[00:41:14] >> Yeah, I think he left this in about as good a place as he could leave it, John.

[00:41:18] >> Yeah, no doubt. Brett Quigley just in front, had the identical same putt, and he ripped it by in to the left and missed it coming back. So Bernhardt right underneath the hole, cannot do much.

[00:41:32] >> Stay in contact.

[00:41:35] >> Within one for sure. So solid. A steady putter. He's leading the field in putts this week. He was tied with Cejka. I think Cejka dropped out of the top spot with that three putt on 9. So Langer, really, he's hitting most, if not all the fairways, and he's putting the best so far. Just one shot behind.

[00:42:02] >> Jerry Kelly for birdie.

[00:42:05] >> Take advantage of that shot in here. It's a really good look right here for Jerry. Oh, yeah. That's two in a row from that angle we've seen buried. Jimenez made one from the same exact spot.

[00:42:17] >> Steve Stricker, who won here two years ago for his birdie. And once Stricker starts walking him in like that, you know the putter is feeling good.

[00:42:28] >> Steven Alker, the reigning Schwab Cup champion.

[00:42:31] >> It's only two back.

[00:42:33] >> Took home a lot of awards on Tuesday night from last year, including Charles Schwab Cup.

[00:42:38] >> Don't be surprised. See him stuff one here. There you go.

[00:42:41] >> Here we go.

[00:42:42] >> Yeah.

[00:42:42] >> This guy really is something special, isn't he? Terry Holt, his caddie, was here 4 days earlier, just wandering around the course, taking it all in. Maybe he just gave him two cents worth of a read here.

[00:43:05] >> Well, they certainly out prepare everybody, that is for sure.

[00:43:08] >> No question. They are the most prepared. You can't really out prepare them. You could maybe try to equal it.

[00:43:30] >> Langer with a birdie at 12. What a performance by Bernhard Langer.

[00:43:46] >> Cejka for his par.

[00:43:49] >> Listen for it.

[00:43:50] >> Had a tough pitch up the slope. Boy gets that thing. That was really solid right there.

[00:44:04] >> You can make birdies, don't get me wrong, on 15, 16, maybe even 17, but they're not as sure a deal as they are here at 14.

[00:44:14] >> That's why you want to get this one. And in your mind, you're almost thinking 16 might do it. Playoff at worst if you can get in at 17, I think it'll be over.

[00:44:23] >> Yeah.

[00:44:24] >> So this to get to 16-under par. And that would be a big advantage with Ernie's length, if he can put this in. As you said, the last four hole locations are really tough.

[00:44:38] >> Pretty good look right here. Not a lot in this.

[00:44:41] >> No, not at all. Little uphill. Keep the speed up.

[00:44:45] >> There you have it. Ernie Els makes birdie, and he has the outright lead at 16 under. Langer still has a putt for birdie.

[00:44:56] >> What a great putt that was at that point in time. 2

[00:45:02] >> Now, Langer has a putt for birdie to match Els at 16-under.

[00:45:07] >> Yeah, also up slope just a little bit. Keep the speed up.

[00:45:10] >> Well, I asked you a couple holes ago if you'd ever bet against him, John. What about this? Pretty straight.

[00:45:17] >> Yeah. There's not much to it.

[00:45:18] >> Never bet against this guy here.

[00:45:19] >> Yeah.

[00:45:19] >> He's putting too well. He's still first in putting this week.

[00:45:30] >> Started walking it in.

[00:45:34] >> Yeah, he's feeling it.

[00:45:36] >> Two Hall of Famers sit atop the leaderboard at the Mitsubishi Electric Championship at Hualalai.

[00:45:50] >> Three-time champion, Miguel Angel Jimenez, has certainly had his chances. Now, playing his second into 18.

[00:46:03] >> Now, Ernie Els at 15 for the outright lead.

[00:46:06] >> Yeah, this has got some left to right to it. Got to get it out there and let it slide. And pinches that left edge.

[00:46:14] >> Birdie all of a sudden, found the putter.

[00:46:16] >> And Els has the outright lead at 17-under.

[00:46:20] >> Well, even though he didn't hit the wedge really close, he still had the advantage of only hitting a wedge and got it close enough. Really hit a powerful tee shot there. Ernie Els still swings 3 degree -- 3 miles an hour faster than the PGA Tour average.

[00:46:39] >> Really -- He really brings it. He's --

[00:46:41] >> He's got a really good golf swing for starters, Zing. And then --

[00:46:44] >> Yeah.

[00:46:44] >> -- he's also coming in at 6-4, about 240.

[00:46:47] >> Yeah.

[00:46:47] >> So the man is strong.

[00:46:49] >> Well, Cejka really now feeling a sense of urgency probably John Cook.

[00:46:54] >> Yeah, he got a nice read off of Ernie's ball. He knows if you get it outside that left edge, just let it turn to the right. Aggressive putt.

[00:47:03] >> Yeah, but it's slipping away. That 14th hole really hurt him.

[00:47:10] >> Yeah, I think the guys are going to come short, even like Alker. I know he stuffed it there at 17. But Alker birdie 14, missed a birdie putt at 15.

[00:47:22] >> Sixteen as well.

[00:47:23] >> Sixteen.

[00:47:23] >> Yeah.

[00:47:23] >> Jimenez --

[00:47:24] >> He did not birdie it.

[00:47:26] >> Jimenez missed some makeable birdie putts.

[00:47:30] >> Yeah. Jimenez birdies 18. He's still not where Ernie is.

[00:47:36] >> Cejka for his par today, literally.

[00:47:44] >> Miguel Angel Jimenez has to make this at least a post 16 under.

[00:47:49] >> This could be fist pump worthy.

[00:47:51] >> Yes, sir. He's good. He's good. He shoots 64. That included a bogey on the 8th.

[00:48:05] >> Els for par to stay at 17-under. He's made two bogeys. It's 5-under today. Made two bogeys on the front side. But he's made a whole bunch of birdies, including at 14 and 15. And just a horrible second shot from, you know, green light, special zone in the fairway.

[00:48:29] >> It was, for sure.

[00:48:30] >> Yeah, no question. Just 150 yards or so center of the fairway. I mean, he didn't have to really knock the flag down, but he should have gotten it back at least around hole high.

[00:48:43] >> There's Langer in the background, hands on hips, watching Ernie Els make a great putt.

[00:48:47] >> How clutch.

[00:48:48] >> Hello. But Ernie, we say the putter holds him back from winning maybe out here more than he should. And today when he needs to, he's just buried putt after putt.

[00:49:02] >> Alker had a real chance to post a number today. He's missed a bunch of putts. Looked like they could have gone in. A bunch of opportunities missed, though he's 65, Lanny.

[00:49:13] >> Could have easily been 62.

[00:49:15] >> Yup.

[00:49:20] >> Well, this is definitely holeable, guys. It does break a little right at the end. It's really straight and it'll bang to the right about halfway.

[00:49:27] >> The last big putt he had was to beat Tiger Woods, and he made it. It's to tie Ernie Els.

[00:49:42] >> Gave it a run.

[00:49:44] >> He did give it a run. It did have some significant left to right break to it.

[00:49:48] >> Yeah. It moved -- even with that pace, John, it moved a lot left or right, right at the hole.

[00:49:53] >> Yeah, we hit that putt a lot today because we knew a lot of players were going to have it.

[00:50:12] >> One thing about it, Ernie Els knows what he has to do now.

[00:50:15] >> Yeah. And this doesn't have anything to it. It does have to watch speed just a little bit. If it gets away from him past that pin, you saw exactly what Bernhard's did. It can kind of get away from you.

[00:50:28] >> Yeah.

[00:50:28] >> So just got to ease it.

[00:50:30] >> This is just a trickle down there.

[00:50:32] >> Yup, two putt.

[00:50:33] >> You'd like to make it, but that is not the first order of business.

[00:50:37] >> This is two putts for the wind for the Hall of Famer, Ernie Els.

[00:50:46] >> How good coming down the stretch?

[00:51:03] >> He needed two. He only used one. Ernie Els post 18-under and has won the season opener, the Mitsubishi Electric Championship at Hualalai.

[00:51:15] >> That was really cool to watch. That was big time putting at the end of this golf tournament. The one on 16, the two putt there was huge. And then, of course, to finish it off.

[00:51:36] >> It was. And I mean, that just shows you why he's in the Hall of Fame. He does what he needs to do to get the job done.

[00:51:44] >> Yeah. He flew all the way in from South Africa, Lanny. Twenty-six hours in the air. He got here just the Sunday before this event started. And, you know, defeating jet lag has been a nonissue for these international players. You know, over the years, they've learned how to do it.

[00:52:00] >> Every dollar counts in the season-long race for the Charles Schwab Cup. So this for Cejka to get to 16-under and share a little of that second place money.

[00:52:04] >> He just took some dollars right out of Bernhard Langer's pocket.

[00:52:06] >> And Jimenez --

[00:52:06] >> And Jimenez --

[00:52:06] >> who posted 16-under.

[00:52:07] >> Yes. Exactly.

[00:52:07] >> Ernie Els wins in thrilling fashion as Ernie shoots a 6-under par 66. Posted two shot victory over Bernhard Langer, Miguel Angel Jimenez, and Alex Cejka. Schwab Cup

Champion Steven Alker finished with a flurry. He shot 65 today. So did Jerry Kelly, Ken Tanigawa, Stephen Ames. How about Doug Barron with a 64, and Stewart Cink as well? What a great way to start 2025 here in Hualalai.