

Production Transcript for **25INTCUTCH - SIMMONS BANK CHAMPIONSHIP - MASTER**

[00:00:48.380]>>PGA TOUR Champions proudly present.

[00:00:52.069]>>The Charles Schwab Cup Playoffs today from Little Rock, Arkansas. It's live first round coverage of the Simmons Bank Championship. Lovely Pleasant Valley Country Club hosting for the 2nd straight year, Joe Finger design. The locals call it Little Rock's best kept secret.

[00:01:10.040]>>And the fans excited for this week, even with some of the weather expected come the weekend. Great golf course, great finish. You think about the 16th and the 17th, of course, the par 5, 18th, a lot of drama coming down the stretch as we get into these playoffs, 2nd of 3 events here on PGA TOUR Champions.

[00:01:31.540]>>And a look at the leaderboard at writings. How about the round he's having, of course, local favorite tag played college golf, University of Arkansas, got up to 7 under at one point, just dropping a shot.

[00:01:44.080]>>Billie Andre done for the day, 67, you see now projected 30th, important for these players you see in the red trying to improve and get into that top 36 as we get to the final event of the season, the Charles Schwab Cup Championship mid-November in Phoenix. Shane Bacon, a pleasure to be joined by my man Paul Azinger, John Cook down on the grounds today gonna be following our second to last grouping.

[00:02:09.929]>>As we go out to Padraig Harrington, this at the 8th, John Cook, this for Eagle after that excellent approach, going off a double bogey back at the 7th, this for his 3rd birdie on this.

[00:02:22.080]>>Outgoing 9 holes.

[00:02:24.330]>>Get a marvelous shot in here and can't take advantage of it.

[00:02:28.649]>>Be disappointing there for Harrington after the brilliant approach. Here's Steve Flesch. Yeah, setup looks so good, just underneath it perfectly, just.

[00:02:39.660]>>Just perfect little par there.

[00:02:42.399]>>Pretty solid round.

[00:02:48.860]>>Go to the night, toughest hole on the golf course today, Alker in the fairway.

[00:02:55.520]>>Beautiful tee shot here for Steven Alker, 5 iron from 193 yards.

[00:03:10.300]>>5 iron here for Stephen Alker, 193 yards.

[00:03:15.809]>>Pin in that right hand corner.

[00:03:18.979]>>It's not a nice line if it gets up a little bit.

[00:03:22.770]>>Quality golf shot, tough hole.

[00:03:25.320]>>Another quality golf shot. This is a par hole for sure. You want, if you can get past this hole.

[00:03:31.509]>>Feel pretty good about yourself. Any kind of par here would be great.

[00:03:39.960]>>Back over to the 8th

[00:03:42.259]>> Stewart Cink in that last grouping 2nd on the points list, that is one nice birdie at par 5. Stuart's not shy about wanting to win this Charles Schwab Cup.

[00:03:56.759]>>Back over to 9. Alker's got this for Birdie.

[00:04:00.000]>>Yeah, he just learned something from Thomas Bjørn. As soon as it gets over that hill, it has some serious speed. Good line, good line.

[00:04:08.770]>>How about those two putts in a row, Zinger? Incredible. This guy putts so well. Week in and week out, he's just a machine and I always say about him, now that I'm out here calling some of his golf, where have you been?

[00:04:24.149]>>This is some player that is about as consistent a model of senior golfer that you have out here.

[00:04:41.700]>> Bjørn just pouring that in to save his par with some speed.

[00:04:46.649]>>Yeah, just easy up-and-down. No problem.

[00:04:50.470]>>No putt par. Yeah, a little side hiller side hill chip. You know, the best part about that chip shot was you get to at least watch it go by the hole. And you know, I've always been told, I don't know if John Cook can say yeah or nay to this, but you're above the hole and the ball goes by the hole.

[00:05:09.290]>>It's almost always straight in coming back and if it's not straight, it's rarely outside the hole coming back up the hill. You find that too, John? I think you're right. Yeah, I,

these greens are so fast that there's not a lot of break around these cups. So like you said, you watch that go by, he, he knows that it didn't do a whole lot when it went by the hole.

[00:05:31.559]>>And you gotta, you know, soak in that knowledge.

[00:05:36.260]>>And Thomas Bjørn did it, made that nice comebacker.

[00:05:42.579]>>I just love the way Padraig goes about putting. He's, you know, pretty painfully slow sometimes, but

[00:05:50.880]>>His routine rarely varies, and this is a great camera angle.

[00:05:56.329]>>Yeah, not much to this nice 2 putt. Yeah, that is a lovely stroke.

[00:06:02.299]>>That stroke works under pressure. That whole technique is routine, even though it can be, you know, kind of.

[00:06:08.279]>>It's just tedious sometimes to watch.

[00:06:11.179]>>Boy, let's go to the green, Leonard.

[00:06:14.299]>>Let's get to 3 under. This guy's so steady.

[00:06:18.470]>>You know, it keeps his shoulders. Look at that. That's just such a confident speed. You know how good you are when you can get it to roll in the front of the hole like that.

[00:06:30.200]>>This would be some par save and remain the solo lead.

[00:06:35.279]>>And he's done that 3 for 3 out of the sand today. I wonder if he feels just really comfortable being in Arkansas where he went to college here. I just feel like, uh, there's always kind of that comeback home feeling maybe or whatever you said earlier, the 11th Ángel Cabrera.

[00:06:51.910]>>Allan curling in the left side. This is a man that historically has putted fast greens very well. He's one of those big game hunters, a couple of majors this year out here. He's swinging so well at it. It's just incredible.

[00:07:06.470]>>Here's Goose in at the 11th.

[00:07:09.630]>>And you get under par for the day. I love watching him putt that elbows out. You don't see many guys doing that. You see mostly the arms hanging down, it's rarely out like that.

[00:07:20.790]>>Now Ernie, is for eagle needs it, couple over par.

[00:07:26.809]>>Yeah, I think Ernie's suffering a little post kind of shock a bit let down from last week. It, you know, it's like a hangover, a couple of good finishes in a row. He really had that tournament, it looked like.

[00:07:38.489]>>And Justin Leonard eagle last hole just took it right out of his pocket. You think about last week on Sunday, the tee shots from Ernie at the 9th and the 18th, both par 5s, unable to birdie each of those holes.

[00:07:50.619]>>It'll be a disappointing for considering.

[00:07:53.910]>>That approach

[00:07:56.329]>>Yeah, you never really have to worry about speed because.

[00:08:00.000]>>And you just got to get the line right and there's not much break around the cup out here putting earlier this morning.

[00:08:06.809]>>I was trying to read more break than there actually was.

[00:08:10.640]>>This would be a disappointing par 10 and 11 there for Padraig.

[00:08:18.350]>>You know, Cookie, that's the hard part is if they're really flat, they have, they have some sort of break and you can't see it. And that, that might have gotten, uh, Padraig there. He probably thought that was straighter than it was and it broke off. This man's not stressing this to tie for the lead.

[00:08:34.260]>>For his 6 birdie.

[00:08:38.549]>>He knew it right when he hit it, didn't he?

[00:08:41.590]>>Speaking of a pole, that might have been a pole that was a pole.

[00:08:47.750]>>Might have been just a little distracted. There was a, a plane.

[00:08:53.760]>>Up above carrying a sign.

[00:08:58.130]>>Got him talking to himself just a little bit.

[00:09:02.239]>>Muttering a little. Let's go to 12, Leonard.

[00:09:06.619]>>And real solid from this distance today, you know, we focused in on Justin Leonard's face last week and how steady, you know, like he's, he's just expressionless.

[00:09:20.169]>>Becker the 17th.

[00:09:23.349]>>Like Chalmers or under, do you wish you swung like Chalmers or what? I mean, everybody does. Well, big lefty Shane Bacon today swings a little longer than Chalmers, kind of about about 15 years. I wish I had it like that. That is beautiful. It really good. I mean that is really nice.

[00:09:45.849]>>18, so just one eagle here today.

[00:09:51.890]>>There's another one.

[00:09:54.539]>>That needed a little bit more speed there, saying, and it got it.

[00:10:01.830]>>Now Harrington,

[00:10:04.190]>>Thomas Bjørn had a really nice shot just behind the hole and not Padraig here 142 yards.

[00:10:12.270]>>Just a little pitching wedge here for Padraig. See if he can get it in that back little nook, and he does really nice shot. Yeah, one of the best of his day.

[00:10:22.409]>>Now Bjørn

[00:10:29.500]>>You made a nice comebacker at the 9th hole for.

[00:10:33.190]>>A par save now gonna need this one after a really nice second, like I said, he a little unfortunate his ball didn't come all the way back to the hole.

[00:10:43.299]>>Not much to this either. Pretty straight. Most guys go to this long putter in their careers when they're missing these types of putts, and it's just made them so much better and Bjørn, I don't, I don't wanna jinx the guy. He's made every single one of these short putts.

[00:10:57.919]>>Since he's been on TV and they all go in like that, Freddie. That's what I noticed last week I watched a telecast last week in uh Richmond and he was putting beautiful and everything is like that is perfect speed dead center.

[00:11:11.200]>>He makes it look easy with his mechanics.

[00:11:14.090]>>Tied for 2nd last week, did Bjørn, now Harrington, one of the best coaches of the day here at 12.

[00:11:22.630]>>Disappointing par 10, disappointing par at 11, but birdie's a tough 12.

[00:11:32.520]>>Now here's a guy that hits a solid. You better believe it. Oh he smoke. What a swing that is. Twirled the club on the way in. Let's see if this is as good as the twirl. Oh yeah, of course you see him twirl that thing.

[00:11:44.140]>>I got it. You got the twirl. You don't twirl unless you love it.

[00:11:51.369]>>I mean this really the guy, when you think about it, another putt drops Alker now to 6 under that ties him for the lead and trying to do exactly what he did last season, chased down a big name in these playoffs.

[00:12:08.739]>>Chalmers at 18 in this.

[00:12:11.849]>>Shoot 6 under

[00:12:13.799]>>Bank it. Hm. How about that finish for Greg Chalmers. See, the birdie at 16,17, 18. That's how you close out things here at Pleasant Valley. I mean, that is incredible stuff around the lake thing. You know, listening to Greg and, and what he was saying about how he feels coming down the stretch. I remember when, uh, I was on the Presidents Cup teams when, uh, Nicklaus was the captain, and he told us a lot, a lot of different stories, but he always said, a lot of people feel when they're coming down the last 4 or 5 holes that they got to do something a little more special to win.

[00:12:43.080]>>And good solid golf is usually good enough to win.

[00:12:47.010]>>And don't try to do something special out of your comfort zone and get the tournament away. I mean, Fred, to your point, you think about Justin Leonard last week, he just kind of consistently stayed in the present in that final round, was struggling to make putts, and then all of a sudden the last three holes, we started to see him disappear and then you sit around and eventually you're the champion and Leonard, of course, pouring in a lengthy when they're at 15, quickly to 5 under par. Alker now to get to 7 under.

[00:13:12.580]>>Yeah, this putt does have a little bit of right to left in it.

[00:13:15.950]>>Where is he confident? Where else was that going dead center?

[00:13:20.940]>>Yeah, the speed is so good on all those putts, you know, that, that exact same line could be missed with not enough speed or a little too much speed, but the speed was perfect.

[00:13:33.559]>>Darren Clark at 17, the tee shot one of the best of the day.

[00:13:40.809]>>4 straight, thank you. We get 5 straight, we'll get 5 straight. He's gonna tie 18.

[00:13:47.859]>>And we've seen 4 birdies all day here at the 15th, had an opportunity to see 3 from this group.

[00:13:58.960]>>Yeah, if he hits this straight, it should go in.

[00:14:03.460]>>OK, there's 1. We got 1. Now we're gonna see 3. I mean, if that goes.

[00:14:09.750]>>I agree. That's the way to do it. Nice, nice early walk there. All right, we've got one in now Bjørn.

[00:14:30.280]>>Yeah, he's not much to this, maybe just inside the right with just dripping speed.

[00:14:38.190]>>Buckets, there's 2.

[00:14:43.880]>>Uh, I mean, I mean, Alker could hit this lefty Cookie and it's gonna go in easily. Yeah, I doubt he's gonna get loose here, no chance, really. This is only about 1 ft.

[00:15:03.710]>>Although these are the toughest putts to make in golf, the, the 3rd birdie in the group.

[00:15:11.340]>>How about this round of golf thing? What a run he's on. That is a pretty scorecard, and he's got a couple of birdie holes remaining. Who knows?

[00:15:24.059]>>Now, that in 1999, here's Harrington.

[00:15:28.510]>>Just a bit too high. Yeah, that was a shame right there. He had a near impossible first putt from the back of the grain.

[00:15:38.020]>>No other way but to run it 10 ft by.

[00:15:42.340]>>Disappointing putt.

[00:15:44.789]>>Couple of them on this side.

[00:15:47.549]>>Yeah he didn't strike it well off the tee, did Padraig Harrington, couple under par, about as good as he was gonna do. How does it affect Padraig Harrington to watch what Alker's doing, I wonder, you know, peppering every fairway, every green and

[00:16:02.070]>>You know, Padraig's swinging for the fences, so there's horses for courses. This just may not be the kind of course for Padraig to have that philosophy.

[00:16:14.299]>>Now Alker this, to do something he has never done on PGA TOUR Champions, which is tough to say considering all of his accomplishments.

[00:16:24.169]>>Charles Schwab champion a year ago, 2nd time in his career, this for his low round.

[00:16:30.369]>>Of his PGA TOUR champion's career.

[00:16:37.729]>>Should drip a little to the right. I mean, no questions at all. Alker made everything on this back nine. Birdie's 13, 14, 15, 16, a beautiful putt at 17, and that unlikely up and in seeing at 18.

[00:16:58.460]>>Steven Alker just the one win this season that happened at the Cologuard Classic, putting himself in a position for another victory.

[00:17:07.239]>>Lead at 5.

[00:17:19.099]>>It is Saturday at the Simmons Bank Championship. Pleasant Valley Country Club here in Little Rock, Arkansas, and expecting a little bit of weather this afternoon. So going early in this second round, all of it focused on a man named Steven Alker and the way he played a day ago, 61 out of the gate, 5-shot lead starting today.

[00:17:39.640]>>The Charles Schwab Cup Playoffs today from Little Rock, Arkansas, its 2nd round coverage.

[00:17:45.839]>>Of the Simmons Bank Championship, 2nd straight year here at Pleasant Valley Country Club. Little Rock's best kept secret to the locals golf course is excellent. The players talking not just about the best putting complexes this year, maybe the best cutting putting complexes of any tour running 14, see if they will continue considering the weather we are expecting to see later today, showers, potentially storms this afternoon in the Little Rock area.

[00:18:15.459]>>So we are going a little early on this Saturday, and really it seems like weather might be the only thing to stop Steven Alker with the way he played a day ago, shot 61 career best 11 birdies, made 6 straight to close and already won under.

[00:18:33.050]>>In his 2nd round, but the lead shrinking a little bit. Justin Leonard, champion last week trying to go back-to-back, couple under par, and his 2nd round already made an eagle at the 18th. Yesterday seems to be the trend for Justin Leonard as of late. Stewart Cink making a push as well as everybody focuses on the end of this season trying to get to Phoenix and claim that Charles Schwab Cup Championship. Shane Bacon, an honor to be joined by my man Paul Azinger sitting next to me John Cook down on the ground.

[00:19:00.780]>>Gonna follow that final grouping today, Steven Alker, Tag Writings and Greg Chalmers in that final grouping today, and we will go out and check in on our leader here at the 6th and say good afternoon to John Cook. Well, good afternoon guys, good to be out here, little cloudy. Looks like it might rain, and Steven Alker with a one birdie on his card and this is slick moving from left to right, and how about it? Beautiful birdie.

[00:19:26.150]>>23 putts in round one and that club, Paul has just been on fire these 1st 2 days.

[00:19:33.989]>>Now Stewart Cink came into the week 2nd on the points list.

[00:19:39.270]>>He has talked about the importance of trying to take home this cup, Paul.

[00:19:43.579]>>You know, we, we compared these greens yesterday to poker tables. They are so smooth and so fast running 14 on the stem meter.

[00:19:52.859]>>And that is really high, high standard, you know, required for touch and feely stuff.

[00:20:06.030]>>We'll go up to 8

[00:20:11.540]>>Cameron Percy for eagle.

[00:20:15.180]>>Yeah they were good for a while.

[00:20:19.109]>>Yeah, that's great speed.

[00:20:25.689]>>Right

[00:20:34.630]>>Chalmers really trying to dial this one in.

[00:20:52.040]>>Yeah, he knows how important it is.

[00:20:55.020]>>He's got a lot to play for it both he and Tag.

[00:20:58.319]>>Kind of moving day Saturday, get themselves in position, what a beautiful look.

[00:21:04.689]>>Very impressive role.

[00:21:09.050]>>You know, we talk about how good these greens are and they are some of the best anywhere on any tour like Stewart Cink said, and, you know, just being out the last couple of days putting on these the the delightful, there's.

[00:21:22.300]>>There's no marks on them, they're, they roll true.

[00:21:26.290]>>They're not easy.

[00:21:27.930]>>But there are

[00:21:29.829]>>No excuses for missing pots. Well, the only imperfections are the footprints on the greens at whatever weight they carry.

[00:21:38.699]>>And what do you think about the casual water rule when it comes to weight?

[00:21:43.030]>>Like we always used to use Phil Blackmar and Willie Wood as an example. Like Willie Wood's not pulling up casual water where Phil Blackmar is gonna get relief. That's just the way it is about that. That's a very good point.

[00:21:54.180]>>That's a good point by you.

[00:21:56.439]>>Think about what happened at Oakmont this year at the US Open. Yeah, depending on which player that was, they might have got relief.

[00:22:03.030]>>Yeah.

[00:22:04.250]>>Sam Burns couldn't get casual water, but whoever.

[00:22:08.310]>>Went out there shortly after that, sure could. I mean, it's relentless, John Cook. I mean, this is just right in the middle. Every putt it feels like. You know, I think these greens really match Steven Alker, just the pace of his stroke, the pace of the greens, the way the ball's going in, it's just, he's in complete control right now.

[00:22:32.109]>>5-shot lead after 18 holes ties the largest 18 hole lead in PGA TOUR Champions history, and the guy is already 3 under, about to play a par 5. Well, this is a stellar performance. He's been flawless to this point. Alker just really

[00:22:48.930]>>You know, the most textbook thing, it's kind of like Hogan. Now, here's tag writings, he's feeling like the local boy and, uh, unfortunately, he's up against a buzz saw right now and

[00:23:00.000]>>He can get his crowd going a little bit after that tee shot, that nice pitch here, John Cook.

[00:23:07.579]>>Certainly got the crowd behind them. There's a lot of support out here for for Tad Ridings and.

[00:23:14.250]>>Nice little pitch shot. Can he pay it off?

[00:23:18.229]>>He can aggressive play off the tee. Nice birdie.

[00:23:22.939]>>Patience is important when you're playing against somebody rolling it like, think about there is.

[00:23:38.520]>>Most of the concentration.

[00:23:41.630]>>is when you're putting. This is when you really wanna just, all you're doing is putting it back on that line again.

[00:23:50.719]>>He's seen the line.

[00:23:52.810]>>That's for sure.

[00:23:57.209]>>It's just a simple game right now for Alker. That's his 15th birdie in 26 holes. This is really something special. You don't get to see this very often in your lifetime, and you know, as broadcasters to be able to watch what's happening is, uh, look at the 7 shots ahead. You just.

[00:24:18.069]>>You know, the challenge always for him is can he keep going? Can I retain this? Can I keep it going?

[00:24:25.369]>>Tag writings one for the green.

[00:24:28.130]>>I had to be a tough 5 footer for him on the last hole. Yeah, it certainly was, and you know, he talked about being comfortable in this situation and Paul, you were so good at and you know, when I was having a good run, you, you have to be comfortable in uncomfortable situations and the only way you can do that is just give yourself chances and tag answering the call again.

[00:24:51.359]>>Go to 12, 1st look here.

[00:24:54.880]>>Thomas Bjørn

[00:25:14.959]>>Good putt there from Justin Leonard. No surprise, Justin Leonard keeping the pressure on 3 birdies. He's starting to keep pace.

[00:25:26.170]>>Got a 12.

[00:25:29.839]>>There you go. He's had a lot of chances.

[00:25:34.369]>>Clean card himself.

[00:25:36.780]>>Go up to the 11th. Justin Leonard, the putter has been.

[00:25:41.109]>>As hot as it was late last Sunday, this for two in a row, both from distance.

[00:25:49.979]>>Gonna stretch, perfect speed. There we go, Justin Leonard, to go back to 10, Alker for another birdie.

[00:26:00.180]>>Yeah, another one of these, you know, 8 to 10 footers that he's just been pouring right in the center. This will move just to his left slightly.

[00:26:12.520]>>And really the first miss we've seen today from our leader. Well, what a run for, uh, that's just a birdie run of all birdie runs, you know, every single one that he had a chance to make, going back to yesterday, he made, and that's the first one he missed.

[00:26:28.069]>>And it feels like a bogey to him because it wasn't a birdie.

[00:26:32.099]>>And now John Cook an opportunity. I mean, finally for someone like Tag to pick up one.

[00:26:37.939]>>Exactly, that's a great point that.

[00:26:41.390]>>Can you

[00:26:42.770]>>Can of

[00:26:44.699]>>Whittle into this lead a little bit. He's pretty good at making it keep pace.

[00:26:51.750]>>Yeah.

[00:26:52.770]>>This to pick up one. It's good birdie. Creative pitch shot.

[00:26:59.810]>>He's looking comfortable. Yeah, and that wasn't dead straight either, John.

[00:27:07.489]>>It'll go up that bridge, kind of kick it to the right, then back to the left at the end.

[00:27:14.890]>>Oh

[00:27:16.680]>>Oh my.

[00:27:19.810]>>The unlikely of birdie's exclamation mark. Look at that face there, that is as much determination as you see out of Alker ever.

[00:27:30.260]>>How about these 2 days in Little Rock?

[00:27:34.790]>>You know, he's so steady in the way he handles himself.

[00:27:38.800]>>And it finally came out. What a couple of rounds here.

[00:27:44.599]>>You talk about finishing off a great dinner with an excellent dessert.

[00:27:52.510]>>Our leader

[00:27:54.109]>>Yeah, that's a, that's a look of determination. Love it.

[00:27:59.630]>>66 for Steven Alker after the 61 course record a day ago, 17 under par, the lead is 5.

[00:28:17.709]>>The Charles Schwab Cup Playoffs today from Little Rock, Arkansas. Final round coverage of the Simmons Bank Championship.

[00:28:26.550]>>Pleasant Valley Country Club hosting for the 2nd straight year.

[00:28:33.900]>>And it is an awesome, awesome golf course. Some of the best screens you will see at any professional event all season long, and we got a man that has been in cruise control for the first two rounds, Steven Alker. It's been very impressive the way he's gone about his business, the way he finished the opening round.

[00:28:54.040]>>6 straight birdies on Friday to shoot 61, a day ago, 66, highlighted by the lengthy birdie putt at the last and today, out on the golf course, a little bit of a late start with the fog delay, about an hour delay here in the Little Rock area.

[00:29:09.140]>>Alker back to it already with the birdie, make it up.

[00:29:13.369]>>20 footer or so at the 3rd. Shane Bacon always pleased to be joined by my guy Paul Azinger sitting next to me, John Cook down on the ground, gonna be following Altag writings and Justin Leonard.

[00:29:25.839]>>In that final grouping today, Justin Leonard, of course, a winner last week.

[00:29:31.709]>>Alker in with par here at this par 5, Justin Leonard hit a beauty of a wedge to this position and John Cook, he's got an excellent look at cutting into that lead.

[00:29:43.189]>>Good afternoon guys, a little bit late start, but here we are championship Sunday. Justin coming off a birdie at the par 32.

[00:29:51.130]>>Golden opportunity to pick up one here at the 4th.

[00:29:55.270]>>That is the start you were looking for if you're Justin Leonard, couple of birdies early.

[00:30:04.030]>>And here's Richard Green up at the 6th.

[00:30:07.810]>>Having a great week as well, this to get to 11 under.

[00:30:11.530]>>Solo 4th position.

[00:30:16.800]>>Well, the Greens are running 14 on the step meter and

[00:30:21.109]>>Probably the smoothest putting surfaces that, uh, we've ever really seen. Look at that start for Richard Green.

[00:30:28.130]>>Certainly if I was Arkansas I'd want to see what tag Ridings has got. So then you got Justin Leonard who's won a major title. So there are 3 really great elements in the final group. If you love golf, yeah, Justin Le tried to go back-to-back in these playoffs, of course that enormous eagle putt on the 18th last Sunday ridings an opportunity.

[00:30:48.199]>>Here to pick one up

[00:30:49.969]>>Yeah, no birdies on his card yet, but a pretty comfortable start. actually got fortunate back there at the par 5. Looked like his tee ball was going out of bounds, hit a tree, came back in.

[00:30:59.369]>>Made par, but this would jumpstart his round. It did yesterday, made 2 here yesterday.

[00:31:05.729]>>And 2 again today. Important putt, get his Sunday going. That keeps all the locals still there.

[00:31:16.760]>>Not a lot of guys behind him that can knock him out that are doing real well. And he's playing and putting himself in an excellent position, really nice 2 putt here at the 5th.

[00:31:27.959]>>Alker still no bogies on the card, only player in the field without a square.

[00:31:38.260]>>Justin Leonard

[00:31:45.900]>>This is such a good camera angle.

[00:31:48.770]>>To watch that's so pure.

[00:31:58.630]>>Nice little bounce back there for Justin.

[00:32:02.099]>>Yeah, he like, he like to watch that path on replay for a while. That, that was really cool.

[00:32:11.060]>>For those watching on TV every time Paul Ainger talks about a golf swing, he mimics it in the studio. It's great. This is a roomy spot. Yeah, it is. Chalmers.

[00:32:21.089]>>Excellent roll, so to make a couple today.

[00:32:30.560]>>Alker to get to 19 under.

[00:32:33.239]>>I think you got a pretty good read off of tag second half of tag writings pot, so.

[00:32:39.569]>>Move slightly to the left, but not much. This is time to pounce, just like gut punch the whole field right here.

[00:32:52.910]>>Punched the gut.

[00:32:55.770]>>Perfect roll.

[00:32:59.119]>>Take that

[00:33:01.959]>>There's green continuing to move up this board, excellent look.

[00:33:10.880]>>Another birdie there, 5th of the day.

[00:33:16.150]>>Good looking scorecard today.

[00:33:19.239]>>They had to wait an extra hour because of the conditions.

[00:33:24.579]>>Back at 9 on bunker shot for our leader.

[00:33:29.589]>>Little hard packed sand, but it's pretty level. Oh, look like you cut it a little thin, or is this a late spinner.

[00:33:47.109]>>We, Dougie's concentrate. Here's Chucky. Got it. What about those sneakers. What are those things? Like Vortex sneakers. That guy hangs around a lot. That's what I'll give him right around 5 ft, pretty fast puttt. You can tell with that late spinning bunker shot he hit. There's some slope there, so he's got to be a little careful with speed, but

[00:34:07.680]>>His pots have been going right in the center perfect speed the whole week. Another killer camera angle straight down the line.

[00:34:15.780]>>This is really

[00:34:17.908]>>Just as good as you can get, we'll see what, if he hits it right on his path.

[00:34:23.678]>>A plant to go to the right, it's not gonna do it in those first bogey, Shane.

[00:34:31.350]>>I want to run.

[00:34:35.678]>>Had been perfect to this point.

[00:35:00.459]>>It's big time when you can come out and double-digit wins anywhere, you know, there's only 9 guys on the PGA TOUR, current PGA TOUR players. Yeah, those double-digit wins, which is, that's a milestone number uh for everybody.

[00:35:15.520]>>Go to Percy at 11. Perfect temperatures out here. Just look at the smoothness of the greens. No. Come on now. Come on now. Look at this guy. He's just been all over the place. He's birdie chances everywhere.

[00:35:35.419]>>Star of the week from the very beginning.

[00:35:43.179]>>One way to start the back nine.

[00:35:46.550]>>Pull out and near hole out.

[00:35:50.399]>>That is how you make the rest of this walk relatively stress free. Alker now with a.

[00:35:56.610]>>Eight shot lead.

[00:35:58.750]>>Right now, Alker's bowling a 300. That's the performance we're seeing here in Little Rock.

[00:36:05.840]>>The guy's lead.

[00:36:07.510]>>Insurmountable.

[00:36:11.820]>>Back over to 12, Leonard.

[00:36:14.840]>>Really nice approach into this difficult par 4.

[00:36:18.889]>>Yeah, moving from left to right, doesn't really have to worry about speed, goes uphill slightly.

[00:36:28.969]>>Yeah, you knew he wasn't gonna sit on the couch that long with the putter. Now, winter last week, he's trying to get, he's trying to run down tag ridings. Tag Ridings knows he's got a bully behind him like trying to snatch second place away. You're like, oh, I wanna.

[00:36:44.149]>>I can't. I'm not gonna win maybe, but I, I sure don't want Justin to catch me. That's what Tag's thinking. Justin's thinking, Oh, I can't let Tag beat me. I mean, Paul, it's like the tournament within the tournament within the tournament, right? We got top 36 tournament, we got 2nd place. Alker, I mean, I'm gonna go as far as to say he's gonna win, so.

[00:37:03.570]>>Yeah, we had to stretch it out. Thank you, no problem. That, that limb was pretty sturdy. This, this thing with Alker has been a joy to watch, Cookie.

[00:37:11.989]>>It really has. We'll ask him about it later, but.

[00:37:16.060]>>It's pretty special.

[00:37:18.209]>>you watch golf played at its highest level. I don't care what tour you're on or who you are. Come on now. Come on. Nobody gonna beat him this week.

[00:37:27.679]>>Just another one.

[00:37:38.120]>>Back at 18, Alex Cejka.

[00:37:41.909]>>The hill for his birdie

[00:37:44.439]>>So when Lanny retired, you know, he gave me all this advice about Chain or about all the players who had the best short game, whatever, best long game.

[00:37:58.919]>>22 under par.

[00:38:20.629]>>That is something special, I'll tell you. They talked about Tag in terms of his 2025, mentioned he had no status to start the season. Monday qualified.

[00:38:31.270]>>Into an event in March, finished 2nd there now 5 top 25s, 3 top 10s on the season.

[00:38:37.919]>>And he is putting himself in a position for a full card in 2026 when I think about Monday qualifying, now for now to save his par.

[00:38:49.620]>>Uh just outside of 3 ft and.

[00:38:53.229]>>Oh, the worst stroke he's made all week.

[00:38:57.699]>>There is

[00:39:04.760]>>A little bit of a surprise.

[00:39:07.909]>>And that hurts his chances to get to 25 under.

[00:39:12.850]>>He hurt his chances to win by 10. Largest margin of victory at this championship, 7 shots back in 2023, of course, a different golf course.

[00:39:22.060]>>It's the 19th plane.

[00:39:31.689]>>Same put that uh Steven Alker had. This has got some swing from left to right in this back portion of the green.

[00:39:39.699]>>I

[00:39:41.689]>>Uh oh.

[00:39:45.169]>>Something happened, do you think Justin.

[00:39:47.919]>>You can go in the crowd ever if you get mad enough to go in the crowd, take someone down. I don't think so.

[00:39:54.139]>>It's just a moment ago at 16, Tim O' Neal.

[00:39:58.350]>>Out of position

[00:40:00.870]>>Come on Has team, let's do it.

[00:40:04.520]>>Right when you need it the most.

[00:40:09.530]>>And you talk about top 36, Tim O'Neal came into the week 34.

[00:40:14.489]>>There were clips on social media and talking about the stress of this week, the importance of this week, getting back to Phoenix, getting back.

[00:40:26.070]>>I mean, if you're watching this in your tag writings, all you can do is smile.

[00:40:35.159]>>You can't begrudge Steven Alker. There's no way. Nobody's begrudging anybody right now. These guys are, they just love the competition.

[00:40:45.239]>>Tag a real opportunity. How about that snuck in the right side.

[00:40:51.379]>>He understands the importance of 2 here.

[00:41:03.840]>>We'll go to the 18th right now, Darren Clark.

[00:41:11.489]>>And this is where you want to putt from after that wedge shot, it'll be disappointing.

[00:41:16.489]>>And he started out the year. He told me he hadn't fished at all, and that's his real passion. He's really set out this year to win it all, and it's not gonna happen.

[00:41:29.379]>>Mention Richard Green kind of floating around. It's for Birdie at 16, that's to get to 12 under.

[00:41:36.030]>>Made a whole bunch of putts today.

[00:41:38.590]>>And that'll continue. Richard Green, one of the rounds of this Sunday. That's a good birdie with that hole's cut.

[00:41:50.560]>>Golf allows you to peak in your 50s.

[00:41:54.360]>>If you think about that, you know, like, uh, so many greats peaked in their 40s, you know, like a Bjørn type player peaked in his 40s, Guys that played this tour well, Kenny Perry types.

[00:42:06.870]>>And

[00:42:08.199]>>Raymond Floyd won on the tour in his 50s, you know, it, it happens. Davis did it.

[00:42:14.679]>>But some of these journeymen.

[00:42:18.179]>>They peak in their 50s.

[00:42:21.350]>>And it's really, it's, it's fun to watch. I mean, uh, guys like Trevino, would you say he peaked in his 50s? Maybe he played unbelievable his whole career.

[00:42:32.409]>>I don't know. It's hard to know, but I just say it's kind of a fact that a lot of Germany and their confidence.

[00:42:39.959]>>Come on

[00:43:37.159]>>Yeah, it's just very interesting.

[00:43:39.750]>>In terms of all professional golf, I mean, there's golfers, as you know, saying that have peaked in their teenage years, right, golfers that have peaked in their twenties.

[00:43:49.050]>>And then sometimes you can stretch it.

[00:43:52.500]>>In your late 40s, early 50s, and find form.

[00:43:57.040]>>Leonard

[00:43:58.629]>>You know that was shoved right off the blade.

[00:44:05.770]>>Putter's gone a bit cold for Justin Leonard. Tough to keep your focus in this weather trying to play against a guy that has been this level of relentless for the entire week, Steven Alker.

[00:44:19.709]>>Huge lead, 8 shot lead, right.

[00:44:31.300]>>And one of the rounds of the day, Richard Green here at 17. I've only seen one birdie today at this par 3. Can it be another?

[00:44:39.280]>>Yeah, good boy.

[00:44:42.919]>>You fellows are shying away from the water. I can assure you, no mistake left hole, the last 3 holes, really.

[00:44:55.979]>>Yeah, that'll be disappointing.

[00:45:01.060]>>Concentration as expected, has waned a bit.

[00:45:04.649]>>But you know, he's right that, you know, he's totally like, this is a battle against me now. I don't want to make any bogeys. He's probably pretty relaxed and also enjoying this, yeah, the reality that he's gonna walk in here nice and cushy, uh, but

[00:45:18.209]>>Look at him, he's looking at it like, uh, come on, man.

[00:45:22.790]>>He does have the power to reach 18 and 2 if he so chooses.

[00:45:28.149]>>Got to get this down in 2 though. Yeah, back-to-back bogies, 15 and 16 for Tag.

[00:45:36.840]>>And jumping on the inside and feeling calm looking on the outside on these putts.

[00:45:44.000]>>Got to control the jumpy stuff on the inside. Looks really good. How about this? How about this part.

[00:45:50.540]>>Give the fans something to take home tag ridings with a big birdie at 17.

[00:45:57.280]>>That's fine and he's loving it.

[00:46:00.000]>>He's trying to seize 2nd place. He wants it all to himself.

[00:46:06.399]>>We'll go to 18 with Richard Green, this to finish at 13 under.

[00:46:11.320]>>The big puttt here

[00:46:14.760]>>And that's a 66 for Green. He's gonna be so proud of that putt.

[00:46:20.739]>>He's gonna jump to 2nd place.

[00:46:28.129]>>And that ties for low round of the day, 66 from Green. That's right there with tag now. Tag right is gonna have to make birdie. Justin Leonard.

[00:46:37.419]>>Just trying to save par here.

[00:46:45.590]>>That's a surprise.

[00:46:51.510]>>Well, this is a big

[00:46:53.479]>>Big two put here for Tag Ridings obviously he'd like to make this, but.

[00:46:58.270]>>He certainly would like the two-putt and this going up the hill, big breaker from right to left.

[00:47:04.520]>>Yeah, he's sitting at tied for a second, but.

[00:47:09.270]>>You're right, John.

[00:47:11.239]>>Time to trust your leg skills, the final hole.

[00:47:16.020]>>Well it comes down to putting on Sundays.

[00:47:23.149]>>These are the ones you remember the most, the last couple of putts or the last single putt, whatever it may be.

[00:47:38.280]>>The long went at 17.

[00:47:41.489]>>Uh, that one on the tracks as well. Yeah, he came through big time.

[00:47:48.510]>>Hope he takes a minute after tapping that one in just to soak up this moment.

[00:47:56.050]>>Pretty clutch performance. He came in knowing what he had to do, just, just have a great week to secure his card for next year. He did it.

[00:48:03.739]>>Leonard, the winner last week, final group.

[00:48:08.080]>>Playing some of the best golf of anybody in these playoffs.

[00:48:24.040]>>Tag Ridings just had a good look at the guy who won last week and the guy who's winning this week and he knows really who his competition is going forward.

[00:48:32.840]>>You can only bode well for him.

[00:49:03.780]>>Just a hair more energy, Justin and.

[00:49:08.870]>>That would have gotten him into a tie for 4th place with Stewart Cink.

[00:49:14.959]>>You get Justin Leonard

[00:49:17.379]>>Continuing to improve on those numbers as we get.

[00:49:21.229]>>Closer to Phoenix, Tag's gonna tap in for his part, gonna finish in a tie for second.

[00:49:26.520]>>With Richard Green, hopefully he gives the fans.

[00:49:30.399]>>A second as he soaks in.

[00:49:33.280]>>What has to be a memorable week for him, the University of Arkansas product. Enjoying being back.

[00:49:40.479]>>Around the locals, but now the man of the hour, Shane, yeah, opportunity.

[00:49:47.139]>>Finishing touches on his masterpiece.

[00:50:02.159]>>And unfortunately.

[00:50:04.219]>>And I have to give him a couple of more seconds before it's official.

[00:50:08.649]>>It'll be his 10th win on PGA TOUR Champions.

[00:50:12.020]>>54 year old from New Zealand.

[00:50:14.580]>>Had some success in the many tours, won 4 times on the Korn Ferry Tour throughout his career.

[00:50:20.250]>>But since he has turned 50, he's found a new gear, playing the best golf of his life.

[00:50:30.820]>>And Steven Alker.

[00:50:33.479]>>Dominating.

[00:50:35.290]>>In Little Rock.

[00:50:48.090]>>He did it all. The pressure was on him from the get-go. After shooting a 61, you know, he shot 62 last year and let this tournament get away. He shot 61. There's a precious hug.

[00:50:59.649]>>He jumped on the field again this week and all the pressure was on him and now look how relaxed and happy he is. That is a happy bunch. Like Tana running out, giving a hug and a kiss.

[00:51:11.479]>>I live just outside of the Scottsdale area these days. Fountain Hills, beautiful park. It was incredible what he did to start. He went 44 holes without a bogey, and, uh, he just played remarkable golf. It was just kind of next level stuff, and he had the pressure on him and the burden from failing last year too, Shane. Be sure to join us Thursday, November 13th from Phoenix, Arizona as we bring you the Charles Schwab Cup Championship.

[00:51:37.199]>>Beautiful Phoenix Country Club gonna be sunny golf course likely gonna be firm and we're gonna see the best.

[00:51:44.979]>>In terms of PGA TOUR Champions golf compete 4 days of golf, 72 holes to claim the million dollar prize. Steven Alker, the champion last year.

[00:51:56.209]>>2nd in his career trying to go back-to-back this week belonged to him from start to finish.