

Champions Learning Center Show #17

VO > PGA TOUR Champions Learning Center.

VO > PGA TOUR Champions International journey continued over the weekend in Southwestern Europe. The inaugural Portugal Invitational. New event, new Ernie Els course design and the first PGA TOUR sanctioned individual stroke play event to be held in the Portuguese Republic. To recap our men on the call - Bob Papa and John Cook.

VO > Thanks, Vince. The PGA TOUR Champions first ever event in Europe, the inaugural Portugal Invitational from the Els Club in Vilamoura. And we had 13 under share the lead through 36. Stewart Cink, Padraig Harrington, Rory Sabbatini, Zach Johnson started the day a shot back, birdied the first three, but John Cook this shot at the seventh really got him going.

VO > Best shot of the week on the toughest hole of the week. The seventh hybrid in there. He hits it in there about four feet.

VO > Go on to make birdie there and that would get him to 16 under par. And then takes dead aim at the par four ninth.

VO > Beautiful tee shot here at the ninth. Sitting duck hole location. Wedge player extraordinaire Zach Johnson, wouldn't expect anything less.

VO > He'd go on to make that putt and make the turn five under par save at ten, birdie at the par five 11th and kind of stole that one a little bit as he spun his wedge off the green but still got out of there with birdie. Stewart Cink trying to make a run. Cink rolls in this birdie putt at the 12th. Didn't get off to the fast start that he did on Saturday. And then this was a big one. The par saving putt at 17.

VO > Little tickler down the hill at 17 for par, right in the center.

VO > Stewart Cink would birdie 17 and then Zach Johnson gave himself a nice cushion with this birdie at 18.

VO > Beautiful tee shot, 365 yard drive, little wedge underneath the hole. The capper.

VO > That got him a 19 under par. And it would force Stewart Cink to have to hold his second shot at 18, which he was not able to do. So Zach Johnson picks up his fourth win on the PGA TOUR Champions in his rookie season. Two shots over Stewart Cink, four better than Padraig Harrington. Good week for Justin Leonard with that 65 in the final round, he

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gets a top ten but Zach Johnson picks up the victory. He is our champion. Let's hear what he had to say.

OC / VO > Today was really solid. There was a few nice par putts, I'm not going to lie. However, again, I put myself in a place where the big number was eliminated, especially after my start. The front nine, I made no mistakes. I actually probably left 1 or 2 out there. So it was, it was a solid day. This place is special. I mean, right off the bat you can tell like this is easy to come to, it's really difficult to leave. And I mean that sincerely. The other, the other sentiment that hit me pretty hard is like, gosh I wish I had my wife here and my kids, but specifically my wife, because she would have loved it. It's relaxed, weather's great, the hospitality, the accommodations, the food, the options. It's, it's got it all.

VO > Zach Johnson's brilliant final round continues his incremental climb toward the top of the Charles Schwab standings, inching closer to seasoned leader Stewart Cink. Harrington, Weekley and now Goosen round out the top five. This continues to be an exciting race to the finish in Phoenix, closing out July with month long fireworks. Stewart Cink remains the season leader as he leaves Portugal with a third runner up finish this season. He also sees Zach Johnson catch him for most wins in 2026 with four.

OC > I think Zach is just playing so good right now that he's firing on all cylinders and he's just going to be hard to beat for the rest of the year and for a long time. But, you know, I've built myself a little bit of a lead in the Schwab Cup standings, so I'm going to have to keep on playing well.

VO > As for Tim O'Neil squarely in the mix during his 13 under finish, good for fourth, his best effort of the season and boosting him into the top 30 in the season standings as he gifts himself the day before his 54th birthday.

VO / OC > I've been playing solid the past few weeks. Except the first round in Scotland, but other than that, been playing pretty good. Yes, I love Portugal, loved the golf course and happy to, to play well here because it is unbelievable here.

VO > The architect of the redesigned Els Club Vilamoura, is, of course, World Golf Hall of Famer Ernie Els, who also served as tournament post and in this case, tour guide as learning center tagged along with the Big Easy on Friday's opening round. Who better to navigate for us than the man who drew it up? Here's Ernie on the mic.

OC > Hello. How are you doing? How are you? Good to see you. (Inaudible words) You guys driving? I might do the back nine. I'm going to do to the back. I felt a little 16 yesterday. I was speeding it a bit. Today's a little warmer. Good swing.

OC > Please welcome from South Africa, World Golf Hall of Fame member Ernie Els.

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OC > Far left. Nice spot. Thank you. Keep trying to hit the fade, it ain't happening. Geez. Actually went left. I might have to take some bunkers out of here, feel uncomfortable on this tee shot. Geez. I'm my biggest critic, so it's easy to criticize things, but I think it turned out fantastic. I mean it's, it's going to challenge you. If you hit quality shots, you're going to be rewarded and I think that's what every golfer wants. You know at our age to play in a foreign country, you know, in a tournament run like this, I think everybody's pretty grateful and happy. Thank you. Yeah. 200 front.

OC > It'll be about 234, or 222.

OC > Unbelievable lie. You get a lie like that after that drive, you got to take advantage. I almost did. Yeah, I jumped a little bit. Go. Thanks. Thank you. Thank you. Thanks.

OC > Birdie.

OC > Thanks. It's not very clean, but it's four.

VO > As Padraig Harrington continues to build his golf legacy on PGA TOUR Champions, it was announced last week that Paddy will also serve as vice captain for European captain Luke Donald at the 2027 Ryder Cup. The upcoming event will be played in September of '27, in Limerick, Ireland. Harrington is a past Ryder Cup captain, represented Europe six times as a participant and was a player in the only previous Ryder Cup to be played in his home country back in 2006.

OC / VO > It's brilliant to be vice captain on Luke's team in Ireland. I certainly wouldn't want to miss out on the Ryder Cup in Ireland in that sense, so being part of the team, it's going to be fabulous. Hopefully I can help, but I do think Luke has all his ducks in the line as it is. So, you know, from what I've seen when he was vice captain for me, when I was vice captain with him, he knows his stuff, so hopefully I'll be helpful, but I think he has it under control. Ryder Cup is, is huge for us in Europe and having one in Ireland is incredibly special. It's a huge, big deal in Ireland and to be part of it, obviously I played in 2006 when it was at the K club. There is one of the most phenomenal places in the world of golf. The Ryder Cup there is going to be just as good as it's ever been. So, you know, to be part of it, it's something special to be part of it in Ireland and with the fans, the home fans, even the traveling fans, it's going to be a festival. But as a vice captain now, I have to do some work and make sure it's a successful one for team Europe.

VO > When Learning center returns, pre-tournament prep work. Getting to know the intricacies of a new layout. A top-level caddie takes us through the paces in Portugal. And you think Scottie Scheffler has some fancy footwork? Check out Nottingham Forest as Premier League players take on a new sport. Hint, scoring is difficult in this sport as well.

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VO > The Els Club Vilamoura promised to test the legends in their first go around here. It played over 7300 yards to a par 72, and that's longer than many courses on this tour. We went to the reviews section to check out what the players thought of competing here in the inaugural event.

OC > Look around, right? I think the place is beautiful. The weather is spectacular. Like the climate, like the nice breeze.

OC > Well, I love the fresh air. You can smell the ocean, so it makes me happy.

OC > This is a place where, I think today, it's you know, you can hear it. It's blowing. But I think this is very normal. I don't think this is anything out of the ordinary.

OC > It's pretty tough. Some spots out there, you know, the par fives aren't easy. They're not all, all reachable in two. And a couple good par threes. It's in perfect shape.

OC > Finishing up the first nine here, the front nine. Got to see the back nine last year for the opening. Quite impressed. I've heard wonderful things and it's living up to it. It has a wonderful look to it so it's just excited to be here.

OC > I like the way Ernie has done the greens. These are sections of greens with some decent amount of slope on them, but he doesn't have a 4 to 6ft mound separating those. It's just another slope going the other direction, you know, and then you've got your flat spot. So I like the strategic runoffs that he has. I just really like the way that type of section greens flow.

OC > Trajectory control, hitting the middle of the face, all of those things are going to be paramount, which I think is a really good test. I think it should separate the field. Those that play the best should, should rise to the top. And that's usually what you want, right?

OC > Ernie looks like he's done a pretty good job around here. I'm looking forward to playing it all week.

OC > When Ernie does something, I'm going to be there.

OC > Looks very, very good. You know, very reasonably generous off the tee. And the greens are playable, they're not crazy humps and slopes. So I think he's done a wonderful job. Congrats to him and the whole team.

VO > Stewart Cink is the Charles Schwab Cup TOUR money leader. He has four wins, two of them majors. And behind his power and precision is a strategy as paired with his partner. Cink's caddie Chris Jones shows us how he scouts a brand new course, and some of the most difficult aspects don't involve what happens between holes one and 18.

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VO / OC > Knowing how far the travel is from the hotel to the course number one, so that I'm not rushing or being late to meet him. Number two, getting the lay of the land of the hotel and resort. At a place like this, it seems like it's a pretty big property and stuffs spread out. So knowing where bag storage is, where the locker room is, first tee, 10 tee, range, figuring that out, getting the lay of the land. And then the third thing would be just getting the course done and getting out and, getting out here ahead of him so that when he says, let's go play, if he says let's go play the back, I've seen it. And if he says let's go start on number five, I'm ready. So that's probably the hardest thing. Short bunker near the green. It's 33 from the front. The middle of it, that'll be our target for his tee ball that carries around 290 or 295. Which isn't really the best spot because it's super narrow and tight. So it's going to bring in both bunkers. So there's a possibility we bring in both bunkers and just risk it and play out of the bunkers if we missed the fairway or hit a three wood back to the fatter part of the fairway and let it run out to here, as opposed to landing something up in here in the tight zone. But a new course, never been to, for me I do a lot of extra stuff. Stewart's very particular on what he wants, and I am too, because I have OCD. It takes me somewhere between 6 and 7 hours sometimes to do everything between tee to fairway on a par five, lay up and then mapping the greens. So most weeks, if we played there, it's going to take me 2.5 to 3.5 hours to get around real quick and make sure everything's in the right spot and nothing's changed. If it's a brand new course, like last week was ridiculous. At the Open Championship, we had these blind tee shots over humps and blind second shots, and it took me over seven hours. Now I'm just starting here today in Vilamoura Els Club and it's a lot different. I think it's going to take me like about three hours to do this side today, and another three to do the other side tomorrow.

VO > Beyond golf, the Algarve region in Portugal is a wonderful place to explore, from the spectacular beaches to sea caves and of course the coastal towns. As players competed on the course, the tournament included activities for spouses. Wives soaked in some local attractions, including Wednesday's itinerary, shopping in some of the boutique shops at Quinto Galago and lunch at Tide Beach Club.

VO / OC > I wanted always to do two things with the women. I wanted one day to be a little bit more cultural, for them to see something about Portugal, what Portugal is known for. And both days we have been to have amazing lunches, which definitely is what Portugal in my mind is known for. I love my food and I love Portuguese food. I wanted to show them that, I think we managed to do that. We put in a little bit of retail therapy for them, give back to the Portuguese economy. We saw a lot of the countryside, we took them to Lagos, which was lovely. You know, and there's so much to do that two days really isn't enough to do it in. So I look forward to do new things next year with them and every year build on what we've

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done and show them a little bit more. But we're lucky. We're in a really beautiful area here in Portugal and so much to see right around the corner from us.

VO > Still to come on learning center, something is afoot in Portugal. Alex Cejka bounces some swing thoughts off Premier League soccer players and we'll kick that around next

OC > No you're useless, stay with soccer.

VO > Isn't it great when athletes from different sports cross paths? In this case, Nottingham Forest Soccer of the Premier League held pre-season training camp in Portugal. As such, some players hit the golf course for instruction from Alex Cejka and in return, they return the favor. The beautiful game meets the impossible game.

OC > Let's wack a few. Come on, boys, come on. I want to see what you guys have. Can we have one more? Let's, let's go over here. What do you want? You want a wedge or something?

OC > Anything.

OC > Show me what you got. Come on. Who's, so you're the best?

OC > (Inaudible words)

OC > You're good too?

OC > I play.

OC > There's a lot, there's a few better on the team.

OC > Really?

OC > Yeah. We're not the best of the team, but.

OC > All right, let's, let's see what you got.

OC > Windy, isn't it?

OC > Well, you guys should be used to it from the island, it's always blowing. Yeah, because watch this. I'm not even trying, I'm going to show you. I'm not trying to smash it, I'm literally just trying to... You see? No effort, and it's still going fine. You don't need to, like, trying to smash it, right? Like the amateurs have the feeling, especially the longer the club, I need to smash it so hard. I'm literally not, watch, I'm not even going to put an effort into it and the ball still goes. That's why you have different clubs, right? That's why you have a five iron and four iron whatever, wedge or whatever. So.

OC > I feel like I'm, if I slow it down I'm losing...

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OC > No, you're not losing anything. If the technique is right... you're tall enough, you have the physics, the big arc and everything. You don't need to smash it, you're long enough. I can already see it, you, you have enough speed because you're athletic. No, you're useless, stay with soccer. Show me what you got. Come on. This is like, come on. Just stay... Yeah, that's not bad. That's not bad. You got it in the air. Here we go. Look at this. It's actually better than you. What happened? Come on, show me what you got. Come on. I think I'll call you the Messi of, of today's session. And now we're going to negotiate a new contract here. Cejka number seven, it's changing. I'm going to show him a logo. I want me to tell you immediately what team that is, yeah? If he knows.

OC > Frankfurt.

OC > Oh, here we go. Look at this. Frankfurt, baby. Yeah. We should have picked like, Miguel who's, who's, who's a World Cup obviously with Spain, you know. You know, my first touch used to be good, but...

OC > Go to any of the games this year?

OC > No. No, I haven't been in a, in a long time, but...downwind, downwind, you know. But you see the difference here? You see, I can't even juggle the ball twice and the boys, like the boys can do it like ten minutes in a row, so. But yeah, that's good. Look at this, look at, look at those skills. Look at this, look at this. Film this, film this. Look. Look what? Look at this, look at this. Put it up there, yeah look at this. Yeah, it's a little bit windy, but look at this. Isn't that gorgeous? Wow, that is pretty impressive. I can't even do it with a club. You are defender. See, I'm like, I'm happy if I can do it with a club, like, three times. I mean, look at this. I mean like very similar, you with the ball and I can do it a little bit like this, but it's obviously... you know.

OC > Let me see if I can do that.

OC > Well you can't, come on, try it. Here we go. You got it all. Look at that. That's pretty, that's pretty multitallented.

OC > I just call it a ball.

OC > Oh yeah. Is that for me? Oh, really? Oh, yeah. Okay. It's a little bit tight, and I got to suck that tummy in a little bit, you know? Well, thank you very much. I'm going to swap jerseys, you know. So thank you. Thank you boys and good luck.

VO > From footy to our next step, Seattle and the Boeing Classic where a year ago Steve Allan came from four strokes back with a bogey free final round 65 nipping Stewart Cink by one. It was Allan's third win on TOUR and landed him the trophy and the distinctive bomber jacket, which also goes to the winner. And of course, Learning Center will be there to guide

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you through the Pacific Northwest. Until then, thank you once again for watching. I'm Vince Cellini. Congratulations to the inaugural Portugal Invitational Champion.