

PGA Tour Champions Learning Center Show #24

VO > PGA Tour Champions Learning Center.

VO / OC > It was a change of scenery, yet remained golf among friends, Constellation, Furyk and Friends. This always enjoyable PGA Tour Champions experience moved to Palm Coast, Florida and the Ocean Course at Hammock Beach. New venue, same fantastic event. Hi everyone and welcome to this edition of PGA Tour Champions Learning Center. I'm Vince Cellini and hard to believe, but we reached the penultimate event on this tour regular season.

The sixth playing of the constellation, Furyk and Friends, where the players battled one another, also battled Mother Nature trying to get the win and increase playoff positioning. Now we'll have more on the ladder in just a minute. But first, a recap from the men who call the action John Swantek and Peter Jacobsen.

OC > Okay. Thank you Vince. What a week it was for the sixth edition of the Constellation Furyk and Friends. The ocean course at the Hammock Beach Resort was a winner, was a dramatic backdrop and a conclusion to the event as well. Jake, 54 holes. Not quite enough to decide the champion.

OC > Well, pretty impressive play coming down the stretch from Vaughn Taylor. Five birdies in a row. He's a PGA Tour champion, Ryder Cup player. He's got the experience and he turned it on at the exact right time.

OC / VO > It was Vaughn Taylor and Alex Cejka in the sudden death. They were tied after 54 holes of regulation. Cejka had a brilliant Sunday, that was to grab a share of the lead.

VO > It was interesting. He had a couple of putts this length that he missed, but he came to 18, hit a beautiful second shot and at that time that putt we thought was going to get him maybe third or fourth place. But it didn't turn out that way.

VO > It was a 65 for Cejka. Vaughn Taylor went bananas on the back nine, birdied his first five holes after the turn.

VO > He's got such a beautiful swing, great rhythm, great action. Makes birdie right there and he follows it up. This was a hard hole today. The wind switched. So 13 was playing as one of the most difficult on the course. But no problem for Vaughn.

VO > He grabbed the outright lead with that birdie at 13. Then at 14 the par five here.

VO > Laid it up to a full wedge. Took advantage to about four feet.

VO > Made birdie there as well. He was stacking them up. He made par at 18 in regulation. They went back to the tee box to start a sudden death playoff. They both made par on the first hole of the playoff. And then at the second. How about this gem from Taylor.

VO > Yeah he knew it. The minute he hit it, it looked like it was going in from the fairway just to about 6 or 7 feet left for birdie.

VO > And after Cejka could not convert for birdie, Vaughn Taylor did and his 18th Champions Tour start. He is a winner for the first time.

VO > You knew it was simply a matter of time for a player with that type of skill level. Vaughn Taylor, he belongs out here. He's going to win many more.

VO > Taylor outlasts Cejka in sudden death to win in Palm Coast, Florida. Let's hear from the champion.

OC > I can't believe it, to be honest. It's, it's been a dream. I didn't know if it was going to happen. I don't know what the beginning of the year looked like. Just been trying to, you know, go day to day, week to week. And, it just means a world. It's, you know, I can't believe it. Honestly I'm shocked right now.

VO > Congratulations to Vaughn Taylor, who bumps to 21 in the Charles Schwab Cup standings. While less than 500,000 separate leaders Stewart Sink and Zach Johnson. dangerous Steven Alker lurking in third. One more week to make an overall move in the season long race. The constellation Furyk and Friends marked Ryan Palmer's PGA Tour Champions debut after more than two decades building a career on the PGA tour.

VO > Here's the rookie. Ryan Palmer, talked to him the other night, and he's really excited about coming out and playing.

VO> Now at 50, the four time winner begins a second act in the sport. Palmer may be a rookie out here, but he arrives with a field full of old friends and months of anticipation behind him.

OC > I got called the rookie twice this morning already. So yeah, I guess I am a rookie. So, pretty funny. 24, 24 years later, you can be another rookie. So, But yeah, it's exciting. I'm anxious to see a lot more guys that I've known for so long and and just enjoy.

VO > The sales pitch from those friends has been simple. The atmosphere is lighter and the fun returns. But Palmer knows that doesn't make for an easy road. Once the ball is in the air, the competition is as real as ever.

VO / OC > Every one of them said, you're about to have so much fun. That's all this is, stress free golf. They all enjoy it. Just the fun. I mean, it's competitive as can be. I talked to guys about that

part. They say it's still competitive as you want, but guys have fun and it's just a nice way of hitting in your career of playing this game. But you got some years left, which is fun.

VO > Palmer isn't looking at PGA Tour Champions as a farewell tour. He sees it as a reset, a chance to reconnect with his generation and make a fresh, competitive start at 50. With his full time PGA Tour days now largely behind him.

VO / OC > No, I'm done. I'll play 1 or 2 out there. I'm a member at Colonial, so playing at home at Colonial again. Apart from the last time, the 24 years at that tournament. So and maybe Byron Nelson, we'll see. But other than that, that's it. This is going to be full time for me out here.

VO > With the 2026 regular season already near the finish line, Palmer has only a short runway to get settled before his first full campaign, and that begins in January at the Sony Championship in Hawaii back at Waialae, where Palmer won in 2010.

VO > Ryan Palmer with two wins.

VO > And it all happened so quickly. Well done young man.

VO / OC > I love starting the year there for 23 years. I mean, it was the best start of the year for me. I love getting there, the folks there. Waialae Country Club, I've always enjoyed being back there. So the fact that it's the first time next year, that's going to be a special. I'm excited about it.

VO > When Learning Center returns, an in-depth chat with tournament host Jim Furyk, his event, his playing status, insight into his strategy as U.S. captain at the 27 Ryder Cup, and more. Furyk: Unplugged next.

VO > Jim Furyk built a playing career on grit and determination. A stoic figure on the course, he carved out a resume that made him a winner on every level. College, PGA Tour and PGA Tour Champions. He's branched out as a tournament host, television analyst because of this guy right here, Jim, and soon U.S. Ryder Cup Captain again, subjects he touched upon prior to the Constellation Furyk and Friends.

OC > Well, Jim Furyk is many things. He's the U.S. Ryder Cup captain, 17 time winner on PGA Tour, major champion, also the author of a 58. The only one of those on the PGA Tour but for all intents and purposes, start our interview, Jim. You're also the tournament host of Constellation, Furyk and Friends, along with wife Tabitha. And I wonder on this amazing resume, how much does that mean to put your name on a tournament and all the charity work that you've done?

OC / VO > It's a bit of a pinch me like moment. I mean, growing up and, you know, watching PGA tour events that were hosted by players, you're looking at Jack Nicklaus at the Memorial, Arnold Palmer at Bay Hill, now Tiger Woods. So it really is a pinch me like moment. My, my good buddies Davis Love, you know hosting a PGA Tour event, RSM up in Sea Island, Steve Stricker the AM fam in Wisconsin. But it's very rare and I think Tabitha and I feel so proud that, you know, we can have

our name on this event and ultimately get a lot of our folks to come in to Northeast Florida, entertain the fans, kind of bond the community together. At the end of the day, we're going to raise a lot of money for charity and help a lot of wonderful organizations.

OC > So at 56, where are you as a player? Where do you consider yourself? I know you've had some injuries you've dealt with as well. You still have that desire. You still have that burning fire.

OC / VO > Yeah, I have the desire. I'm not sure my body does, if that makes sense. But, you know, I've only played I haven't played that much, as everyone knows, I've played one event in 2025, one event this year in 26. I had a hip injury. It took me a little while to diagnose it, and because of that, without my hip kind of functioning properly, I put a lot of stress on my lower back. So now I've had the hip replaced. It feels pretty good, but my lower backs bothering me quite a bit. I've got some disc issues and you know, my everyday life was great. Get out of bed, I feel super, but

if I play golf three, four, five, six days in a row, that starts to change. And so I'm excited about where I'm at. I wake up every morning with a full plate and, and I think that's important, right? You wake up, I've got a purpose and a motive every morning. And I'm not saying I'm retired, but I haven't been playing a lot of golf and I don't see anything immediately in the future. But the opportunity to come back and play the Champions Tour is always there if I start to feel good.

OC / VO > All right, let's jump into a couple of those things. First of all, the Ryder Cup 27 in Ireland. I know you just had the press conference and you know better than anyone what's ahead for the U.S. team. Been over three decades since winning on foreign soil, European soil, the foursomes issue that you said you're going to address, there going to be some changes involved. So this is the big reveal, Jim. Now you can completely put your strategy on the table for us. What's coming for the U.S. team, what are we talking about?

OC / VO > I mean, we were just talking football, I don't think I don't you know, you're a Browns fan. Deshaun Watson as well as he's played this year. He doesn't walk into an interview and just tell you, lay out the you know. The game plan's the game plan for the week. So I'm not necessarily sure, I think I talked a lot about it at the presser though in Ireland. We have we have so much talent each and every year. We're not putting it together very well. I think a top to bottom that's organizationally that's on the captains, that's on the players. And what I talked a lot about is the preparation. I don't think we're preparing, especially for the alternate shot. When I started playing the Ryder Cup the US had, that was our strength, playing the alternate shot, playing for since we felt like that was and the statistically it shows we were we were superior in that at the time. The last four sessions, we did very well in 2021 at Whistling Straits in the alternate shot, and since then it's been a glaring weakness. 8 and 26 for the last 34 matches. A lot of it, I think, is the preparation, how we're getting ready for those matches. As captains, we have to put those players in good positions and good pairings, but I think we also have to have them prepare better for those matches. And, you know, you'll look at if I just look at the last two Presidents Cups, let's take the Ryder Cup out for a second. We go 0-5 on Thursday, then we go 3-1 on Saturday. This last one 0-5 on Thursday, 2-2 on Saturday. It's like we're not ready for that.

That first session and that 0-5 is, it's unacceptable from top to bottom. And so, something we're going to key on, we're going to work on this year. We have, we have 12 months. And, and I said at the presser, we'll be ready to go. We'll be prepared and we'll let that talent go out there. And hopefully they can showcase it.

OC / VO > All right. Moving on to the Golf Channel and some of the coverage here. You move to the dark side of the media. You know you're one of us. But where do you get your style and what you want to convey information wise to viewers?

OC / VO > I think I'm still getting a little comfortable with that. I'm not sure I necessarily have a style yet. I. I guess at the end of the day, I, I don't mean this in a bad way. I played so much golf. I didn't watch a lot of it on television. You know, I always would want to run back and see the end of the Masters or run back and see the end of major championships, but I played so much, I didn't watch a ton of it on TV. So really, I guess I'm just trying to be myself, you know, prepare for the golf course. I was always a hard worker. I was always very prepared. I knew exactly how I wanted to break down and attack a golf course. The hard part for me now was watching guys hit 330 yards in the air and trying to imagine how you're going to attack from that perspective. That wasn't my game. But really, I just, you know, my idea is really to kind of just, you know, land it 30 years of experience and major championships and golf all around the world and kind of just talk about it the way I normally would, be myself, have some fun. And I think, you know, I was always so stoic when I played. That was the way I felt like I needed to be. I didn't smile a lot. I didn't fist pump. There wasn't a ton of flair. It was kind of a blue collar, let's go to work type of attitude. But I think, you know, my friends at home know me as being a little sarcastic. You know, I like to jab, I like to have a little fun. And I'm kind of hoping a little bit more of that fun comes out on television. Enjoying ourselves, having some fun, laughing.

OC > Cookie. First time we've worked together, I've really enjoyed it and I appreciate you having me on with you.

OC > Any time. We'll do it again tomorrow.

OC > It's a great group of folks to work with and they all have so much experience. So they've helped me out a lot and kind of, well, I guess they're going to help me form kind of my style here going forward.

OC / VO > Well, we're looking forward to it. Just be you. That's that is a good self advice. And lastly, Jim, the nominees came out for the World Golf Hall of Fame to be announced in July of 27. What would that mean to you to be in the World Golf Hall of Fame? You know, this kid from West Chester, Pennsylvania, with the unusual swing and, you know, this journey that you've been on in golf?

OC / VO > Yeah. Again, I'd kind of go, you know, pinch me type moment. I wasn't a a thought when I was a kid and practicing and pretending to be Jack Nicklaus and having an eight footer to win the U.S. Open, you know, the Hall of Fame was probably the farthest from my mind, I think

leaving the University of Arizona, you know, we had a wonderful team. We won the national championship. I wasn't that can't miss kid. I wasn't the one that was expected to kind of go on and have a successful PGA Tour career. I laid it all on the line for about 30 years. I squeezed every ounce out of it. Surely there were some misses. There's some moments that I just, you know, still bite me that, you know, wins, that I think that I could have, could have attained. But I laid it all out there. I poured my heart on the golf course for 30 years and gave it everything I got. And and hopefully that all works out.

OC > Yeah, it's an amazing career and it continues. Thanks, Jim. Great to see you.

VO > On a risk reward. Par five. The right play isn't always the boldest one. During his practice round Tag Ridings walked us through the decision when to attack the green in two and went to lay up. And which strategy gives him the best chance to score over the course of a tournament.
OC > So 308 to the last bunker on the right there, the far left one.

OC > Little hurt up there, but we do have a chance to go with this green at two. We've got to hit a pretty impressive drive. Being that [inaudible] green. So and that line is up the left side just right of that bunker. And might as well send it.

OC > Absolutely.

OC > That's Florida. Long carry, no rolls. That was right. That was what we got to do. Take four of those maybe only three. All right. So we got 209. Right okay. It's awfully tempting from here isn't it.

OC > It is, at 209, it is. 225 fold. We got a little fan in. Rusty four. And it's hard not to pull at this point, but it doesn't quite get back there.

OC > No, but it does get into the green.

OC > So it's an option to go super trusty. But let's go for plus and try to make it look cool on TV. 125 should be playing 135. How about trusty four iron?

OC > What would you do different Friday that you've seen this.

OC > Lay up. Yeah, yeah. And I had looked at it online and told and had the, the idea if that's probably the right play. If you play this hole three times and you lay up three times, you're making one and a half birdies, you know, and if you go for this thing three times and make six once, you can't catch up to one and a half birdies. You know, you've missed a number right there.

OC > Fanny wants me to hit four iron, doesn't he? Oh, I got there in two. This club's been pretty trusty. Make two birdies with it last week. All right. So the hardest shot you get here is you know you're in between wedges. You got to control the spin. Which kind of worked out fine because I'm taking a gap wedge which is 125 yard club down to 112. I'm flying it probably 118. It's taking five

yards off of it. I mean it hopefully doesn't spin as much. And there's a tear in this green. So it does give you that little desire to do the second shot at it. But good, good wedge. You should have a look.

OC > There's a putt on it. There's a putting contest. If you ain't putting, you're not winning. Four iron about, you know, seven feet away. But here's a good wedge shot. Got a great look. Grain's going a little bit left up hill into the grain pulling it that way. So once I get that I can just add that into my read. And no pressure. I got a good looking birdie. Grain is strong. The force is strong with this one here. We gotta go for two now.

OC > But you won't.

OC > Very unlikely. Has to be no more than four iron we love. But typically I would rate it to five iron six iron type of green that you want to go out into. It's really just, the soft helps. But it's an island and there's no miss. So you know you don't want to be more than five iron in here really. It's a great hole.

VO > Still to come on Learning Center. A look at our final event of the regular season. It's off to Cary North Carolina and the SAS Championship, where defending champion Alex Cejka tells us why his win was so important on several levels. Alex relives his special day.

VO > This week the 2026 PGA Tour Champions regular season ends with a SAS championship at Prestonwood Country Club in Cary, North Carolina. A fabulous jumping off point for postseason, this tournament has passed champions like Fred Couples, Ernie Els and Bernhard Langer. A year ago, the winner survived a pressure cooker Sunday that included brutal weather conditions. Prior to 2025, the average winning score was 16 under. Alex Cejka grinded his way to a nine under finish in windy, rainy conditions with birdies on his final two holes to post a final round 71, earning his fourth PGA Tour Champions victory and first three round non-major. Cejka recalls that special Sunday and why it was so meaningful on so many levels.

VO / OC > It was very emotional for me. We play every week out here. We got really, really great players. It's tough to play really good. Maybe finished up three. Winning a tournament was pretty special, you know, especially out of three reasons. First of all, it was a three day event I was leading in the past couple of times. I was in the final group and never pulled it off.

I was kind of finished third and fourth, whatever. Winning a three day tournament like for the first time for me. Second, playing with Bernhard in the last group, you know, he's my idol, playing with him. That was really something special and I'm glad that he did. And the third one was, you know, that was kind of the last tournament to qualify for the for the Team World Cup event.

And I just wanted to make the team for Darren. And I don't know if you guys remember when it was raining. It was bad weather. So we all know when you play golf on a tough golf course in bad weather, a three four over is very easy to do, right? So and I had a lot of great players behind me who made a run, so I had to really play well and I'm just glad I did it.

VO > Alex Cejka defends this week at the SAS Championship, the last chance to earn your way into the top 72 in the standings and a spot in the playoffs. Postseason starts at historic Norwood

Hills Country Club in Saint Louis with the opening event, the Stiefel Charity classic. Then it's a return to Arkansas and the Simmons Bank Championship at Pleasant Valley Country Club. The top 36 will make their way to Phoenix for the four-day Charles Schwab Championship, which culminates the 2026 campaign. In short, everything is on the line for this season and next. And Learning Center takes you every step of the way. Farewell from the Constellation Furyk and Friends. I'm Vince Cellini, we'll see you next time right alongside the legends.