

**SBS Championship
The Plantation Course at Kapalua
Kapalua, Maui, HI**

January 6, 2010

INTERVIEW OF STEVE STRICKER

JOHN BUSH: We would like to welcome Steve Stricker into the interview room at the SBS Championship. Steve, just coming off of a phenomenal year last year, three wins, and a career win for you. You are here in Kapalua, let's get your comments . Look back onto last year for us and comment on your preparations for this week?

STEVE STRICKER: It was obviously a lot of fun last year, a lot of things went my way. It was a great year. To top it all off at the President's Cup playing with Tiger and the team winning there. And obviously to be here to start the year is always a nice treat. It's a great way, I feel like, to start your year off. You know, it's a quick turnaround it seems like from last year, but obviously great to be here. You would like to be here every year.

JOHN BUSH: Questions?

Q. There was an interesting stat from the week that only seven guys from the field were here last year, do you find that interesting at all?

STEVE STRICKER: Yes. Somewhat interesting, but the depth of our TOUR is so strong that I can see that happening, I guess. But you know, if a couple of the other guys come, if Tiger comes and Phil comes, that number goes up.

Q. It goes up to 9.

STEVE STRICKER: Is there anybody else? No. But it just shows the depth of our TOUR, is what that means, and there is a lot of guys that are capable of winning each week and guys that are coming out strong from the Nationwide Tour and coming out with a lot of confidence, and I think that's what that shows. It's just tough to win out here in general.

Q. With Tiger out indefinitely, it would seem to open things up for guys that had good years that were somewhere near No. 1 in the world, do you feel like it actually puts No. 1 in the world in play?

STEVE STRICKER: You know I hadn't really thought about it. I suppose if he is out. Phil almost caught him last year. If Phil would have won one of those events I know he would have caught him. Yes, if he stays out for a while I think it definitely is in play. Are guys worried about that? I wouldn't think so. At least I am, I am focused on coming out here this week and trying to play well here this week.

All of those things take care of themselves, if you come out and play well. You know, to focus on something like that, I don't think anybody is doing.

When a guy comes here to play, he is worried about teeing it up that first round and trying to play well. All of those ancillary things come with playing well.

Q. It's good to look back a year ago. We have four guys win Majors who are outside of the Top-30, the first time that ever happened, guys like Vijay, Jim, Padraig, Anthony Kim, who didn't win at all. Not to throw you in the mix, but you had three wins most of your career, which would you find most surprising of all of the things that happened last year?

STEVE STRICKER: Out of what you just said?

Q. Yes.

STEVE STRICKER: You mentioned them all. I would say like Vijay and Furyk, Anthony Kim, guys like take that that didn't win, that they're not here. Padraig, you put in there, too. That to me, that group is, I think the most shocking. I think that someone out of that group didn't win.

Vijay has been such a staple here at this event and winning each year, I think that's a shock, too. He was battling some injuries last year, I know. Golf is a game of cycles. I'm testament to that. There is up years and there is down years. Those guys in the group that you mentioned may come out firing this year and win a lot of events. It's just the nature of the game and again it goes back to the strength of this TOUR and the depth of The TOUR. But, yes, I think that's the most shocking. I thought of Vijay, because a couple of years ago I was here. It came to mind that he wasn't here. How many years in a row was he here?

Q. Probably eight or nine.

STEVE STRICKER: I thought the same thing this week.

Q. When you factor in that, kind of what Larry mentioned a minute ago, as you look to 10, it seems beyond the number one ranking that anything can happen this year. Do you get that sense more than other years that this could be wide open?

STEVE STRICKER: This could be wide open. I have a feeling Tiger will be back. He doesn't need many events to get back to the top spot whether it be in the FedExCup or whatever, Money List or whatever. You never know. He could be out the whole year. I hope that he's back sooner than later. But it does have that feel to start the season, it's wide open. You know, Phil is going to be there obviously. I expect Vijay to come back and win again and play well. He will be healthy, I'm sure.

Q. What do you expect out of yourself?

STEVE STRICKER: I expect a lot, a lot from last year, keep it rolling. I feel like I haven't really lost a beat. I feel like I'm still doing the same things that I ended the year on. I gained a lot of confidence again from last year.

The President's Cup was really a good test for me, I think, whether I could handle that pressure and that situation. So I feel comfortable. I feel relaxed. I feel like I was rested. I had enough time at home. I feel like my swing is feeling pretty good for not playing. So hopefully we get off to a good start and we'll see what happens. For me it's just taking it one day at a time, one hole, one shot at a time.

Q. Coming into a year, I guess previously you didn't necessarily have expectations, you want to just play as well as you could play. There has to be a point where you start having expectations of what you wanted to do during the year. When did that start and what kind of expectations do you have for this year?

STEVE STRICKER: Well, I think the last couple of years I have had higher expectations. But I've always tried to not get ahead of myself. I learned back in college, I would win some tournaments and try to go to a tournament and like, I'm going to win this one. You put that emphasis on winning. That is a direct correlation to failing. I guess you put so much emphasis on winning that your expectations are so high and your patience is very low at that point when you are putting that emphasis on winning.

So I learned a long time ago that I can't go and expect to win or expect to play good. I can expect to play good, I guess, but not put so much pressure on myself that I have to play good and just take it as it comes and do what I do. Continue to take each hole and each shot at a time. I always try not to get too far ahead and look ahead, but this year, you know, again, I expect to go out and play well. I think that's different from maybe three or four years ago when I wasn't sure I was going to play well. I go out there the last few years expecting to play well and shoot good scores.

Q. To follow up, not that you're 50 years old, obviously you are getting older, and your chances of doing certain things in the game are dwindling is the best way to put it, do you put an emphasis on some of those situations?

STEVE STRICKER: You know, I haven't thought about it too much that I'm getting older. I feel like the best golf is coming and has

been the last year or two, and I still feel like I have room to grow. I feel like even last year I grew as a player. So I still feel like I'm learning and continuing to do good things.

My attitude has been so good the last few years, and that's what I really want to make sure that I continue to do well is keep my attitude the way it's been and not get too down when I hit a bad shot and not get too high when I hit a good shot and keep that even keel going. That's my goal. Each week is coming out to play well and keep a good attitude about it all.

Q. Steve, is there anything significant that helped you to improve your attitude a couple of years back or was it a combination of things?

STEVE STRICKER: I think a combination of things playing well. My confidence level being higher, I think. You know I can shrug off a bad shot because I feel like I'm going to hit a good one the next time. I guess when you have no confidence, when I was at that point, where I had very little confidence, you know, when you hit a bad shot it kind of just brought you down for the whole round which leads to poor play.

So now that I have a lot more confidence, I can shrug off those bad shots, and I have seen every bad shot there is. I've hit them all. We all have. I just let it slide off my back now, and I hope to continue that. It's easier said than done. But that's been probably the best part of my game over the last two or three years that I've been able to shrug that off and move on.

Q. You have Tiger questions at every tournament you have played since Chevron, what's your best guess the first tournament you play in when you don't get asked about it?

STEVE STRICKER: Even when he is here you get asked about him. I don't mind the questions. Like I say I hope he comes back. We need him out here. We need him out here and THE TOUR wants him out here. Corporate sponsors want him out here. It's got to be on his time when he gets everything right at home. So we need him out here.

Q. This is a real hokey question. Can you explain what it's like getting here for the first time and stepping up on the first tee and just getting ready to go, practice round or whatever?

STEVE STRICKER: For the very first time ever?

Q. Any time you are back here, the first day you are here, stepping on the first tee, that view, looking toward ocean?

STEVE STRICKER: Yes, it's unbelievable. On our way over here, Nicki and I are taking both of our kids over here, travel over here is not easy, especially when you have a couple of kids. Our 3-year-old is the best of all you, you wonder why you are making this trip at some point in time during that long day, but when you get here you realize why you came. It's spectacular. The views, especially when you get up on 17 tee box looking down. We went

whale watching on Monday afternoon. They were right next to the boat, diving under the boat. It's unbelievable. Once you get here you realize why you made the trip and it's a great place to start. That's why we are over here for two weeks. If you are going to make it, you might as well stay here for the couple of weeks and play them both. So we are excited to be here.

Q. I wouldn't think you want to rush back to Milwaukee.

STEVE STRICKER: Yes, get back to the snow.

Q. Did you have any thoughts about expanding the field to include past champions or two years worth type thing, or do you like it the way it is?

STEVE STRICKER: I think it's great the way it is. You know, it's one of the very first things I think about when I win the tournament is that you get to start the year here. Not everybody feels that way. But me personally, it's a great way to start the year.

Then I think if you started including other categories like you are talking about, that diminishes the value of winning. Maybe not depending on what the criteria would be. I just like it the way it is. It gives a guy a little bonus for winning at the end of the year and gets him going starting in the right direction for the new year. It's a great place to start.

Q. You told that great story about Bobbi when she won that tournament and said we are going to go to Hawaii. When you finally got back in '08, and after you won again last year, did she have the same kind of reaction or does it tire on her now?

STEVE STRICKER: No. She did. It doesn't tire on her. We were going to stay in Phoenix one more day before coming over here. She about had a melt down because were going to skip a day here. She loves it here. Now she has my 3-year-old. Before or right after I won, Bobbi says we get to go to Hawaii. My 3-year-old is chiming in, we get to go to Hawaii. She didn't know anything about it. But she knew she was coming over. No, it's great for the kids. They look forward to it. My wife is not a big flier, but once she got here she loves it, too.

JOHN BUSH: Steve, play well this week. Have a great season.

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