

Davis Love III
Press Conference



JOHN BUSH: We'd like to welcome Davis Love III into the interview room at the RBC Heritage, making his 29th start in this tournament. And he is a five-time champion. Welcome back. If we can get some comments.

DAVIS LOVE III: Well, I'm glad to be back. Always fun to come and play here. We've been hearing about the golf course since the hurricane and decided to see what it looked like, and it really, actually, doesn't look that different. It's in excellent condition. Obviously since I've been around here quite a bit, I noticed the trees that are gone, but it doesn't seem to affect the golf course very much. I'm excited to be back playing.

JOHN BUSH: You have been around here quite a bit. Talk about Atlantic Dunes.

DAVIS LOVE III: Yeah, headed over there this afternoon and tomorrow afternoon. The grand opening was the day the hurricane hit, so obviously didn't get to do that. So excited to get over there and see it and talk to the members. I get to play it a little bit. I'm actually staying right on the golf course, very convenient.

Q. Would you mind speaking about Harbour Town Golf Links, and what makes it unique from your perspective?

DAVIS LOVE III: Well, it's obviously one of Pete Dye's, and obviously Jack Nicklaus involved, as well, but one of the classic courses on Tour now. It's always in the top five of everybody's rankings of courses on Tour. It's just stood the test of time without really much adding of length. And always produces great champions. So many of the former champions here have won major championships, and just a great golf course and one that the players always enjoy playing. A lot of strategy, though.

Q. You mentioned the trees down on the course. Do you think it will change your strategy, as you play some of those holes with some of the trees missing?

DAVIS LOVE III: Yeah, it's going to be a little different. I think if I'm the greens superintendent I might be happy the Bermudagrass is going to grow better, not as many shadows.

The biggest difference I saw was like No. 10, so much different looking up the right. We always say in the golf course design business, we have to cut down some trees and build some fairways, to see how many pretty trees there are here. I think there are so many here that unless you played over 30 -- I played a lot of Junior Heritages, too. I've been coming close to -- actually I was here with my dad in I think it was '69 maybe, when I was real little. Been coming here a long time.

And I noticed even over the last few years the older trees might not be as thick or might have cut some limbs out. I know Brian Harman when he got to 17, he said at least one limb is gone, he's a lefty, he didn't like the trees on the left. I never really saw them.

But it's a little different but there's still so many gorgeous trees. I made one comment out there today, if you cut every tree down, it would still be a great golf course because the way Pete makes you hit it closer to the lake on 10, so you can have a better angle on the green, the farther the right the worse your angle is. All of his golf courses are like that. The trees are a little bit of the strategy, maybe on 11 or around the corner on 12, especially 15. The trees have gotten so big in some cases that they might have helped a few holes, cleared them out little bit. But they planted them in the right place and in a few years you wouldn't know the difference.

Q. Is 15 downwind, too, now?

DAVIS LOVE III: I didn't get to 15 today. I cut across at 10 to 16 because I was kind of in a hurry. But I'll get around there tomorrow. I've heard it's a little bit different. But I would doubt it. That's always been a tough one to get to in two.

Q. Are you amazed the strategic trees survived, the one in 16 at the middle and the one at 10 that hangs over and a few of those?

DAVIS LOVE III: I was hoping a few more at 10 were down. A few more at 9. But you hit it right on 10 you're still going to be blocked out. 2, I heard it was -- clear all the way to the green, so I hit it down in the right rough and I was blocked out, so it didn't work.

Again, that's the beauty of the course. I honestly think that if you took down all the trees down the right on 2, the way he built the green, it's not like he was going to

be flying 3, 4-irons on the green and getting it to stop. The back right pin is still the back right pin, no matter if there's a tree there or not. But, so many of them -- the ones that you really needed it seems like on the holes that I played, the 13 holes that I played, they were fine.

Q. Other than that shot in the rough that you mentioned, how do you feel about your game going into Thursday? Are you feeling pretty confident about your game and swing again?

DAVIS LOVE III: I'm getting better. I'm coming off a collarbone injury. And I played Houston, and obviously wasn't in last week. I'm just getting back into the swing of things. I'm rusty, and I'm turning 53 in a few days, so those two don't go so well tomorrow. I played with Brian Harman, and Jack Lumpkin was out watching both of us, he said you're looking fine. Go out and play and have fun.

I've got to get some experience, I think. Really since last June I kind of hurt a little bit, surgery in July on my hip. Played two events, and broke my collarbone. I haven't played much. I'm starting to feel like -- I haven't played in a year almost. So I'm excited to get back. I was playing great at this time last year. I was hitting the ball really, really well. And so hopefully I can get back to doing that now that I'm healthy.

Q. You're kind of a unique, multi-tasker situation this week. How do you balance what you do at Atlanta Dunes and then playing in the tournament?

DAVIS LOVE III: Well, I've been a multi-tasker for the last four or five years. Last week I sat in the CBS booth and practiced in the afternoons. You know me pretty well. I don't sit still very well.

Going over there and spend some time, and unfortunately my brother can't be here this week, but my son-in-law is caddying, so we're going to go over and play little bit. Tomorrow get to hand out at least the awards in the Pro Am over there.

But I'm excited about the golf course, just like everybody else. I would be over there even if they didn't ask me to come over there, I'd be over there hanging out and checking it out.

So many friends -- my former caddie, Jeff Weber, Tom Webber that worked so much for Pete Dye, he helped us build it. We all have a lot invested in it. I always say people aren't going to come up to me and say we don't like your golf course. But it's been an overwhelming, really the last couple of months, and especially the last couple of days being here, people said they liked it. So we're happy.

I can give back something to Sea Pines for all they've

given to me.

Q. What do they like about it?

DAVIS LOVE III: I think it's friendlier, a little more open. But it does look like an oceanside or a seaside golf course now. It's got that style and that look. And it kind of matches what you have here, with the other golf courses. But in look, but it's not -- Pete Dye has his own style, and you've already got a Pete Dye here and a Pete Dye over there at the same clubhouse. So it's a little different look.

I think the members like variety. And I think they'll find it, if they play far enough up, they'll find it a little friendlier. The balls are running over there right now because it's so firm. This course is actually softer than I expected and that one is harder than I expected. So when we get some rain and the course gets a little age on it, I think the members are going to really like it.

Q. How do you prepare for these greens? Smallest greens on Tour. Is there anything you do special to get ready for this week or the course in general?

DAVIS LOVE III: Well, you have to be -- one, you better be chipping and putting good. I think a lot of the lowest putts per round come at this golf course, because, one, because you're missing a bunch of greens. But you have to be really patient. And you have to be really committed to your targets, if you start guiding it and start missing greens. I think I've learned here, pick a good target right in the front of the green, and just hit it. If you're on the green you've got a legitimate chance to make birdie, it's just a matter of being free.

Good ball strikers, you look at either major champions or guys like Boo Weekley that hit a lot of really, good quality golf shots, seem to play well around here. So I'm just looking to be patient, capture some of those good feelings from around here, good memories.

JOHN BUSH: Davis Love, thank you, sir. Thank you for your time.