

# RBC Heritage

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

## Davis Love III

## Dru Love

### Press Conference

JOHN BUSH: We'd like to welcome DAVIS LOVE III and Dru Love with us here at the RBC Heritage. Davis, making your 30th start in this event you haven't been at all 50, but you've been at most of them.

DAVIS LOVE III: I've been at more than I've played. I was here for the first one with my dad. I don't remember much. I was five, I guess. But I remember playing in the marsh mud. And I've been here when I was injured and just came up for a few days to say hello. But, yes, always one of our favorites. Someone asked me last week at the Masters, why did you always play so well at Hilton Head, and not at the Masters? Well, I was pointing to this time of year, and always seemed to play well at Greensboro, PLAYERS or here. But this is always a big start to the season and a start of the majors obviously last week, and always been a favorite place for me, I played the Junior Heritage here, as well. Been coming here for a long time.

JOHN BUSH: Dru is playing this week on a sponsor's exemption. You were five years ago old when Davis won the last of his Heritage titles. Talk about getting the sponsor exemption this week and what that means to you?

DRU LOVE: It means a lot. I'm honored to be here, it's my family's tournament, his favorite, my mom's favorite, sitting by the beach and the pool. And my favorite for watching golf. It's always been a pleasure to come here, and I'm very excited to have a chance to play, get inside the ropes. I felt the same way at home at the RSM, really excited to get inside the ropes there instead of watching, and I'm excited to do the same thing here. I think it's going to be a great week, and hopefully the weather will turn out nice.

JOHN BUSH: Just comment on your state of the game.

DRU LOVE: It's good. Practicing really hard, working really hard. Starting to see some things come together. My putting has been there and my irons haven't. Or my irons have and my putting hasn't. Now it's about time to get things to work together at the same week. And it looks like things are turning up.

JOHN BUSH: And Davis, state of your game coming

into the week?

DAVIS LOVE III: I'm a little rusty from almost four months after from a hip replacement. But I played three in a row before Houston. I didn't play Houston, but I played the three weeks before that and felt like every week I was getting better. And I beat Dru in a putting contest last night, so confidence is high. After he made nine birdies on the golf course, came in and I squeaked out a win on putting green.

But we both have been working maybe too hard on our putting. And not getting the results. My three weeks I played putting was not great. And after about two months where all they would do is let me putt, I should be putting better, but I think the expectations -- he and I are on different ends of the spectrum on expectations. He's trying to get on a hot streak this year and avoid Q-School. I'm trying to get on a hot streak and like Tiger, move from the thousands in the World Rankings back up to the top. But it's the same deal. We're both practicing hard, working hard and just need to free it up a little bit on the golf course with the putter.

**Q. Your dad just said he remembers being here when he was five. What do you remember about the last one when your dad won, did you pray in the marsh as well?**

DRU LOVE: I don't remember the marsh. The last one was 2003, I would have been ten?

DAVIS LOVE III: Yes.

DRU LOVE: The only thing I remember from when I was young was going into that little hospitality house on No. 10 and getting milkshakes. And then catching become up on 12.

I like to think the one I remember most of his wins was TPC in 2003. I think sometimes I get memories from this one and that one mixed up a little bit.

But definitely yesterday on the back nine, going around, first time playing this golf course, after watching it for many years, oh, I remember -- I think I remember when he was over here and hit it there and made birdie. And started to piece things together and remembered things well the last round.

**Q. What makes Hilton Head so special for you?**

**What are a couple of your favorite moments that you can recall?**

DAVIS LOVE III: Well, it's always a fun week after a stressful week at the Masters. But it's more about -- here it's more about family and enjoying the hospitality of Hilton Head and of Sea Pines. We stay with a friend over on the beach and they may kick us out, the family is getting bigger and bigger, we have two granddaughters this year instead of one.

And the golf course -- there's so many different things that make this a special place. The golf course is one of your favorites on Tour. And the week, the hospitality is one of your favorites on Tour, and staying with friends and all the family wanting to come. For everybody else it's a vacation, Dru and I have to go out and keep score, but it's just a special week all around.

**Q. With all your success here what are the keys to playing well here at Harbour Town, a course that is very different than what you guys see normally week to week?**

DAVIS LOVE III: I think you have to do everything well. You can't just say the long hitters or iron players will do well. All aspects of the game. You have to hit it in the fairway, you have to be in the proper position in the fairway to be able to attack the flag. And you obviously have to putt well. But you look at the players that have won here, it's not one style of player. It's guys that have been playing well that year or major champions or veteran players that understand how to play the golf course. It doesn't suit any one style of game. But you have to have everything clicking really to compete.

**Q. Can you remember any time going into a Sunday on Tour where you had a chance to win that you made a conscious effort not to look at a leaderboard?**

DAVIS LOVE III: Bob Rotella tries to get me to do it every time. I'm not too good at it. I like Patrick Reed's comments, I'm a leaderboard watcher, I watch it. And I realize like he's in the last group, I have those holes to play, so then I get back into my game plan. Trevor Immelman and a lot of us who have worked with Rotella talk about it. How do you do that? How do you not look? But, yes, when I walked off the last hole at the Wyndam in 2015, Bobby Long came up and said congratulations. And I said, well, I think I had to make that putt? What are you talking about? You had a two shot lead.

I made an effort after my hot start to say I'm not going to look at the leaderboard, I'm not going to think about the Masters, I'm not going to think about winning a golf tournament. I'm going to do my routine until I run out of holes. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't.

Ben Crane is the famous story, a few guys that have gotten to the last hole and not known what they're doing. That was one of my best efforts. I always tease Rotella, I'm really good at doing it like at the U.S. Open qualifying, there's no leader boards, so no score, you don't know what you're shooting, so you get lost in the process.

Today the leader boards, not only are they right there, but they're entertaining. You're getting stats and getting Brian Harman, four things I didn't know about Brian Harman popped up on the scoreboard.

So it's very distracting, but that's what Dru and I were talking about last night, we were talking to Bob Rotella, everybody has distractions that lead you to expectations or trying to get you out of your routine. And the scoreboards are just one challenge.

Tiger and I argue, he wants to look at it. He wants to know. And I would rather not look at it and not know. Everybody has to do it differently. But I love Patrick's answers last week.

**Q. To that point, though, Jordan never looked at the leaderboard until he walked off the green on Sunday.**

DAVIS LOVE III: It really doesn't matter. We had this discussion after Patrick's and other guys comments, there's the best way to birdie the 18th hole, and that doesn't change. You need to hit the fairway, way up there, and you need to be right of the flag, if you make a mistake, it needs to go past the flag and roll back down the hill. You don't want to be left. You obviously can't hit it in the right bunker. It doesn't change, if you're run ahead or one behind. The best way to birdie the hole is the best way to birdie the hole. 17 you need to be five feet left, 10, 15 feet left of the flag putting uphill. If you hit it right of the flag like Justin Thomas hit really a better shot than Jordan did, but it went over the green, because he was on the wrong side of the flag. If you hit it five feet, six feet left of the flag, he would have had a shorter putt than Jordan. You have to put it in the right position.

Same thing here, you have to put it in the proper side of the fairway on 16, no matter what the score is, to be able to get to the hole location. We can say pin placement this week, right? So in theory if you're four back and you have to make eagles coming in, it might change your mind on 15 that maybe I should go for it. But in reality you can just stick with the game plan. I think Patrick kept saying that, stick with the game plan.

**Q. Gary Player made an interesting comment last week to say professional golf, we need to cut the**

**ball back 50 yards because there are guys hitting over 400 yards on drives pretty regularly, what are your thoughts on that?**

DAVIS LOVE III: I don't know if we need to cut the ball back. It's hard to convince the rest of the world that the game's too easy and the ball is going too far. I think the driver -- they could roll the driver back a little bit, the coefficient of restitution and the jump face and things like that.

I watched a lot of the Masters last week. They had backed up the tees a long way at 9 or 11 or 7. And the players are not hitting it any differently than when I played there in 1988, and I was of the longest driver. They're hitting it shorter on some holes because they've backed the tees up so far. But it was firm and fast and we saw a lot of 340s out of Rory and some of the longer hitters. But, no, I think there's other ways to do it rather than the golf ball.

**Q. You talked about playing three in a row earlier in the season, what is your goal this week?**

DAVIS LOVE III: Anytime I come I want to play to win and give it my best shot. Again, I'm working my way back from an injury. So a lot like when I watch Tiger Woods, I'm pulling for him to not get hurt and keep playing and build on what he's worked so hard over the last year to get back in shape. And that's kind of where I am. I'm three to four weeks away from really being in tournament shape and feeling good about my game.

So when you get to this place I feel like if I get a chance, if I start playing well, if I put myself in position on Sunday. I've done it so many times here, so many final rounds around the lead, I'd like to have a chance.

It's always good to win, but I'm building on -- I had a rough year last year, smashed my collarbone early and replaced my hip. I've got a lot of new parts in one season. I'm starting to see the results of that, but I'm still kind of rusty.

**Q. You were the big hitter in the day when you were winning here, and you were the one smart enough to dial back and hit a lot of irons off the tees. Dustin is coming here for the first time in like a decade. Would it be a reasonable goal for Dustin to actually just challenge himself to take the driver of the bag completely, just play with the irons, and see if he could win it that way?**

DAVIS LOVE III: Dru was going over his round with me and Mike Hulbert. Mike said it wouldn't be a bad thing if you lost your driver this week and didn't take it out there. It's a 3-wood, 2-iron course for a long hitter. But you need it -- well, today you need your driver. It's cold and the ball is not going anywhere, not running.

But Dustin -- I spent a lot of time around and with Dustin. He's learned to play the game. And he and Austin, they notice the strategy. I've watched him hit a lot of 3- and 4-irons off the tees. I'd love to caddie for those two this week, their length and show them where to hit it.

But there is definitely a strategy. The driver every hole strategy, aggressive, is certainly not going to work for him. He'll figure it out. But that was what I figured out, thankfully, I had Herman Mitchell, Lee Trevino's caddie, to take my driver away from me the first few times around here. And he would literally hand me the 1-iron like this (indicating,) and just walk away. And I didn't have a choice. Or he'd just lean the 1-iron on the water cooler and forecaddie. And that was my club that I was going to hit.

One time he told me, you can get the driver out of the bag with me sitting on it, you can hit it. With we know Herman, we wouldn't get the driver out of the bag with him sitting on it (laughter.) But then he let me hit it off of 18 coming down the stretch when I was into the wind and playing long.

But you have to use it -- Dustin's power or Dru or -- who else I've seen this week, whoever the big hitters are this week, they don't need to use their power with the drive. They can use it with the 3-iron on No. 9 one day they might hit 6-iron off the tee, and the next day hit driver, depending on the pin placement.

The difference in his game is his wedge game and his putter. I like him here and at Colonial, which most people say, well, they're not good golf courses for them. Well, yeah, they're great courses, because he can use their power and, shoot, they're 180 yards out they can hit an 8-iron. Charles Howell, guys like that that they drive it way out there and their irons are really long, there's no reason to not hit 3-iron off the tee and 9-iron to the green.

**Q. Dru, how much have you or will you tap into the experience and knowledge your dad has here?**

DRU LOVE: Well, he said last night, I went over my Monday Pro Am with him and Mike Hulbert, who's played here a lot, too, and told them what I hit, where I hit it and what happened. And they gave me five or six things that I should have done different lip. 2-iron off 9 is still too much club. I have a 4-iron and then a 2-iron. Sometimes I'm even going to hit 6-iron off that tee. I didn't realize that was the play until I talked to them.

My caddie, Barry Williams, yesterday was first time I played the course from the back tee, I played it at 15 and I don't remember much. I hit two drivers I think around the entire golf course. And I learned more last

night talking to him about which side of the fairway to hit it on. If you hit that club you can't hit it in the right half of the fairway, it has to be in the left half. You have to dice this course up and -- the fairways are tight, you've got to make it even tighter and pick the left half. Sometimes left rough is better than right center of the fairway on some holes, and other way around.

JOHN BUSH: Dru, Davis, we appreciate your time. Good luck this week.

**Q. I want to follow up real quickly, what would mean more to you this week, the 6th win for you or a course win for Dru?**

DAVIS LOVE III: That's a tough one. I'll be pulling hard for him and a bunch of other young guys here that I watched come along. It would be thrilling for him to win one. He needs it a little more than me right now.

DRU LOVE: I can promise if we're side by side coming down 18 he's going to try everything he's got to beat me (laughter).

DAVIS LOVE III: Definitely, but I'll still be pulling for you.

**Q. Davis, having captained Patrick Reed, what jumps out to you about his game, is it the attitude or the game?**

DAVIS LOVE III: I think it's more attitude. He's passionate about competing all the time. He doesn't leave anything to chance and he works hard and off the golf course to be prepared. He's got an impressive game when you watch -- I've gotten to watch him play a lot, and played a fair amount with him. He kind of sneaks up on you little bit.

He's not the longest. He doesn't have the prettiest swing. He gives us the Arnold Palmer finish every once in a while, to kind of make it go where he wants it to go.

But he's a competitor, for sure. He tries to get the best out of his caddie and his teammates and people around him. I remember riding that ferry back and forth to the Presidents Cup and it's literally at four or five in the morning and everybody else is trying to get some coffee and wake up. And Patrick has got two yardage books out. He's not going to waste any time riding that ferry, he's going to study his yardage book. He's just so competitive. He wants to win all the time.

And I kept saying, I did some CBS work last week on their featured groups, and I kept saying on Sunday, if they back him into a corner, he's going to come out fighting. Every time he made a bogey or mistake, he came back. He just has a lot of confidence in himself and his ability. That's why he's so good at match play. He's like Poulter, get them in match play, playing one-on-one, they want to beat whoever they're playing.