

# Charles Schwab Challenge

Thursday, June 11, 2020

## Tom Lehman

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Tom, you opened the Charles Schwab Challenge with a first-round 65. Can we get a couple comments on your round.

TOM LEHMAN: Well, first of all, it's great to be here. It's just a great old golf course and it's in immaculate condition, a perfect day for scoring, barely any breeze, soft fairways, soft greens. The greens have some speed but they're not overly fast, so you can be quite aggressive, I think.

But you know, I've been aiming for this week for a while. I live in Arizona, and we've been able to play golf all the way through this COVID-19 thing, so I've been playing a lot, practicing a lot. My game feels pretty good. I love the golf course. It benefits people who put the ball in the fairway, no doubt. Today I hit it straight and made a few putts.

**Q. What were your expectations? Can you appreciate how cool it is for a guy your age to step into a TOUR event -- no disrespect, of course, but to come out and stamp a 65? I know you said you've been playing a lot, but even so, what were the expectations coming in and kind of what's your feeling right now about what you've done today?**

TOM LEHMAN: Well, I really like the way I played. Do I feel like I'm capable of shooting a 65 out here at Colonial? Well, for certain I do. Did I expect to do it today? Well, I would be probably lying if I said I fully expected to play and shoot such a low score. But I did expect to play well.

To me, I kind of felt like if I could just finish out 2-under, 3-under, I would have been really happy with that. To get a couple more is definitely frosting on the cake. A lot of rough out there, and for me I've got to drive it well. If I don't drive it well, I'm quite a ways back in some pretty thick rough. In order to play well for the next three days I need to keep putting the ball in the fairway.

**Q. Obviously the TOUR orchestrated this 8:46 a.m. tee time for the George Floyd pause, and I just kind of wonder as somebody who's from Minnesota, obviously you're probably close to what took place there in terms of spiritually I suppose, but what was the moment like for you when they paused?**



**What went through your mind, and what's been your reaction as a Minnesota native?**

TOM LEHMAN: Well, I certainly don't like -- there's so much to say about that. But what I would say is this: I think everybody needs to feel deeply what happened and to hurt deeply because of what happened to George Floyd. I think everybody needs to understand that when you have an absolute disregard for the suffering or pain of somebody else or the death that you cause on somebody else, if you have no regard for that, you are a part of the problem and you need to get your s--- together.

I would say that's probably the thing I took away from it is let's just understand that we're all human beings and need to care about each other. If you can't do that, then I feel sorry for you.

**Q. Did you feel moved this morning for the 8:46?**

TOM LEHMAN: I think everybody chooses to do things in their own way. I think pausing for -- to me is like a time of prayer. I prayed. I just prayed for our country. I prayed for that man's family, for George's family. I prayed for his soul. I just prayed that the chaos that we live in can be wisely moved forward so that decisions are made that actually are meaningful and helpful.

**Q. I asked Olin Browne a few weeks ago about this, about playing here this week as a former champion. Why was it important for you to be here this week?**

TOM LEHMAN: Well, I think there's a couple things. The opportunity presented itself, and as a past champion being eligible to play, I think the biggest thing is knowing that I'm not taking a spot from some young guy out here on this TOUR. So the ability to come and play without causing somebody else to not play actually was part of what determined whether I would play or not. Because I'm a past champion, and the same at Memorial, where I can play without causing somebody else to not be able to play, I'm looking forward to playing in both of them.

**Q. Did you feel any need to play here just out of a sense of historic significance, that this is the first event back after the pandemic?**

TOM LEHMAN: No, I wouldn't say so, no. I don't think that was really in my thinking at all. It's nice to be here. It's kind of a historic event. It has some significance to

it for sure, and the field who is here tells you that it's significant, so it's cool to be here to be a part of this, no doubt.

But I think the opportunity to play and to play in a tournament that I love so much and that I've had some success at and I'm part of the history here, that's kind of what drove me to want to do it. If it would have been the second week back, third week back, fourth week back, it would have been the same feeling for me.

**Q. When is the last time you played in front of so few people?**

TOM LEHMAN: You know, believe it or not, there's been a few Champions Tour events that kind of felt like this, where you kind of played maybe later in the day and there are not a lot of folks around. Maybe not quite this few. But I played with two guys who just came off the Korn Ferry TOUR and we were reminiscing about my days on the Hogan Tour and their days on the Korn Ferry, and this kind of looked pretty familiar.

**Q. Are there things you actually preferred or liked about the experience today?**

TOM LEHMAN: I think it's a lower pressure atmosphere. That's the thing about the PGA TOUR; I wouldn't say it's a circus, but it's a big event. There's so much going on. There's so many people and there's so much happening each week at a TOUR event, and this is such on the down-low type thing. The pressure is all internal versus all maybe the circumstances that surround you. So people are playing well and they're going to want to play well; they're going to put pressure on themselves. But I don't think you feel the same kind of nerves or atmosphere that you would normally.