

Oak Hill Country Club ~ Rochester, NY

Hole #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Out	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Out	Total		Yardage
452	401	214	570	428	170	461	428	418	3,542	429	188
372	598	323	181	439	460	469	3,459	7,001		Par	4
4	3	5	4	3	4	4	4	35	4	3	4
5	4	3	4	4	4	35	70		Score		

AN INTERVIEW WITH:

BERNHARD LANGER

KELLY ELBIN: Two time Masters champion and World Golf Hall of Fame member Bernhard Langer, ladies and gentlemen, joining us at the 69th Senior PGA Championship here at Oak Hill. Bernhard is making his first appearance in the Senior PGA Championship but has played here before and certainly has a lot of great memories from this place with the Ryder Cup victory. Bernhard, welcome back to Oak Hill, some initial impressions of the golf course, what you saw yesterday.

BERNHARD LANGER: Well the golf course is in magnificent shape. Very good. Very -- the rough is extremely consistent, tough, but consistent.

Fairways are in great shape. The greens are good. And the course, you know, it's at 7000 yards, but it's only a par 70. So if you make it a par 72, you're looking at 73, 7400 yards, which is very long.

And there's some tee shots where we probably are not going to hit driver, just because of the dogleg or the terrain kicks the ball into the rough. So we're going to hit 3-woods and 5-woods which will make the course play even longer, because you're giving up another 40 yards off the tee on certain holes. So it's playing very long.

There's only two par-5s, and we cannot reach them in two. They're both three shot holes, I believe. There's really not one hole where I stand on the tee and I feel I have to make birdie here otherwise I lose half a shot to the field. It's a very tough test.

KELLY ELBIN: Any changes to the golf course that you have noticed from 2003 when you played here versus what you saw yesterday?

BERNHARD LANGER: None whatsoever. I used the same yardage book and I haven't had a close look at the front nine yet, I played the pro-am, but I didn't get a chance to have a close look. But the back nine seems very, very similar. And the front nine, I don't think there's a large change either. But you would know better than me, maybe.

KELLY ELBIN: Open it up for questions.

Q. What in your mind -- you've played this course three times I think, competitively, what in your mind makes this course a consistent challenge no matter what year it is, no matter what time it is, just overall?

BERNHARD LANGER: It's everything. It starts off with the tee shots. Very narrow tee shots. Then you have trees that come into play. You always have rough. You got water. So the tee shots are tough.

Then if you hit the fairway you still have the lengthy second shots in to some very difficult greens. I think the greens were built, well when was the course built? I don't know. I would guess a long time ago. And the architect, whether it's a hundred years ago, whatever, they were built for Stimpmeter maybe seven or eight. Now we're putting 11 to 13. So the greens are far more severe now, even though they haven't changed in terms of undulation, but the ball rolls out that much more.

So if you have a downhill putt, it's that much harder. If you have a chip or bunker shot it doesn't stop like it used to. And it's that much tougher. And you find all of that on this golf course. It's a very challenging tee shots, very difficult second shots, with fairly long clubs. You have rolling terrain, sidehill, uphill, downhill lies. You have shots up like No. 9, for instance, and a bunch of other shots. 7 I think is uphill and downhill. So you always are guessing how much that comes into effect.

And all the greens are back to front. So you cannot miss the green long. If you miss it long, you might as well forget a low number. And so you play for the front edge and the front edge is usually very well guarded by bunkers with a very small entrance to the green.

So it takes precision, it takes length, it takes touch around the greens. And this course will hold up forever. No matter how long the guys will hit it off the tee, it doesn't matter. This course is very, very difficult.

KELLY ELBIN: Thank you. For the record the East Course here in Oak Hill was built in 1926. Questions?

Q. As you get older, what do you find, if anything, about your game becomes more difficult or more of a challenge maybe you can't do some things now that maybe you did 20, 25 years ago.

BERNHARD LANGER: It gets harder to get out of bed every morning and feel all the aches and pains. Even this morning, you know, it takes me about an hour or two to loosen up and to limber up a little bit.

So it's harder to make a full turn, especially when the weather is cold, it's even tougher, I guess. When you're young you just put your feet on the ground and you're ready to go. So those things are really the biggest change.

Obviously I don't hit the ball maybe as far as I used to, even though the equipment made up for that, but everybody else hits it 30, 40 yards further. But on the other hand, I have a little more experience. So there's not a whole lot that I can't do, except physical restrictions.

Q. Along those lines, can you just talk about what it was like to

contend for so long at the PLAYERS Championship a few weeks ago on such a long course against the younger guys?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well the PLAYERS Championship is a very extremely demanding golf course. And since they made the changes two or three years ago, the course plays much faster now. It actually plays a little shorter now than it did three years ago. Even though they might have lengthened some holes I think it plays shorter because you get more run on the fairway. So if you hit the fairway, you get, you find your ball closer to the hole than you did a few years ago.

It's the type of golf course that it's really not all that long. There's probably three or four holes that are tough in terms of length, but the rest is more precision. And that's why I think I can still compete there.

KELLY ELBIN: Bernhard tied for 15th a couple of weeks ago at the PLAYERS.

Q. Is this a tournament you look at, being No. 1 on the Money List, where you consider yourself a favorite or is it a type of championship where really there are not any favorites?

BERNHARD LANGER: That's a very good question and I really haven't thought about it. Because I, we talked about that last week, that every week there's got to be a favorite. And on the Regular Tour it's Tiger Woods, on the other tours it's Lorena Ochoa and here it's this and here it's that. And I disagree with it a little bit because I think that there's far more than one or two favorites. That's just the way the media builds it up.

I think that on any given tournament you have 30, 40, 50, maybe 60, 70 guys that could win and it's difficult to say, well this one guy is a big favorite. It's not like a horse race like where you have this one horse and whatever that is so much superior that whenever it shows up that it wins nine out of ten. Even though you can all say, well, Lorena has won a bunch of so many of whenever she plays and Tiger, yes, they are dominating, but I think that on our TOUR we have, I'm talking about the Champions Tour, I think we have a lot of very talented players, very tough competitors, and there's a bunch of guys who can still play to a very, very high level and can win on any given week.

So, yes, I consider myself one of the favorites, one of the favorites, because I think that there is at least 30 to 50 who can win this championship.

Q. Having talked about how difficult this course is, does experience and you having had experience playing elite competition here on this course, does that give you any type of an edge over maybe somebody who is not more familiar with had this course?

BERNHARD LANGER: I think experience always plays a bit of a part, especially on tougher golf courses. Because you just know from the past that if you hit it in a certain spot you have no chance and it's better to maybe hit a couple of irons more into a green but from a certain place where you can hit it from than going for broke.

So experience is important. But now days you get these guys playing two

or three practice rounds that have professional caddies, so that it shouldn't take them all that long to figure out where to go and where not to go. And then it's more a matter of being able to execute.

Q. This event like the PGA Championship is unique in that it includes the finest PGA club professionals. Can you just talk about what an accomplishment it is for them to be in this field and perhaps some of your experiences with these club professionals?

BERNHARD LANGER: I can really not comment a great deal on that because I'm not one of them. I haven't spent a lot of time with them. I don't play with them. So I really don't know how good they are or what they have achieved in their careers. And it's got to be tough to have a full-time job and still try and play golf at the same time.

So I'm sure some of them are extremely gifted and talented to be able to do most of those things, to run a club and to do their job at home and then still be able to play golf at a very high level. So my hat is off to them. But that's really all I could say.

Q. With the success you had in the 1995 a Ryder Cup, coming back here, does that stir up those memories for you and the success that your team had here?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, sure. As soon as I drove up here onto the grounds there were certain memories that came back. Whether it was the opening ceremony, closing ceremony, certain shots, certain moments on the golf course during the competition that happened. Yeah, they come back from memory, of course.

Q. Anything special? Anything you go, oh, yeah, that's where something happened or anything like that, anything special pop out as far as a memory goes when you rolled in?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, sure, I remember there were a couple of hole-in-ones at I think it was the I'm not sure whether it was the Ryder Cup or whether it was the PGA Championship. There were two or three hole in ones on the 8th hole I think it was, right? No, the 6th hole. And then I remember following Faldo playing Curtis Strange coming down the last few holes because the whole thing kind of hung on that match. And it seemed like that anyway. And what was the Irish guy, Phillip Walton, he won a huge point for us coming down the last few holes. Because it was such a tight game to, such a tight match.

And I remember Seve it was one of those weeks where he was all over the place but he was still even par or whatever on his own ball, only hitting like one fairway out of 12 or something like that. So the way he scrambled around was incredible.

And then the closing ceremony and the opening ceremony celebrations we had winning after we won and popping the champagne and taking pictures and having fun. That kind of stuff.

Q. That was pretty much the ascension of the European Tour, the European Ryder Cup team, wasn't it, I mean that's where the beginning if you look back, you won the majority of cups since then. Did you guys feel, was it some kind of feeling in the team room that week about how you were trying to turn it around because obviously the U.S. has similar issues now, but did you have that feeling back then or were you, what was your approach?

BERNHARD LANGER: I think the turning point was really 1983 at Palm Beach. I know we lost there. I was part of that team and we lost by one point, I think. All came down to the last match between Gallagher and Watson, but I think that after that, even though we lost and we were kind of down, losing, but we got together and said, we could have won this. We were every bit as good as they are. I think that was the turning point. And then the next year we won at the Belfry and from then on we have been competing very nicely ever since.

Q. To follow-up, there was some comments by Seve this week about how he wishes the U.S. would win because he feels like there's been a lot of air out of the Ryder Cup balloon because the Europeans keep beating us. Do you have any thoughts on that?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, I don't think that, I think the Ryder Cup will be the Ryder Cup for a long time, no matter who wins. But he's probably right in that extent that if it's a close game it's always better for the spectators, I think, for the television. The closer the match, the more drama. The more excitement. The more people look forward to the next one. That kind of thing.

But I think the Ryder Cup has such a strong history over the many, many years that people are interested anyway, no matter what happens.

KELLY ELBIN: For the record, the Europeans have won five of the last six Ryder Cups including the '95 matches here.

Q. Looking ahead to Valhalla do you have much experience there and what do you anticipate that course shaping up to be to host the Ryder Cup?

BERNHARD LANGER: I have played one tournament there. I think it was the PGA Championship. And I'm not going to be there this year, so I -- and they made some changes, would that be correct?

KELLY ELBIN: Significant changes.

BERNHARD LANGER: Yeah, so I can't talk about it because I haven't seen the changes. But I liked the original golf course when we played it some years ago. And it's a very fair golf course. Just whoever hits the ball the best and makes the putts will win. And I think it's a very good test. Again, I don't know what changes they have made, and whether that will have an impact on favoring one team more than the other, I don't think it does, because all these guys are accomplished golfers, they learn to adopt, they learn to play on any given venue, any given golf course, otherwise if you can't do that, you're not a top golfer anyway.

**Q. Do you prefer being a captain or a player in the Ryder Cup?
What's the difference?**

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, there's a big difference. As a player you just worry about your own match and that's all you got to do. You practice all week, you prepare for your own game. Obviously you're part of the team, but as a captain it's totally different. You actually are never going to hit a shot. You just are running around trying to please everyone, trying to prepare everything the best of your knowledge to make the best pairings and do all that kind of stuff. But you're never going to hit a shot.

So it's in a way a lot more nerve wracking being a captain than being a player because you're kind of 24/7 for a whole week as a player you just play your game and then you practice some more and watch the others and cheer them on. So it's totally different.

KELLY ELBIN: 2004 European Ryder Cup captain, Bernhard Langer.
Thank you.

BERNHARD LANGER: Thank you.
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...when all is said, we're done[®]

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