

**DAVIS LOVE III**

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**Q. Davis, can you tell us a little bit about where your game's at right now entering this week and how you feel?**

**DAVIS LOVE III:** Well, I've been playing a little bit. This last year, the last, you know, six or eight years, been starting and stopping, getting some surgery, some injury. But I've been playing a lot lately and I'm starting to feel better about my game. My son helped me in San Antonio when I was playing on the regular tour a little bit with my putting, so I'm starting to feel a little bit more confident with my putting, so I'm excited to play. I'm ready to get out there and compete. I've got a great pairing with Darren and Miguel, so it's going to be a fun week.

**Q. You were talking about two guys, international players. I'm with the Chronicle, by the way. Just talk about the fact that you've been a Ryder Cup captain, you're going to be a Presidents Cup captain. How much pride do you take in being -- you know, leading the teams?**

**DAVIS LOVE III:** When I saw my pairing, the first thought I had was two Europeans against me, but they're both guys that, specially Darren, that I really enjoy being around and playing with and have a lot of respect for them. And we've spent a lot of time together competing on the international side, but also enjoying the competition and being around each other. The Sunday nights at Ryder Cups are some of the most fun because that's the only time in the week that both teams get together really and hang out. One team's a little happier than the other.

So, yeah, I'm -- I was texting Steve Stricker last night about Ryder Cup stuff. We're just nonstop working on it, getting prepared, trying to help the team be ready to play. It's been a big focus of my career, especially since in 2015 we started working together more as captains on a long-range plan. It's hard to believe back in 2015 now all the way to 2022 Presidents Cup team, and Steve Stricker and Tiger Woods and Jim Furyk and Tom Lehman and all of us have been working on this plan already over five years, and we're planning for the future with the Zach Johnsons and guys we brought in, the new guys. So it's exciting. I can't wait for Whistling Straits right now.

**Q. So this is -- it's such a major commitment to do this and you still play some golf. It kind of takes away a little bit of how much you could have been competing on tour?**

**DAVIS LOVE III:** Well, it really shouldn't if you're organized with your time and you're a smart guy. So it bogs me down, but it looks like it's not hurting Stricker, and Furyk played really well. I just always say they're more organized than me.

No, it's a big commitment. It's a fun commitment, though. You get to interact more with guys you compete against every day. You get to take your relationships to a different level. I know we've really been focused on getting to know players better. It's easy for me with a Dustin Johnson or a Rickie Fowler, I've been around them a lot, but now I get to know Patrick Cantlay and Collin Morikawa, the guys that I don't really know. So that's why you see me so much on the regular tour. I feel like I still need to stay connected, stay out there until my captaincy time. I'm playing Charlotte next week and the only reason I'm going to play that big old golf course is because the Presidents Cup is going to be there next year.

It's a big commitment, but it's fun. I remember just loving watching Tom Kite be my captain and all the time and effort and thought he put into it, so we're just trying to carry on that tradition.

**Q. I was getting ready to ask you, you played on so many teams in Ryder Cup. When you were playing, is that when you kind of got the thing like, I would like to, you know, be a captain one day?**

**DAVIS LOVE III:** Well, when you try to make the team, and my first team was Tom Watson and it was just an incredible experience, I watched him say things and do things that were just so much bigger than life. Got on the Concord and went and played. I said, golly, I just want to keep making teams.

And then after I played six Ryder Cups and six President Cups, after a while you start thinking, wait a minute, I'd better start paying attention to what these guys are doing. Keep the book *After the Ryder Cup* so I know how to plan for this for the future. You kind of know. You win a major, you play a bunch of teams, you start thinking, well, maybe I should prepare for this. You never know if it's going to happen. I've been really blessed to be assistant and captain more than my fair share.

And then the culture changed a little bit to where we were more an advisory board or we were part of Team USA golf. It became even a bigger role. So I never really imagined in the beginning doing it, but once you get into it, I think really, you know, when Kite was the captain and I had won the PGA that year and I sat down with the PGA of America a little bit after, talked about my experience, a little bit of a debriefing, I started getting the idea that this is going to be a possibility down the road.

**Q. With all the international competition you've gone against, you come out here, there's a lot of good international players that you're playing with this week. Just talk about that.**

**DAVIS LOVE III:** Well, both tours, PGA TOUR Champions and the regular tour, are getting more and more international. This is the place to play, is on the U.S. tours.

And they're coming. I was on the board of the tour a lot and we didn't discourage that. We

tried to encourage that. Like we want this to be the place that everybody plays. You know, Darren Clarke now is a fixture of the PGA TOUR Champions. He played a fair amount on the regular tour, but now he is, you know, one of the stars of our tour out here now. I think it's great. Same thing with Jose Maria and Monty and all those guys. I've known them for a long time, but it's great now that the fans are getting to know Darren Clarke better and better because he's winning a lot and he's on TV a lot and he's one of the most fun guys out here, so I think it's great.

**Q. What's your schedule like for the next year and a half going to next year's Presidents Cup?**

**DAVIS LOVE III:** Busy. I'm looking at another hip replacement and a Ryder Cup experience at Whistling Straits. Then we'll just immediately shift gears to Presidents Cup. I've got a lot of decisions to make this year for Presidents Cup, but because being on the board of the tour and knowing the staff really well and being assistant captain a few times, we've got it pretty much dialed in. Picking out clothes right now for 2022 for the team and things like that.

And then I've had the same goal for four or five years, I want to play a full season of golf without being hurt or having, as my wife says, going under anesthesia. So that will be the goal starting over again probably in September, August, September, start really playing again. I'm looking forward to a lot of golf over the next couple years and a lot of watching golf.

**Q. You mentioned, you said you have hip problems?**

**DAVIS LOVE III:** Yeah. I've had one hip replacement and I'm going to have to have another one. Then I'll get dialed in.

**Q. Lastly, coming up this summer's the 30th anniversary of Payne Stewart's first U.S. Open win. Do you have any memories or stories you can share with us of Payne Stewart?**

**DAVIS LOVE III:** Well, fortunately, I was on some teams with him, but I got to play a match with Payne Stewart in '99 Ryder Cup, Playing for Ben Crenshaw. It was kind of a shock to me to get paired with Payne.

So the night before he gets in my face a little bit and he says, "I need some more enthusiasm and passion out of you." What he was telling me is he likes to get excited and fire up the crowd and play with passion and he just saw me as a guy who kind of meekly played along.

So we got out there on the course and I tried my best. We got to the 17th hole where Justin Leonard famously made the putt, and I had been not playing great, but we were either even or one down. Maybe we were hanging on and even. He drove it out there nice and I hit it in the bunker. And being disappointed, I didn't want to hang my head and walk up to the green.

I said, "I tell you what, Payne, you get it anywhere on the green and I will make it," because it was a hard bunker shot. It was like 10 feet and I poured it in, gave it a big fist pump and he came up and was poking me in the chest and he goes, "That's what I'm talking about."

And then from then on I knew how to be a better teammate, how to be a better -- in two-man competition or even on the teams, that you had to do something to support your partner. He gave me a great lesson.

And then we ended up winning on Sunday and he had on red, white and blue pajama pants standing on the piano smoking a cigar. So that Ryder Cup will always be -- it's about Ben Crenshaw and winning, but it was more about that was our last go-round with Payne.