

# Desert Classic

Sunday, January 20, 2019

## Adam Long Press Conference



DOUG MILNE: We would like to proudly welcome the winner of the 2019 Desert Classic, Adam Long. Congratulations on your first career PGA TOUR victory. There's a million different ways I could go with that right now, but I'll turn it over to you. With the win you move to No. 12 in the FedExCup standings, you got obviously a lot to look forward to, your schedule's certainly going to change. And so with all that said just a few comments on your first career PGA TOUR win.

ADAM LONG: I mean, first I have to thank my family, my wife is here, my dad's here, and my mom couldn't be here, but my whole family has been with me since the beginning. And I don't know if any of us ever dreamed we would be here, but we are here and it's been a fun road and a lot of people to thank, caddie, Matt has been awesome and coaches, Brian Fogt growing up and Josh Gregory more recently and it's been a -- you have a lot of help along the way and couldn't be more happy to be here.

DOUG MILNE: You had a lot of interesting odds going. You had you and your sixth PGA TOUR start, you're paired with Phil Mickelson in his 596th PGA TOUR start, 43 wins, versus zero wins, and you managed to get the job done convincingly on the 72nd hole. You mentioned that he's certainly someone you've looked up to and followed over the course of your career. Could you talk about that dynamic of being in the same group and kind of acting as the dragon slayer, so to speak.

ADAM LONG: It was a little surreal when I got the text last night that I was paired with Phil and Adam Hadwin. That was a cool one in itself. It's like, hey, I'm playing with Phil on a Sunday, let alone in the final group. I was nervous and excited, I had all kind of feelings going on and couldn't have been a better group though to play with and a huge thanks to them really for making me feel comfortable and like I belonged to be there and I couldn't ask for two better guys to play with, they're both really complimentary and outgoing and obviously terrific golfers and -- but it was definitely a little bit of the Phil and Adam Hadwin show, no doubt. There's a lot of Canadians down here and you couldn't go five steps without hearing a shout out to Phil. But I kind of hung out in their shadows and tried to just keep hitting fairways and greens and I didn't know what to expect or what was going to happen or how I would feel coming down the stretch, but I felt fine and I didn't

know what was going to happen but I just kept plugging away and finally got up there to 18 with a chance to win the tournament and I tried not to think too much about it, I didn't know what it could mean or what this or that I was just trying to stay in the moment and try to make a putt, that's all it was. But when that thing went in I don't know, I never felt like that in my life.

DOUG MILNE: My final question is, how exciting is it to think about your schedule now, what it all means you're into and so forth.

ADAM LONG: Yeah, it's amazing. I was an alternate just for next week at the Farmers, so I didn't know what tournaments I would be getting into. And to start the year and coming off the WEB.COM TOUR it can be tough. You're not guaranteed a whole lot, I didn't get off to a good start, so I was at the bottom of that category and my tournament schedule was a little bleak. But this changes everything, obviously, and I'm looking forward to the PLAYERS and the Majors of course all through the summer and then following it up with the FedExCup playoffs is going to be pretty surreal and pretty exciting but a lot to look forward to.

DOUG MILNE: Open it up to questions.

**Q. Staying in the moment is a nice thing to say but when you tied for the lead were you aware that you tied for lead?**

ADAM LONG: A little bit. I didn't really look at a whole lot of score boards out there. You can't help but see a few here and there, whether it's our standard bearers or score boards out there, but I knew I was in the mix. And even after I hit my second shot into 18 I asked Matt, I was like, we're all tied, right. Like I wasn't a hundred percent sure. But I didn't care, I had nothing to lose. I was just out there having a blast and didn't want it to end. It was an awesome day, Matt and I had a great time out there and it just kind of, it ended on a high note.

**Q. You shot 63 the first day on Nicklaus tournament, I think. And normally 63 would get you a lot of attention. But the other guy shot 60. So you just kind of were under the radar a little bit because of that guy. Was that a big benefit for the week for you?**

ADAM LONG: Sure. I mean I was, honestly, I mean,

big goal is to just finish in the top-10, just so that I can get into next week to Farmers. I mean that's, making the cut, trying to move up the WEB.COM category, I mean there's a lot to play for. But I didn't expect to be sitting here. I would be lying if I said I was. I just kept plugging away and the chips fell in today and some putts all throughout the week and it just kind of was all started clicking for me.

**Q. You're 31 and a rookie on TOUR so you played a lot of golf. Have there been peaks and valleys during that time while you've been trying to get on TOUR? Have you ever questioned whether you were going to make it or what's that been like?**

ADAM LONG: Yeah, I mean, certainly those first four, five years as a professional where I wasn't really progressing as quickly as I wanted to. I wouldn't say doubted, I just was a little unsure and needed a little more direction. But once I got a little more comfortable being pro a professional golfer and my coaches Brian Fogt and Josh Gregory a lot most recently have really helped along the way. And the last couple years on the WEB.COM TOUR I was really close to getting my card. And so it's been a little steady progression, there's been some low points, but overall it's been pretty steady.

**Q. So coming into this tournament what were your expectations and hopes coming in and then how did they change once you got to last night and you're playing in the final group?**

ADAM LONG: Yeah, I mean I had a great practice those first few like Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, I played really well and played some practice rounds with Josh Teater and Derek Fathauer and we had some games. And I made a lot of birdies in the practice rounds and I know everyone you can make a lot of birdies out here, but I felt good about it and I felt good about my game and where it was at. But you never really know until you get out there and you tee it up. I bogeyed my first hole of the tournament without hitting a good shot on the entire hole. So you never really know. Things started -- I made an eagle over there on 4 in the first round and that really turned the tide a little bit like, okay, we got this, this is going to be a good week. But all the way up until last night it just, it was a, I mean the goals as far as just trying to make the cut, finish in the top-10, give yourself a chance, I stayed pretty in the moment and pretty just tried to get off to a good start every day and tried to make as many birdies as I could.

**Q. What's your previous win?**

ADAM LONG: Previous win? The Hooter's Tour 2011.

**Q. Remember the name of the event?**

ADAM LONG: Woodcreek in South Carolina, like Columbia area.

**Q. Just having been so long since winning were you surprised at all that you felt pretty calm in the final group?**

ADAM LONG: Yeah, honestly, I didn't know how I would feel. I felt nervous, but I kind of always do before I play. So I wasn't like, I wasn't freaking out by any means, but I was, I kept telling myself I had nothing to lose, I'm in the mix, I got a chance at a top-10 and getting in next week and I was just trying to have a blast. How often are you going to get to play with Phil on Sunday?

**Q. And then you talked about maybe some valleys and stuff. What's the best low point story you have?**

ADAM LONG: Oh, definitely missing like either four or five cuts in a row on the eGolf tour on the East Coast, mini-tour. And, I mean, I was lost, I had no clue what I was doing with anything, nothing was working. I was just traveling in my car week-to-week like, what am I doing. And I had no real -- I didn't know -- I remember texting my coach like swing videos and stuff. I mean, I was lost. And as the story goes I flew from missing my fourth or fifth straight cut on the eGolf tour to Columbus, Ohio for sectional qualifying for the U.S. Open and played some of the best golf of my life and qualified for the U.S. Open. So I mean it went from like the worst month of my playing career to the best week of my playing career until now.

**Q. All that said, you talk about the scuffling that you've gone through all these years. Was there a point at any time where you were thinking to yourself or talking to your wife or saying, I'm going to have to go out and get a job, this just isn't working out or did you always have that faith that it was there and it was going to come out at some point?**

ADAM LONG: I mean, like I said, the first four years or so, two, three, four years of playing pro I was kind of struggling playing the mini tours, wasn't getting on the WEB.COM TOUR. I had one short season out there, but I was, I wasn't doing great. But I never really doubted it, I still wanted to play and I still loved it and I still wanted to see how good I could get. Honestly the last two or three years on the even four years on the WEB.COM TOUR has been, I progressed and I got better. So I have always said like or thought as long as I feel like I'm getting better at golf and I'm not taking backward steps too much, then I got to keep going. So there's, I mean there wasn't much doubt recently.

**Q. And my other question is, is you've, whatever you've made in golf up to this point, I think you just doubled it today. I mean what, what's your reaction to that and the idea that all of a sudden I've got this eye popping winner's check?**

ADAM LONG: I have no idea, I haven't thought about it. But I'm keeping my phone off for awhile so nobody is asking for a loan. But, no, I mean, it's pretty life changing, I would say. But I don't know what my first purchase will be or how I'll spend it or anything. But just happy to go home with my wife Emily and enjoy it and just keep living like we always live.

**Q. How big were those first two holes to help you feel comfortable the final round?**

ADAM LONG: Huge. Huge. You leave the driving range you're like you just want to stripe it down the fairway, you want to hit the fairway to start. I was nervous on that first tee shot, but nothing like I never felt before, just really nervous. Hit a great one in the middle of the fairway and had a pretty good number that I could just hit a nice 9-iron over there and, yeah, but to birdie the first two is more than I could have hoped for. And I was just trying to give myself as many opportunities as possible, but birdieing those first two really calmed me a little bit like, all right, like I got this, like I can compete, I can play, I belong, and let's just keep it going.

**Q. And what was the difference between the 71 you shot on Stadium Course on Friday and then what happened today?**

ADAM LONG: Quite a bit. I was playing with Phil Mickelson. But, I mean, I started off on 10 on Friday with a double bogey and hit it in the bunker off the tee and in the water and made a double. And then shot 3-under on the back nine just to shoot under par -- or the front nine, my back nine. But today was, I mean, I felt like it was a totally different day. I felt a lot better, actually about my swing today than even yesterday when I shot 9-under. I was hitting a lot better shots, my misses were fine, and I mean we were fortunate to have perfect weather too. Didn't have to worry about fighting any conditions like strong winds or anything. But there were pretty different rounds, I would say for sure.

**Q. Two questions. Have you ever been to Augusta?**

ADAM LONG: I have been. I've actually played it a few times. We have an alum from Duke who takes used to take a lot of the golfers from the golf team at Duke out. And so I went right after I graduated in maybe the fall of 2010 I want to say. I spent the night in the cottages there and played a couple rounds. But that was in November. So playing it in April might feel a little different.

**Q. And is this win the most important or impressive thing anybody from Duke has done this week?**

ADAM LONG: I don't know Zion Williamson is pretty

impressive too and JT Barrett, I'll go with those guys for now -- or RJ Barrett, but.

**Q. They can go with you now.**

ADAM LONG: I'll give them a run for their money. We'll see.

**Q. What are you thinking over a 15-foot birdie putt for the win?**

ADAM LONG: Honestly I -- oh, I knew it was for the win, once Phil's putt didn't go in, which it looked like it was, he had a lot of those today. But I told myself not to like think about that it was for the win and it's just a putt up the hill to the left. I was just trying to -- I putted really well today and made a lot of good putts and I was like, I don't know why I should miss this. And it just felt like one I was going to make. I was just trying to concentrate on a few mechanical things that I think about, but it was like, other than that just give it a good run and don't leave it short.

**Q. Do you remember how much you won for the Woodcreek open?**

ADAM LONG: Probably 20, 25 thousand dollars.

**Q. And what did you do with it?**

ADAM LONG: Paid off the stuff that I owed everybody probably at the time.

(Laughter.)

No, nothing crazy that I can remember.

**Q. And that is your lone pro win before this week?**

ADAM LONG: Yeah, I think so. I won some qualifiers and stuff, but, yeah. Official tournaments I think so.

DOUG MILNE: Had you had much interaction with Phil prior to this week?

ADAM LONG: No, it was the first time I met him and I met him in the tent beforehand and he's like, let's have some fun today. And, I mean, he's a pretty outgoing guy, I think being paired with him was pretty fun. It was cool. He and Adam knew each other a little bit, I think they played together before, and I think I tagged along and had some input here and there. But I was trying to enjoy it and focus on my own game, really.

DOUG MILNE: Scale of 1 to 10, 10 being most nervous, antsy, how much, what was the number on walking in meeting him for the first time?

ADAM LONG: There was some anticipation, some build-up there. Like how is this going to go or like whatever. But just from seeing him on TV and stuff you just know he's going to be a good guy. You know he's

going to shake your hand and give you a smile and maybe a thumbs up but, yeah, there was some excitement there for shooter.

DOUG MILNE: All right, Adam, congratulations, and best of luck moving on to San Diego.

ADAM LONG: Yeah, thank you. Thanks, guys.