

Interview mit Bernhard Langer anlässlich der Toshiba Classic in Newport Beach

Q. Since you've been away, the Tour has staked out a position opposing the anchoring ban. Obviously it's a subject you've been vocal about. I'm wondering how you feel about the Tour taking that stand. And also, did you during the comment period give any feedback to the USGA and R&A?

BERNHARD LANGER: I wasn't personally asked to give feedback to the USGA and R&A, but whenever I was asked in interviews and was talking to some other players and officials, I clearly voiced my opinion. I think the PGA TOUR came to the right conclusion for many areas, what you say, arguments, just point in that direction. There's really no real reason to ban the anchoring after this many years being out. You're going to hurt the game by banning it. You're going to drive people away from the game of golf because they're not going to enjoy the game if they. I'm talking about amateurs. This is not for me personal. If they take the putter away, I'll find a way to putt or I'll go retire, so this has nothing to do with me personally. I'm thinking for the better of the game, growing the game and what's good for amateurs.

That's the very same reason that the PGA of America is very much against it, too, because the owners of golf courses, because they can see that hundreds and thousands of people would leave the game because putting is a huge part of the game. And if you had certain ailments, you know, a bad back or if you're not a good putter and you're used to the long putter, it might help you a little bit in that regard, and you now take that away from them, they're going to leave the game. They're going to start up croquet or bowling or whatever. No, I'm serious.

I've talked to a lot of people. I'm a member at three different clubs in Florida where I live and we discuss it because it's a topic that has been out the last few months and a lot of them say, yeah, that would be a very bad thing to do. Some of them considering to probably give up the game if they're forced to give up the belly putter, the long putter. To me, that's the main reason not to do it. There's obviously a bunch of other reasons, and it's been around way too long. Even a year or two ago, Mike Davis from the USGA said long putter is no problem, we don't see a problem in the future with it. It was changed in 12 months. I can tell you what changed. Three major winners, that's a problem now. Well, it makes no sense. If you look at it if it was a real improvement to everybody, if it was easier or simpler or better, everybody would use it, and I'll give you an example. How many people are using a graphite shaft in a driver?

Q. 100 percent?

BERNHARD LANGER: 100 percent. How many are using the big headed driver? 100 percent. Why? Because it's an improvement. How many people use a hybrid? Almost 100 percent because it's easier to hit a hybrid than a 1-iron.

See, those are the things. Well, how many using a long putter? 10 percent, 6 percent, 15 percent, whatever it is. It's the minority. So why go there after having it out, making it legal for even 90 years or 80 years. There's a picture out that somebody used it in the 1920s or 1930s. So it makes no sense, I have no idea why they're going there. I hope they're not going through with it. Not for my own personal reasons, just for the better part of the game, to grow the game.

Q. When you anchor, have you tried just moving it a little bit away from your body and is that a big difference?

BERNHARD LANGER: I haven't tried it, to tell you the truth, but I would think it fits the purpose somewhat. I have not been messing with it because I'm not convinced it's going to go that way. So why spend hours of practice and energy doing stuff if it's never going to happen. And I still think there's a good chance they might not go through with it because of many arguments that point in the other direction.

Q. How long have you used the current putter that you're using?

BERNHARD LANGER: The current putter or style of putting?

Q. No, the current putter that you're used to right now, your gamer.

BERNHARD LANGER: I don't know. I've used a similar type of putter for 17 years now, 15 years, something like that.

Q. Are you looking at new putters still as we speak, looking for improvement with...

BERNHARD LANGER: I always look to improve, yeah. If I find anything that I think will improve my score, my game, I'll try it, and if it's better I'll put it into play.

Q. Optimistic?

BERNHARD LANGER: Well, we're all that way. If I give you a new driver and you hit it 20 yards further and straighter, you would be stupid not to put it into play. If I'm going to find a putter that I can make one more putt or have better distance control or get a better roll, whatever, better alignment, then I'll put it into play because one stroke a day means four strokes a tournament, or three. That's a huge difference.