

August 21, 2006



An Interview With:

U.S. CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN

JULIUS MASON: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I'm Julius Mason, the senior director of communications and media relations for the *PGA of America*. Welcome to the biannual *Ryder Cup* Selection News Conference. Please allow me to introduce our head table this morning. From Kiawah Island, South Carolina, the president of the *PGA of America*, Mr. *Roger Warren*. And from Scottsdale, Arizona, our 2006 United States *Ryder Cup Captain*, *Tom Lehman*.

We are also joined by some *PGA* America national officers. First, sitting in the front row over here, the vice president of the *PGA of America*, Mr. *Brian Whitcomb*; secretary, *Jim Remy*; honorary president, Mr. *M.G. Orender*; and the CEO of the *PGA of America*, Mr. *Joe Steranka*. Also joining us in the front row *Tom Lehman's* captains assistants, *Corey Pavin* and *Loren Roberts*.

Roger, at this stage I'd like to go ahead and turn it over to you, please.

ROGER WARREN: Thank you, Julius. Good morning everyone, the 36th *Ryder Cup* in the 90th year of the *PGA of America* is just 32 days away. Today we are going to fill out the final two players of this team. It's going to be an exciting, exciting time and we are so proud to have *Tom Lehman* leading this team as captain and representing the *PGA of America* as we go through the *Ryder Cup*.

Tom is the 24th person to lead the *Ryder Cup Team* in 79 years. And today is one of the tough parts about being the captain is making the selection.

So ladies and gentlemen, I am proud as I sit next to *Tom Lehman* for what he represents to

the game and the characteristics that he brings to this process is something we're very proud of. And Tom, the floor is yours.

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Thank you, Roger. You know it's quite an experience and quite an honor to be sitting right up here today, and I've been talk about it for almost two years now; that the honor is very humbling what the *PGA of America* gave to me. And the evening that I met with *M.G. Orender* and *Brian Whitcomb* and *Roger Warren* in Orlando, October of 2004, was a night that I'll never forget when they asked me to be the captain of this *Ryder Cup Team*. So to those three gentlemen, a sincere debt of gratitude for putting your faith in me.

I'm extremely excited about our team. It's good to finally have the team together in its entirety. It's been a long two years and it's been a grueling summer, and really at the end of the day, I'm very pleased with the 12 men that we have. They have all learned their spots. They have all played their way onto this team. They all did what they had to do to get there. Even Tiger just barely snuck on. So this is our team and you'll be meeting the next two very, very soon.

So am I diving right into it, Julius?

JULIUS MASON: You know, we've got this room for another two hours; I think you can stretch it. (Laughter).

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Okay. Well, quite frankly, I slept about two hours last night. It's been a difficult decision for me to make. It's tough for me to call people who I respect and admire so much as players and as people and let them know that, no, I did not pick you. I basically talked to everybody from position 11 through 25 on the phone except for two guys who I talked to in person yesterday at the course to let them know what my decisions were.

So it's not easy for me. It's emotional for me. I've been on the side of the coin where I've

been looked over and not picked and it's no fun to be in that spot.

So with all of the guys that I know that didn't get picked, they would be feeling the way that I felt, and again I guess I just want to let them know through watching it or what they read in the paper how much respect have for the effort they gave to be on a part of this team. With that said, the two guys that I did pick, I believe make the team very complete. I think they were two guys that deserve without question to be on this team.

The first gentleman I picked is **Stewart Cink**. Stewart has played steady golf his whole career. He hits the ball great. He's a strong guy. He's a tough competitor. He fits in really well with the team. He's played extremely well all through this summer. He's one of those guys who, you know, was back a little bit further and just steadily worked his way up to 12th on the Official **Ryder Cup** Points List.

I made it kind of a point at the very beginning to let our guys know that I would be keeping a supplemental list of the Top-10 Americans each week starting last year and **Stewart Cink** was sixth on that list. So I felt very, very comfortable and safe in -- not only safe, but it was the right thing to do and it was the right thing for our team to pick **Stewart Cink** as my first pick.

The second guy I picked is, again, a guy that I think belongs without question on this team. One of the things that I think our team needs is somebody who can really putt and really can chip, who can drive the ball, put it in the fairway, who is a tough, tough, tough competitor, who will never quit, never give up. And for that reason and those reasons, I picked **Scott Verplank**.

JULIUS MASON: Thanks, Tom. At this stage, folks, we'll go ahead and take some questions.

Q. So I know that we were expecting some upheaval, but as it turned out, the four rookies that were on the team stayed in the rankings. I'm wondering if you had to go a little more with experience with your two picks in light of that fact versus, say, throwing Glover or somebody in as an at-large.

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Well, the check I guess as I said before, the four guys who will be first-time players all earned their spots on this team. They all qualified through their good play. They deserved to be there.

Having that kind of inexperience definitely played into my thinking. But I wasn't married to it, I can assure you that. I was not married to only picking guys with experience. I was married to picking the two guys who I thought were going to make our team the best team, and those are the guys that I picked.

Q. When did you make the picks?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: That's a good question. (Smiling).

You know what I waited all day yesterday to see how it was going to shake out. I wanted to -- obviously needed to give the **PGA Championship** it's full run, and there was at the end of the day no change, but there was -- it did create some interesting decisions to be made. You know, with different players, I'll give you an example. I had to look at Steve Stricker. I simply had to give him a good, hard, long look simply because of the way he's been playing this year.

Anyway, so last night, you know, Corey and I and Loren spent the entire afternoon and evening together. I was on the golf course most of the day yesterday watching some guys play and went back to the house, and we just talked all night long. It got to be about 9:30 and I simply said, you know what I'm too tired to make this decision tonight.

So I called all the guys who I was -- had six guys on my list and I called them all and said, look, I'm not going to make this decision until the morning. I call you sometime around 7:30 in the morning and give you my decision then, which is what I did. I eventually did make those picks this morning.

Q. Can you give us an idea of the reaction and response, especially by Scott Verplank, was he surprised at all, and what was also Stewart's response and reaction?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: You can ask them that question yourself. But the impression I got was that they fully expected to be a part of this team; that they have been thinking about it, dreaming about it, looking forward to it for two years. And they basically said, "I can't wait to go. Let's go play." That was their reaction.

Q. You mentioned Steve Stricker. Who else did you really give serious, hard consideration to, those other six players that

were the toughest decisions that you had to make?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Well, Steve was one. Obviously the two guys I did pick. You know, I had to look at Davis. Davis to me was a difficult, difficult phone call to make. But I, you know, out of respect for him, out of my admiration for him, I had to hang onto him for as long as I could.

Lucas Glover. Lucas, I've got to say, may have been the toughest phone call, simply because there's times in your life when you have this gut feeling about somebody, and you can't exactly put your finger on what it is and why. But you kind of feel like there's something special, and that's how I feel about him. I feel that he has that quality. He has struggled with his game over the last three months since the beginning of May; a lot of pressure, putting a lot of pressure on himself to play. And at the end of the day, at 14th on the list and not having played that well over the last three months I could not quite pull the trigger on him, but I held off to make that phone call this morning. He was crushed. He was very disappointed.

The thing I can say is, I've been there. I've been there, I've experienced it, I know what it feels like. And it has nothing to do with respect or a lack of admiration for their game. It's just you simply make the two picks you think are best for the team.

Q. Can you just talk about the new points system, a lot was made about it and now you have four rookies in the Top-10. Was it important for you to get two veteran guy who is have played in Ryder Cups to be your captain's picks?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Yeah, I think kind of a similar question before, I actually looked at what the point list would have been like had the point system not changed. And, quite frankly, what it made me realize immediately was the reason it was changed was to get guys who are playing the best golf this year, and I think that's what it's done. I think we have guys who have played the best golf this year; with that said, you know, looking for experience.

I think what I'm really wanting more than anything is a team that is just tough ten tally, strong, guys that will never give up and who will never quit. I could have picked any number of guys knowing they are going over to Ireland, going over to foreign soil to play, knowing how the crowd

is going to be, knowing the pressure of the situation. And not really seeing a guy like Lucas Glover playing well through the summer, it made the decision for itself. And it came down where **Scott Verplank** and **Stewart Cink** made their decision for me, that's the way I look at it.

Q. Davis made reference yesterday to you "sneaking around out there." Would you categorize it as such, and who were the two players you told in person that they were not going to be on the team?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: You know what, I bumped into two guys in the locker -- dining area afterwards, **Dean Wilson** and Billy Mayfair, and we discussed about the picks and how did you feel it was going to be. I kind of went through my thinking with them.

So without saying exactly, I'm not going to pick you, they knew that I wasn't going to pick them. The rest of the guys from John Rollins on down all the way to **Corey Pavin**, actually, I actually called and talked and said, I'm not picking you, to the guys I didn't pick.

So everybody who I've been sending notes to over the last couple of months, trying to encourage to play their best golf, they got a phone call from me or I saw them in person.

Q. A couple things, one, could you tell us where Scott Verplank was in your Top-10 American list?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Ninth.

Q. Okay. Second, you said there were six players, I think our mathematics showed five. Could you tell us who the sixth person was?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Yeah, Corey.

Q. And could you then finally tell us, Corey came -- Corey was circulating amongst us, we have our own little pipelines, could you kind of explain to us why or -- why he got on the list and B, why you didn't pick him?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: I think he got on the list because he had a chance to win, and he won. You know, winning to me is important.

Match play is like the final round of a tournament, which means that you tee it up on the first hole, somebody is going to win that day. Corey proved that he still knows how to do it, and

he has a huge heart, he has a great competitive nature. He's been through it before, although it's been ten years.

And at the end of the day, Loren and I and Corey decided as a group that the best thing for our team was to move the direction we did. But I gave Corey a long look. It's a tremendous pat on his back that everybody was doing that. You know, as the assistant captain, which is also plays a part in it with me, as assistant captain, he's still going to be there. He's still going to be walking with the guys, he's still going to be talking to the guys, he's still going to be with them and he has a great amount of things that he can share, and he gets to do that whether he plays or not.

Q. Why not *Davis Love*; and secondly, is it your philosophy to give everybody a taste of action on day No. 1, or could you see a scenario where somebody sat even as far into the singles?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: You know, Davis is simply -- he hasn't played well, plain and simple. He's been injured. He's still slightly injured. And just, you know, with all of the experience he has and all of the things he's accomplished, I still want to have guys who are playing well. I think he has definitely struggled.

The second part of that question again?

Q. Are you of the mind to give everybody a taste of action on day No. 1, or could you see a scenario where you sat guys even right up until the singles?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: No. I guess my style would be I would want the guys to play before the singles, no doubt.

How much is probably up in the air depending on, you know, how their game is, whatever it might be. But I definitely would want my guys all to have a taste of the action before the singles gets there.

Q. Just touching on that question a little bit, *Bernhard Langer* had an interesting situation in Oakland Hills and he sort of conducted a little mini-*Ryder Cup* with matches, and sort of I think based his team and how they played on those matches, and the U.S. Team really was kind free form in its practice. Do you already have a scenario in

mind for how you are going to conduct practice rounds?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: I do. We will definitely be having formal practices with the team all together. And we will be competing with each other in practice not to see who plays so much as just to have fun, to be sharp, to be comfortable with the formats.

You know, wither going to have a lot of things done before we get to the *Ryder Cup* in September. We're making this trip in a week or so and we'll get a lot of things accomplished then. But our practices will mean something. They are not going to be out there just knocking balls around.

Q. I've got two questions. First, did the style of golf course play into your decision at all, *The K Club*, and also, given the success that the Europeans have had here the last few times, what kind much sense do you get from your team and how badly do they want to win this thing?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Well, I'll answer the second part of that question first. Our team is unbelievably motivated to win. There's not one guy on the team who is going over there to finish second.

I feel very confident with this team. You go down the list and I like them all. All I can tell you is that for whatever the reason, whatever the case, there's a group of guys who are ready to play right now.

The first part of the question about the style of golf course, absolutely. As I looked at what we have on our team and maybe what our team needs, it became very obvious to me that we could use another guy who can put that ball in the fairway no matter what and who knows how to putt and chip and who has always been a great putter and chipper.

You know, match play is a bit of a matter of the heart. Almost completely it's a matter of the heart and the passion that you have, you take it personal. And so I think the picks I made, that's part of why I picked them is I feel like they do that.

You know, *Stewart Cink* is much longer, stronger, but he hits the ball extremely well. He's a straight hitter and he's a good putter and a great chipper.

Scott Verplank is, you know, he hits it straight, straight, straight, hits a lot of greens, he's

a great putter and chipper. **K Club** is the kind of golf course that can be thick rough and trees and you've got to put the ball in play and you need guys to put the ball in the fairway and putt and chip.

JULIUS MASON: On that note, I'd like to go to the phone lines right now and ask Tom's captain's picks to say good morning. First, **Stewart Cink** are you with us right now?

STEWART CINK: I'm here. Good morning everybody.

JULIUS MASON: Stewart, why don't you say good morning to your captain and give us some thoughts on the emotions you were feeling who you got the nod?

STEWART CINK: Tom, good to talk to you again. I appreciate you putting the confidence in me. It means a lot to me. These opportunity don't come around that often and I'm honoured to be a part of your team, not just part of the U.S. Team but part of your team, so looking forward to it.

I was also -- as far as the way I was feeling, you know, I really expected to know something last night as we all kind of did, so we were a little nervous. There was some nervous moments. I was hoping to be picked but I didn't know for sure what was going to happen. You know, it was a little bit of a sleepless night last night. There was a lot of nervous energy around the house between my wife and I and the kids. The kids were very interested.

So I was really relieved to get that call this morning and to know that Tom was interested in putting me on the team. Like I said before, I'm honored and just very relieved and I'm ready to go.

JULIUS MASON: Thanks and congratulations, Stewart.

Mr. Verplank, good morning. You there?

SCOTT VERPLANK: Good morning, I'm here.

JULIUS MASON: Say good morning to your captain and the same. Give us some of your thoughts.

SCOTT VERPLANK: Good morning, Tom. I'm a little like Stewart. I didn't sleep very well last night. I knew I was getting do you know to the end of the final cut. I don't know if anybody else knew it, but I kind of felt like I was getting down near the end. You know, I basically slept with my cell phone under my pillow, whatever sleepy did get.

I'm like Stewart; I got calls kind of late into the night and I woke up this morning about 5:30 just wide awake. I'm so pumped and I can't wait to play on another team. I love playing for the United States, and to be quite honest with you, I'm really looking forward to playing for Tom. I know when Tom got passed over as No. 11, I was one of the picks in 2002, and I know how much that hurt him. The last, two years ago, I was fairly certain I was going to be picked and I did not get picked.

So I've been on both sides. This side is definitely a heck of a lot better. I can't wait.

JULIUS MASON: Thanks, Scott. And at this stage, ladies and gentlemen, questions for anybody.

Q. Tom, this is for you. Have you solidified the plans for the trip in a week or so, and have you heard from Mickelson and woods definitively and more the other players for matter, are they going for sure, and once do get over there, what will you do on a day-to-day basis and how long will you be there?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Well, there are ten definitely going. Possibly 11, possibly 12.

As I think I had mentioned before, that you know -- I'm just going to say something right now, okay, and if I ever hear somebody question **Tiger Woods'** desire to be a part of this team again, I'm going to go crazy. **Tiger Woods** cannot wait to play in this **Ryder Cup**. He is looking forward to this **Ryder Cup** every bit as much as looking forward to playing in the **PGA Championship**, the **British Open**, the Masters and the **U.S. Open**. And if he didn't have this commitment with his charity with the Deutsche Bank, he would be in Ireland with us, and that's a fact.

And with a leader like that, I'm going to tell you one thing, also, that Tiger told me. He said: "We've got some young guys on the team. Don't worry about the young guys, I'll take care of them." That tells you about the leadership of our team.

So, you know, when we go over there to Ireland, we're going to go over there, we're going to play some golf, we're going to do some fishing, we're going to drink some Guinness, we're going to have some fun, we're going to get our pairings all put together. We're probably going to sign a bunch of autographs, probably see a few media folks, let the folks of Ireland know how much we are looking forward to coming back in September.

Phil again had a commitment, and the two of them are trying to work it out. So that's why I say it's still up in the air. You know, I could say the exact same thing for **Phil Mickelson**. In fact, I will. I'll tell you right now. Phil is the exact same way. He has called me several times. He's talked to me many, many times about this team and what he thinks the team needs. He is completely tuned in and plugged into this team. And he's having fun. He's having fun being a part of it.

I would say the one thing that I feel like I've done best is I've included all my guys into getting their opinions about a number of things. Any time you do that, it becomes a much more cohesive unit.

So I look at this list of our players, I talked to all of our top players last night at length, and that's not unusual. I've talked to a bunch of them at length. I talked to Phil last night at midnight my time for 35 minutes. You know, Tiger called me on the way to the airport. Our guys are clued in, plugged in and ready to go. I'm really excited about that.

Q. I asked Jim Furyk if he was going to expect to play with Tiger Woods, and he said he did expect to be Tiger's partner, and I asked him how many matches and he said he didn't know. Are you playing him all four or what?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Boy, what else do you want to know? (Laughter).

They are a tough team. They are a tough team. And I know I wouldn't want to play them.

Q. Can you tell me, did you solicit input from your top players such as Tiger and Phil in helping you and Loren and Corey make the captain's picks, and also, will you consult Tiger and Phil kind of as playing consultants for the pairings themselves?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: You know what, I've consulted them about a whole huge number of issues. You know, the bottom line is, is that you get all kind of opinions. And it becomes my decision on the decisions that I make. The one thing that's common with all of the discussions is their desire to win. That's what I'll tell you.

I'll tell you right now, the fact that I didn't pick **Davis Love** is going to hurt a lot of the guys because they like him so much. I'm not sure what to say other than the fact that in this game of golf, there's so many friendships that are formed

through all the years and all the experiences, and Davis has been a part of six **Ryder Cup** teams, and I'm not sure, maybe six **Presidents Cup** teams and guys really enjoy him. The guys really like Davis. I love Davis. We all like him. So the fact that he's not a part of the team, you know, it's going to be something that you say, gosh, you know what I miss Davis.

The flipside of that coin is that I think we picked the two players who are playing extremely well and who are going to provide our the team with what we need, and I think all of the guys understand that and agree with that.

So, you know, it becomes not personal. It's not personal. It's all about trying to get the best team possible.

Q. There was a lot of, with this new points system that decided this team, obviously a lot of emphasis on current form and especially winning with the bonuses. Your two picks, one of them has not won in two years and the other one has not won in five years. How much did that enter your thinking?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Well, obviously I did think about that. And I guess the fact of the matter; there's not a lot of guys doing a lot of winning, period. If I were simply only going to pick guys who have won, it would be a pretty small list. It's just kind of the nature of the international world of the **PGA TOUR** right now.

So I think the end of the day, the criteria that I selected was winning is important, but every bit as important is ones you get a chance to win, when you're in the hunt how do you perform. And I think these guys performed well under the pressure. That's part of the reason I didn't pick them. I think when they get in a position where they have something they need to do, they generally speaking can finish it off.

You know, there's two examples right now I can think is **Stewart Cink** has moved steadily up the list. He's had a bunch of fourths and fifth and has played extremely well and he has not won and you sometimes you get unlucky not to win. One year he won, he beat me at Hilton Head, he birdied the last three holes and finished, so I know he can finish the game.

Scott Verplank, he withdrew from **Byron Nelson** after having a shoulder injury. He came back a few weeks ago and first week out, he finished fourth at the Buick. So to me that says a

lot about him. He knew he needed a big week and he got it.

So, you know, I don't doubt their heart at all. I mean, their heart is part of the reason why I picked them. And then going even more forward with that, I think it's important that we go back to the fact that I have kept that alternate points list and those guys are both inside of the Top-10 of the Americans. So me, that's a significant thing.

Q. Congratulations, everything seems to be fitting in place well. Did you get the two cents mailing card from the September Golf Digest, and if you did, what were the results, and they did put somebody on there that's totally ineligible?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: I haven't seen that, whatever that is you're holding up there.

By the way, where is all your cameras today? You're looking a little bit light.

Q. They are tucked under here, but they had a mail-in list, they said they would forward it to you, and on the list was: Fred Couples, John Daly, Chris DiMarco, David Duval, Fred Funk, yourself, Justin Leonard, Davis Love, Scott Verplank, Michelle Wie, and a space for two others.

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Yeah, I think I got *Michelle Wie* and a write-in for *Paula Creamer*. (Laughter).

Q. Do you feel a connection so Zach Johnson, you group up in neighboring states, played the Waterloo Opens of the year get to go where you are were at, playing on the Hogan and Nationwide Tours to get to the Tour?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Do I feel a connection? I feel a connection with all my guys. There isn't a guy on the team that I don't feel a special bond with now. Being he's from Iowa, my mom's from Iowa, us Minnesotans like to pick on Iowans, and Iowans like to pick on Minnesotans. Trust me, whenever Minnesota plays Iowa in anything, whoever loses hears about it.

But yeah, I do feel a connection. My life as a golfer has always been about kind of the underdog, overcoming the odds, overcoming the frustrations. So I can relate to a guy like Zach who has behind of come up like I did through the *Nationwide Tour* and to Rookie of the Year, to

now where I think he's on the brink of being a superstar. So I can relate to him.

Q. First of all, great picks, but we just I think saw a little bit of maybe your coaching style. Is there a coach that you patterned your philosophy after?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Well, you know, that's really hard to say, because I don't know that many coaches personally.

But I would say that my coaching style and my captain's style is a very personal style, relating and communicating with my guys openly and honestly.

If I had to pick anybody who I admire most in the coaching world is *John Wooden* and I feel very fortunate to have been able to spend some time with him. You know, I spent some time with Mike Scioscia from the California Angels and got some real pearls of wisdom from him. And I'm going to visit Mike Krzyzewski in a couple of weeks. I think they are three guys that I admire a great deal.

On top of that, I've had great input from past captains, from people in golf who really are knowledgeable about the game and knowledgeable about the workings of the world and what you need. I spent literally hours on the telephone with some of these guys over the last month. In fact, last night I talked to Tom Watson for 25 minutes. To me when you get the input from people who know what they are talking about, from people that have been there, who are successful, I guess you realize that first and foremost, if you don't care about your team, then you might as well quit and go home. I think the guys know that I care about them and I think that goes a long way.

Q. You referred several times to the list you kept, the American list.

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Yeah.

Q. Would you like to see that system implemented in future years?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: You know, I don't know that it's the time it talk about that right now. I mean, it's it is a certainty that the game in America has changed with all of the international players who are here.

So I think the *PGA of America* does I think a really good job of evaluating post-*Ryder Cup* each year to see where we're add at and

I'm sure this year will be no different and I'm sure there's a way to make things even better; that they will consider doing that. You know, I'm pretty pleased with the system. I have to say, I really am; the system that, you know, gets the guys who are playing the best in the year of the Cup is the system that you want. It definitely helped I think to do that.

Q. Actually this is for Stewart Cink. I wanted to ask him whether he thought at last year's Presidents Cup was a turning point in terms of the guys coming together and bonding.

STEWART CINK: Last year's *Presidents Cup* was a huge, huge moment. The last putt there when *Chris DiMarco* sunk the clinching putt there on the 18th green, that was great because a lot of us that are around my age like me and *David Toms* and Chris and some of the other guys, we had not experienced a win. We had won in 2000 at the *Presidents Cup* but then had a drought there. And I wasn't on the South African *Presidents Cup* team, which I think there was a tie.

But there's nothing like a win in a team environment and that was a huge, huge moment for us, especially to win the way we did. We won a close one. That's something that we haven't done. I think to get just a taste of that, that will go a long way at this *Ryder Cup* because I have a feeling it's going to be a close one.

Q. Question for Scott. Obviously you've played over there last time at *The Belfry*, and could you perhaps tell us about your experience over there and how difficult it is when most of the crowd is rooting against you.

SCOTT VERPLANK: You know, personally, I enjoyed that immensely. I think it's similar to what Tom was saying. I've kind of had to fight the odds most of my career with different health problems or different scenarios. So to me, there's nothing like going on the road and winning at somebody else's house. That to me, that's the ultimate in sports.

You know, I immensely enjoyed *The Belfry*. The crowd was great. It was very exciting that they were so supportive of the *European Team*. I won two matches and lost one, so I got it a little less noisy around me since I won a couple matches.

But I think it's such a great event. To me it's the premiere event in the world. I haven't won a major. Maybe one day I'll get that chance and get that done, maybe if Tiger takes a couple years off or something.

But, listen, I don't know how you could be any higher or have a better event than this *Ryder Cup*. So I told Tom that I was put on this earth to play in things like this, so I'll be ready to go. I am so fired up.

Q. For both Stewart and Scott, both of you obviously will have *Ryder Cup* experience but at one point you were both rookies. Can you talk about what the four rookies on your team, what's in store for them, and also, they talk a lot about leadership, can you give an example of what they mean by leadership in this type of competition?

SCOTT VERPLANK: Stew, you want that one?

STEWART CINK: I'll take that one. I'll address the leadership one.

You know, a group of individuals, whether it's golf or at the office or wherever you are will always evolve into leaders and followers. In this case, I think you've got some leadership qualities that are pre determined because of the records of the players and their experience. Tiger and Phil, *David Toms*, *Jim Furyk*, those guys are the ones who have put up the most points, they have won majors in the past, they have been involved in a lot of *Ryder Cups*. So they already have some built-in leadership, and they are expected to be leaders.

On the other hand you've got the natural human instinct that will sort of take over and some leaders will develop out of just being in the group themselves. I think that's really fascinating to see how guys will take charge within, say, a pairing on one match. You'll have a guy who really needs to be led or wants to be led and you'll have a guy who wants to be the one in charge. I've seen it a lot of times, Davis has been a good leader in the past when I've played with him, but on the other side, when I played with *Chris Riley*, I felt it was my duty to sort of take over and be the one in charge there. It works well both ways and it's really fascinating to see and you really learn a lot about the individuals in that sense.

SCOTT VERPLANK: Do you want me to talk about the rookies? (Laughing).

I guess I have some experience with that because I guess in 2001, we actually played it in 2002, I was a rookie, but I was a captain's pick. So I was kind of unique in that way.

All I heard from **Azinger** and Hal Sutton and guys that have been there and had been doing it for five years, they said, you'll get on the first tee, you'll be so nervous, you won't be able to stand it. Just take a deep breath, you probably won't even be able to see the ball just make a swing.

I heard all of these stories about how it was going to be. I got on the first tee and I was hitting first in our alternate-shot game and I looked around and I went -- I had the biggest smile on my face and I was so calm. Because I said, how could you be nervous doing something this gait and having so much fun?

I think that I will try to impress that upon the four guys that haven't ever played. Yeah, you're going to be nervous because you want to do good. It's a great event. But if you can't enjoy it, then you probably shouldn't be playing golf because it doesn't get any better than that, and if you're enjoying it, the nerves go away real quick and you usually get in there and play some of your best golf.

I think that every one of them, they will do great in that format and they will do great in that situation. I really think they will do really good.

Q. I understand that it may be down to you as to whether the public will be admitted into *The K Club* for next week's sessions. What is your view on that?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: I guess I would not have a problem with limited viewing, absolutely. I think if there's a group of people who want to come out and watch us practice or see the guys after the round, sign some autographs, I'm certainly not opposed to that. I know we're over there for a reason. I know we're over there to accomplish something. So you know, during the course of practice, it would be great to have some fans out there watching as long as they respect our practice and then we can take care of what they like afterwards. So that's the way I feel about it.

Q. Could you share a little of your thinking in passing over John Rollins in the 11 spot and Jerry Kelly in the 13th spot. He had made -- everyone knew his desire to make the team.

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Absolutely. Both of them. I guess the end of the day, with both guys, and having called and talked to both of them, they both have been quite inconsistent. I think at the end of the day, that's really what was the defining moment for me with those two in particular.

A lot of good golf interspersed with a lot of missed cuts and things like that, and nobody ever would question their passion, absolutely not, you're right about that. There's nobody who wanted to be on the team more than **Jerry Kelly** or John Rollins. And Jerry, it's been his goal; he rolled the dice with the **PGA**, he didn't play the previous two weeks because he wanted to prepare and he really wanted to be here.

I think the end of the day, you really have to know, you really have to know what you're getting. You have to know what to expect from your guys. And part of the reason why I selected the two guys that I did is that I feel like I know what I'm going to get with those guys day after day after day, round after round, shot after shot. To me, that's important. To their teammates, that's important. Their teammates need to be able to trust each other. Teammates need to be able to look at the guys around you and say, I trust you, let's go get it done. So the trust factor is huge, and you get that by bringing it day after day after day and getting it done.

Q. I was just looking for a little detail on the trip. Are you guys leaving from Firestone Sunday night or Monday, and is it players only, the 15 of you or is there family going along and how long are you planning to be over there?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Yeah, we're leaving from I believe Cleveland actually Sunday night, coming back first thing Wednesday morning, and it's players and caddies. And Corey is going as well, assistant captain. .

Q. You talked about knowing your guys. Can you just give us a little something on the four rookies and what you think each brings to the table to this team?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Absolutely. Brett Wetterich makes a ton of birdies. He's long and he's strong and he's fearless. You know, I believe that he brings -- I'm not sure the right word, a little bit of the devil may car attitude to the team.

That's the way he plays. So I like his power, I like his strength, I like his length. I like the way he putts it. I like the fact that he maybes a lot of birdies and I think he'll make a great four-ball partner with somebody.

J.J. Henry has got a great attitude and everybody likes him. Everybody likes being around him. He drives the ball great. He's long, as well. He hits it pretty straight. He's in my opinion, a way underrated player. Everybody who plays with him goes, wow this, **J.J. Henry** guy can really play. I think he has a very well-rounded game and could fit in with anybody, especially with his personality.

We talked about **Zach Johnson** a bit already. Again, another solid ball-striker and a great putter. His short game has always been the strength of his game, something that's important in a **Ryder Cup** match. I think he has everything that you need. He's not really lacking. And again, a guy that everybody enjoys being around and likes being with.

And then **Vaughn Taylor**. I'm not sure that you can rate how much guys hate to lose and say this guy hates it more than this guy or this guy hates it more than that guy. I would say that it would be pretty tough for a guy to hate to lose more than **Vaughn Taylor**.

Q. Now that you've made your captain's selections, and that's over with, do you feel sort of relief or that there's a burden that's been listed off of you now and you can just worry about the matches itself?

CAPTAIN TOM LEHMAN: Yeah, I feel good. I feel really incredibly good about where we're at and I feel very at peace and very settled and very confident with the two guys that I picked. I obviously hurt for the guys that didn't get picked and that's an honest statement. But I feel tremendously, tremendously confident in this squad.

JULIUS MASON: Stewart and Scott, congratulations. Thank you very much for joining us this morning. And ladies and gentlemen, we'll see you next month at the **Ryder Cup**.