

**LANTO GRIFFIN**

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**Q. First of all, just a few comments on obviously how -- not to sound too dramatic, but how life has changed since getting that first win in Houston.**

**LANTO GRIFFIN:** Yeah, I think the biggest thing is the lack of sleep I've been able to get just thinking about the three-year exemption and starting the year in Maui. The Sentry Tournament of Champions is something that I've always watched, so it's been fun. Just the outpouring of support from friends, family, people I don't even know. The players, getting a lot of congrats from players, peers has been really cool.

I don't know, it's something that you always dreamed about and never really knew if it would happen, so now that it's happened, it's been a pretty fun experience.

**Q. You really hit the ground running. You're the only player on Tour who's had top-20 finishes in every one of your starts so far. Did you come out feeling that hot or did you just kind of build upon what was working for you?**

**LANTO GRIFFIN:** Yeah, no, that was my goal starting the Korn Ferry season, just be more consistent and knowing that 15th, 20th place finishes aren't going to lock your card up, but when they stack on top of each other, they really build up.

So coming into the fall two years ago, I got off to a really bad start, I made one cut in the first five and I think I reshuffled back. So I really wanted to play smart and just try and stack some nice finishes. I didn't expect that four top-20s to start, but I knew my game was trending to be able to do that.

So after the first two, I felt like I had a really good kind of base under me, which I've never really had. But then obviously you've got to keep going and I've been able to try to -- I've been sticking to my game plan, which has been great.

And then obviously the win, I think winning kind of takes care of itself. If you do all the right things, you know, obviously I got some really good breaks in Houston, but I felt like I could have -- I had a chance to win one of those first four, everything fell in the right place.

So I think having that mindset that you don't need to win, play smart and have some good finishes and obviously you get a week where the putts drop and you get a good break here or there and then all of a sudden you're in the winner's circle and it kind of blindsides you. The blindsiding is kind of what happened to me.

**Q. Yeah, and with all that, you're leading the FedExCup. I know it's still early, but just**

## **the decision on coming here and playing in Bermuda, a little bit about that?**

**LANTO GRIFFIN:** Yeah. Obviously it's been a long year and I could have taken a month off and gone to Mexico, but there's tons to play for still. Another win would get me a third year exemption, Open Championship, WGCs. Those are all in the back of my mind. East Lake is huge, making it to East Lake is my No. 1 goal now.

So why not play? The island's beautiful. I did some research, my girlfriend wanted to come. It's hard to look at an island like this and not want to go.

And then the biggest factor of all was RSM, that Birdies Fore Love. That was the No. 1 factor for me to play. I wanted to play. I wasn't sure if I had the energy, but I had a 10 birdie lead after Houston for 300 grand for charity.

I want to start a foundation. We're going to, we're working on it right now. So if I can start my foundation with 350,000 to that 150 in Houston, that would be a dream for me. So having that capital to disperse to different areas that need it, that means a lot to me. If I skip Bermuda, then my chances of winning that 300,000, I still have a shot but I felt like if I play Bermuda and I make two or three the last three cuts or make all three, I should have a really good shot at it. So that made the decision easy.

## **Q. A little bit more about your foundation you're looking to start?**

**LANTO GRIFFIN:** Yeah, I want to help two causes. I want to help kids, youth that want to play sports -- doesn't have to be golf -- that can't afford it. Growing up, we couldn't afford to travel like travel soccer, travel baseball. And then junior golf, I had a lot of families that would bring me along with them and help pay for the tournaments. I just don't think that if there's a kid like me when I was young coming up that all he wants to do is play golf or all he wants to do is play soccer, and he's good and he's doing everything right, then he should have the means to do it.

In my hometown, Blacksburg, Roanoke, that whole area, it's going to be a need based, but also a want based. If someone really wants to play travel soccer and he's good and he really wants to put in the hard work, then I want to be able to sponsor him and give him the opportunities that I had.

And then the other one is help families that are battling terminal illnesses. So the husband comes down with pancreatic cancer and he can't work, can't support his family, the mortgage is coming up. If I could cut the family a \$30,000 check, look, for the next six months or three months, whatever, you don't have to worry about travel expenses, hotels, your mortgage; focus on getting better, healing, don't worry about finances. Because my mom went through that and it was tough to see that. She had to go back to work. As soon as my dad passed away, she had to go back to work. She went from being a stay-at-home mom with four kids to working.

So if I can help families either -- you know, cancer research is important to me, too, but you have to donate a lot of money for that to do anything. So I feel like if I can help some families immediately when they're in the time of crisis. So obviously there's plenty of instances like that. And then basically helping kids and helping families that are battling the ultimate.

So those are the two things that I'm going to base my foundation on. That might change a little bit, but those are the two things that kind of touch me, touch home.

**Q. When are you hoping ideally to have that?**

**LANTO GRIFFIN:** We're working on it right now. I won a SwingThought tournament in 2014, I made 20 grand. After that I talked to a couple people I'm close to, I'm like, let's start a foundation. Obviously looking back, I didn't have any of the resources to do it.

So it's been something I've thought about for a long time. It hasn't been like, hey, I won, let's start a foundation. It's something I've wanted to do. That's been really exciting. We've already got -- my mind's spinning on ways to bring in more money.

My first event's going to be around Greenbrier at the end of the year or in August, so I already have -- Dormie Network's one of my sponsors, they're going to donate. Ballyhack in Roanoke. So we're working seven, eight months away, but I want the first one to be a really big event.

So the community support in the Roanoke Valley and the New River Valley, they're behind me and I know I'm going to be able to do a lot of good stuff. The RSM is mind boggling to me that they're that generous to give away 300,000, so I'm chasing it.

**Q. When you're talking about that, do you feel like you have kind of more than two bites, maybe one or two bites or more bites at the cherry to contribute to this foundation, one, with the RSM Birdies Fore Love, but also the Wyndham Rewards? You're obviously leading the FedExCup right now. As you get closer to the end of the season, even through the season, that's probably something that plays on your mind. There's a lot of bonus money involved there.**

**LANTO GRIFFIN:** Absolutely. Anytime you can -- every player, most players, they have their own organizations, but if I can support my hometown, my village that raised me, I feel like there would be nothing that would make me feel better and be able to look back than -- obviously taking feels great, but being able to give back is the ultimate.

I mean, it's weird, you win a tournament and you win -- I won \$1.35 million and it feels good, but it doesn't feel that great. But when you can change people's lives, that's when it's really going to hit home and be like, I've actually made a difference. So I'm going to chase -- I plan on playing a lot. I want East Lake, the Wyndham Rewards. The Wyndham Rewards is probably down the road for me. This RSM is right now, so that's my No. 1 goal.

**Q. It must be really satisfying for you individually to contribute, but also when these organizations like RSM and Wyndham and the Astros Foundation, they see or hear you talking about this, that's got to be satisfying for them knowing that?**

**LANTO GRIFFIN:** Yeah, just knowing that they're making a big difference. RSM and the Astros Foundation, without the Astros Foundation, without Jim Crane, I mean, he brought that tournament back from the dead. If he doesn't do that, I might never win a PGA TOUR event, you never know. So Jim Crane, I owe him -- I mean, I'm an Astros fan for life. I'm going to donate money to his foundation. They have a really good foundation, they help youth under 25, homelessness, opportunities, all kinds of stuff. So I definitely want to donate to their cause.

There's some players that do a lot of good stuff. I know Danny Lovemark's foundation does a lot and it would be nice to support some of theirs now. If I can use, I wouldn't say fame or whatever it is where my stage --

**Q. Your platform?**

**LANTO GRIFFIN:** My platform, if I can use that and raise money for other people's, too, I want to do that. It's crazy what golf -- I mean, \$300,000 is a life-changing amount of money, it really is. It's mind boggling how much -- it's not 25 grand.

When I won 10,000 at the Travelers, I couldn't believe that Travelers had 10,000 and that made a big difference. I gave \$20,000 to a kid named Ben Carroll, who's playing at Charleston Southern. His mom died two years ago of cancer and he's a really good player. Perfect example.

So I was able to give him a \$20,000 scholarship, so instead of -- you know, college scholarships cover tuition, sometimes books, sometimes housing, but life expenses if you want to go to dinner, if you want to go to a movie or whatever. So I was able to give him 20 grand, five over four years. He was able to use that for amateur golf tournaments, travel, gas, whatever he needs to to make his college experience a little bit easier. I know he's going to do the right things on the course and if he ever makes it on the PGA TOUR or wins, it would be cool that I had not a big part at all, but I supported him, because I had a lot of people that helped me out.

**Q. Big paying it forward or paying it back, so to speak, I think it's really caught on how what a big collective heart Tour players have in terms of charity.**

**LANTO GRIFFIN:** I think we learn it from the PGA TOUR, though. The main focus of the PGA TOUR is supporting charities at each tournament in that area. When you can see the PGA TOUR lead by example, put their money where their mouth is, it makes it easy for us to want to be part of that.

**Q. Last one, just some thoughts on the course? Have you had a chance to get out and see it?**

**LANTO GRIFFIN:** I played nine.

**Q. A little hilly?**

**LANTO GRIFFIN:** It's hilly, yeah.

**Q. Windy?**

**LANTO GRIFFIN:** Windy, both things I don't mind. We played nine real late last night. We were walking on seven green and it was just incredible, like the whole world just opened up. It's a beautiful place and it's one of the cleanest, nicest islands that I've been to. I played a lot of Latin Tour and all that and this is by far the nicest place I've been in my opinion from a view and like feeling safe. Food's really good. This place is pretty special.

**Q. I rode in with Harry this morning on the shuttle and I asked him what kind of comments he still gets on the Seinfeld shtick. I was with Kevin and you guys when you all did that.**

**LANTO GRIFFIN:** Kevin's the worst, God. Oh, didn't see you there, Kev.

**Q. Do you still get comments on that?**

**LANTO GRIFFIN:** Yeah. On Safeway I think I got a couple, but he was a star. I call him Costanza now, or George. I don't call him Harry.

**Q. You were pretty good.**

**LANTO GRIFFIN:** Yeah, that was fun. That was one of their better skits, for sure. By far the best that you guys have come up with.