

**February 24, 2009**



An Interview With:

## TIGER WOODS

LAURA HILL: Tiger, it's been about eight and a half months since we last saw you. You've had knee surgery. Welcomed a member of the family, and welcome back. Just a couple comments for us.

TIGER WOODS: Yeah, it's great to be back. Sorry I'm late. I forgot how long it takes to play 18 holes walking. But no, it feels great to be back out and get back out here in a competitive environment again, and it feels really good.

LAURA HILL: Can you talk about what led you to your decision to come back this week at the Accenture Match Play Championship.

TIGER WOODS: Yeah, it was basically my practice sessions have been going really well, so I felt good there. It was just a matter of Elin and Charlie feeling good, and as long as they're healthy and secure at home, then I was ready to come back and play.

**Q. Describe the strength you have in your knee and also in layman's terms can you just kind of describe how your swing could be different now that you have some stability on the left side?**

TIGER WOODS: Yeah, the strength, I feel a lot stronger in my left leg. Both legs have been stronger than they ever have been. Stability is something I haven't had in years. So it's nice to make a swing and not have my -- as I've said before -- my bones move.

Since I had no ACL, I had a lack of ACL for a number of years, no matter what I did, it was always moving. So I would try and hit into my left side, but the more I did it, the more it would move, so hence one of the reasons why you saw me

jumping off the ball is to get off that leg. But it's nice to be able to hit into it for the first time.

**Q. Can you describe what the rehabilitation process was like for you?**

TIGER WOODS: (Laughing) Don't go through it. It is not a lot of fun. The first few months are pretty tough. I mean, you're in quite a bit of pain, and it was just a lack of strength, mobility, just a lot of different things that you take for granted. That's all taken away from you.

So to come back after -- you start feeling pretty normal probably around five months, start feeling pretty good. But still, five months is a very long time. The six-, seven-month mark you start feeling really good, and here I am at eight months out.

**Q. You talked at Torrey Pines how the Open was your greatest win. I just wonder in the last few months as you rehabbed, did you think back on it and how amazing, how did I do this type of situation?**

TIGER WOODS: Yeah, as I've watched the highlights, it is -- knowing what I went through, just the struggle each and every shot, it was a tough week.

I look back on it, I hit a lot of good shots, hit a lot of bad ones, but I putted great all week. I just hung in there, stayed patient, and that's one of the things I was very proud of is that I was able to stay very patient the entire week. With everything I had to deal with through that week, to stay that focused for all 18 holes each and every shot, I was very proud of that.

**Q. You spoke about the physical aspects of being on the sidelines. What was it like mentally for you having spent your life [check] repeating and repeating and repeating and then just have to sit on the couch and watch it on TV, and following up on Doug's question, has your swing changed now that**

**you can swing through more?**

TIGER WOODS: First off, being on the sidelines, it actually felt great to get away from it, be with Sam and E and watch her grow. I would have missed a lot of that. So I was able to be a part of that.

That's something that -- it was a blessing in disguise to have an opportunity just to see Sam grow that fast and that much. As players you travel so much that I would have missed a lot of that, so I was very lucky there.

As far as my golf swing, I'm doing the same things I've been trying to do, but now I have a leg I can do it on.

**Q. How did you find this as a walking course, and how do you feel about the prospect of maybe having to play an awful lot of golf this week?**

TIGER WOODS: Well, it is a long walk, especially between holes. This course is spread out quite a bit. But hey, I feel good just being out here, just being able to get out there and walk the golf course. It felt great today. I was very, very pleased.

**Q. What is it like to get back to work in the match-play format compared to a stroke-play event?**

TIGER WOODS: Well, you have to be on your game right away. It's not like you can build into it. You can go out there and shoot 4-, 5-, 6-, 7-under par and still go home, so you have to make sure that you bring the intensity and bring your game from the very first hole, because if you don't, then I'll be going home.

That's the fickleness of match play. You have to play well. Sometimes you can play poorly -- I remember one of the guys at La Costa one year shot 79 and won his match. So that can happen. But the reverse can happen, as well. The only thing you can control is what you do on the golf course yourself.

**Q. Even for you in your situation, do you think you'll have nerves on the first tee? Do you think you might be nervous?**

TIGER WOODS: Oh, yeah. The day I'm not nervous is the day I quit. To me nerves are great. That means you care. I care about what I do, and I take great pride in what I do. Of course I'll be nervous. That's the greatest thing about it is just to feel that, to feel that rush.

**Q. You've touched on this already, but how liberating does it feel having that left knee so much stronger again, and how does that change your confidence and your mindset going forward to pile up more titles and specifically more majors?**

TIGER WOODS: Well, I feel great. I mean, I didn't think it would feel this good before the surgery or even just after the surgery because I hadn't known what it's like to feel this way. It's been so long. So to have it feel this healthy and this solid and secure, man, it's a great feeling.

**Q. What do you think of the golf course?**

TIGER WOODS: Well, the greens are a bit tough. They're a little severe out there. The green speeds are down because if they ever got them up, you couldn't play. It's going to be -- I think it'll be interesting to see how the TOUR sets up the pins. Are they going to really make them difficult because the green speeds aren't that fast, or are they going to -- the greens have so much pitch on them and so much slope and movement, that there aren't a lot of pins that you can go to, so each pin will be in its own little section, and they'll probably put one or two pins in that little section.

**Q. Switching gears a little bit here, a lot has happened in the world in the time that you've been away from the golf course, not just golf, but the PGA TOUR itself, and you have connections to that. One thing, the Tiger Woods Foundation has an agreement with Stanford Financial. I wonder if you can explain that and where that stands at the moment and what's going on.**

TIGER WOODS: Everything is wonderful on our side. The foundation is doing well. Obviously as you said we have an agreement there, but everything is good on our side.

**Q. You haven't had any word from them whether that would continue?**

TIGER WOODS: We're okay.

**Q. Secondly, can you just kind of talk about the state of the PGA TOUR and what you've seen in your time away and sponsors that have left and things that are going on, and what level of concern you have over that?**

TIGER WOODS: Well, the TOUR is

obviously feeling it, just like any other part of business. I think it is very important for all of us to understand that, how important the sponsors are to our sport, and we have to acknowledge that. It's one of those times where we may be losing a few tournaments, and a lot of tournaments are coming up on their contract years, and this is a very important year going forward for us, and hopefully people will support us and what we're trying to do on the PGA TOUR, because I think it's a great opportunity for people to come out and sponsor this event and our sport, but hopefully everything will be okay on the PGA TOUR going forward.

**Q. You said before Christmas that you hadn't had a chance to look into the eyes of guys like Camilo Villegas and Anthony Kim coming down the stretch. You may have noticed recently a lot of young players have come through and won, Danny Lee on Sunday and Rory McIlroy, you may remember him from Carnoustie, he won in Dubai. Have you seen any of that on television and would you look forward to playing somebody like Rory if he managed to make it to Friday and you do, too?**

TIGER WOODS: I saw that he won there, yes. I saw some of the guys have been playing well, and I think it's great. It's the new young crop of players. It's good to see the game is youthful. It is a different generation than mine, but I think it's great to see.

We need that youthfulness in our sport. We need that injection of new blood in our sport. It's just a matter of them getting the experience and playing well, and it's good to see that they're winning golf tournaments around the world.

**Q. Was there any stage of discouragement during the rehab, and was there ever any doubt in your mind that you would get back to where you wanted to be?**

TIGER WOODS: There was no doubt I'll get back. Discouragement, yeah, there's plenty of that (smiling), as I said, especially the first few months. Anyone who's ever been through an ACL reconstruction, they'll attest to it. It's not a whole lot of fun. But once you start feeling a little bit more explosive and a little more secure in the leg and the movements start coming back, yeah, you start seeing the light at the end of the tunnel. But as I said, the first few months are pretty tough.

**Q. Can you imagine a time, now that you've had a taste of life away from the sport,**

**from the hassles you face playing golf, every time you go out there, will diminish your appetite for the game?**

TIGER WOODS: No, I don't think that will. I just think -- I didn't realize how much I loved being home and being around Sam and E and now Charlie. I mean, I'll tell you what, that's something that is just so important to me.

I knew family would be, and it has been, but I didn't know it would be to this degree, the closeness that I feel. That's something that as I said was a blessing in disguise, to be away from the game and have an opportunity to be a part of Sam's growth and development and watch it. That's something that -- we've had so much fun, so many great times, and I would have missed some of those things.

**Q. With that being said, the anticipation of fatherhood the second time around, just kind of how has that been these last couple of weeks for you?**

TIGER WOODS: A little less sleep, yeah. That's been one of the tougher parts. But it's great. This is my week to get some sleep, get some rest (smiling), so I'll take full advantage of it.

But on a serious note, it's great. To have Charlie healthy and Elin healthy and obviously Sam just doing great, it just couldn't be any better.

**Q. What's the biggest mystery you'll face tomorrow?**

TIGER WOODS: Well, I think just trying to get in the rhythm of the round, something that you -- you need to find that rhythm quickly and get into the flow. Obviously I think match play helps that because it is basically like playing the final round of a tournament from the very first hole each and every match.

**Q. There's been a lot of attention on Ryo Ishikawa the last few weeks here. Can you tell me from your experience at a young age getting all this attention, what does he -- what would you say to him advice-wise in order to succeed on the PGA TOUR?**

TIGER WOODS: Just like anything. Just because there's attention doesn't mean that that helps you hit any golf shots, doesn't help you make putts, and it doesn't help you win golf tournaments. You've still got to put in the time, the effort, and the legwork to achieve success.

Just because people are writing about you and talking about you, as my dad always said, that's never hit you a high draw, a low fade or holed a putt.

I hope that he does well going forward. He's done great so far, just an unbelievable start to his career, and hard to believe he's only 17. It's just great to see, and hopefully he'll continue to improve and have just an unbelievable career.

**Q. You mentioned in the teleconference the other day that you had compared notes to some other jocks who had had knee surgery or similar situations. I'm wondering if you could maybe give a couple examples of names of guys you talked to, what advice they might have imparted, and then as a follow-up you had a couple of check swings out there when the shutter bugs got you. What was that like, was there any pain, and what would that have felt like a year ago at this time?**

TIGER WOODS: Well, as far as other athletes, I'm not going to mention their names. It's not worth it. But you have to understand that these guys have been through a lot. A lot of different circumstances, not all of them are knees, but wrists, neck, back. But it's about the process of rehabbing and the mindset you have to have going in and the due diligence. That's what people don't understand. Trying to get back to play at a professional level is different than someone who sits at a computer desk. To be able to have to go out and the movement and the explosiveness you have to have, it's a little bit different. That's what all those guys said the same thing, it is different, you have to understand that and treat it as such.

As far as some of the check swings out there, they didn't hurt when I was doing them before when my knee wasn't good. Some of those hurt my wrists and neck over the years, but never my knee.

**Q. Just two quick things: One on the economy side, can you talk about everybody thinks that now that you've come back golf is going to turn around and the world is going to be better and everybody is going to make more money and everything else. Talk about the pressure of coming back and everybody thinking that. Two, Tim has talked about how he'd like to see players do more for the Tour to try to help their sponsors. What, if anything, can you do more because everybody looks to you?**

TIGER WOODS: I don't know if I can do any more. Our contracts are already set. Our purses are set. We're in a position now for the TOUR going forward making sure that we can still progress and continue to increase our purses going forward and making sure the sponsors really enjoy and get full value out of their participation in our sport.

That's going to be the hard part going forward is that not all companies have the luxury to be able to put as much money into a tournament because obviously everyone is feeling what's going on.

As far as what Tim says, Tim is right. We have to do more as players. We have to make sure the sponsors are really appreciated, because without them we couldn't have these events. We wouldn't be playing for the money that we're playing for, and we wouldn't have the playing opportunities we have, not just here in the United States but all around the world. Sponsors drive the events. They always have, and it's great for them to be a part of these events.

**Q. It's been said that there's ready and being tournament ready. After today's game where is yours? Or is that simply a distinction that you don't make?**

TIGER WOODS: Well, tournament ready is just obviously having rounds under your belt. I haven't had that for a while. I've played one tournament in ten months. I've had plenty of rounds. I've simulated tournaments the best I possibly can, but it's hard to get the adrenaline up to where it's going to be tomorrow when I play.

As I said to Tom earlier, trying to get into the rhythm of the round as fast as I possibly can, that's when you're tournament honed, you play tournaments. It happens instantly, and hopefully it will happen quickly for me tomorrow, as well.

**Q. Curious as to what you missed the most while you were gone.**

TIGER WOODS: Miss the most? I missed sitting here in front of you guys (laughter), talking, just hanging out here.

No, I miss that rush of playing and competing, I really do, getting on that first tee and feeling it. I miss that. As much as you can have money games at home with the guys, it's not the same. This is what I do for a living, and this is what I've always wanted to do my entire life, and



not being able to do it at the highest level was frustrating at times.

It wasn't as frustrating as you might think because I knew I wasn't physically ready to do it. As I said when I was at the Chevron World Challenge this year, I didn't feel like I was ready to come out here and embarrass myself, and I had to make sure that I felt my game was good enough and ready to compete and win again. That's what feels good about it, coming back out here and feeling that again.

**Q. What, if anything, do you know about Brendan Jones?**

TIGER WOODS: Well, he's an Aussie. I don't know a lot. I know he's played out here before, and that's about it.

**Q. He said he's never actually met you, but you guys once literally bumped into one another walking into the locker room in Thailand. I'm wondering if you remember that.**

TIGER WOODS: You're really stretching it, aren't you (laughter)?

**Q. We know you for your work ethic. I just wondered if you ever attempted to cut a practice session short the last few weeks to spend time with Charlie?**

TIGER WOODS: I have. I have done that. When Charlie has been awake and alert, usually for not very long, that's usually when I'm at home. If he's taking naps, I'll go out and practice and then come back in. Elin will call me, tell me he's awake, and I'll come back in. That's one of the beauties of living on a golf course.

**Q. With your late start to the season, have you given any thought to maybe playing in some other tournaments that you wouldn't have otherwise played in as you lead up into the Masters?**

TIGER WOODS: You know, my schedule is so up in the air. It's frustrating because I have to take it week to week. I don't know how the leg is going to feel next week and weeks going forward, continuing playing on this thing.

It's been feeling great so far, but there's a difference of walking out there all the time and competing and playing. It is hard. I wish I could tell you and I wish I knew myself that I was going to play certain tournaments and full schedules and all that, but I don't know. It is a little bit frustrating.

**Q. It's special for everybody for you to be returning, especially for southern Arizona golf fans. Can you tell us what it means to return in this part of the country? Second, are there other parts of your golf game that may have prospered from this break other than explosion and the stability of the knee?**

TIGER WOODS: Well, I think coming back here, it's great to be back here in warm weather. I can work on my farmer tan, which is great. Just being able to come out here and play again, I mean, that's -- I'm really looking forward to that.

And as far as other parts of my game, I spent a lot of time hitting easy shots because that's all I could do for a while. I got really good at hitting a 5-iron 100 yards. I could really dial that in.

My short game has gotten a little bit better. I've got more shots than I did before, just because I've spent so much time on it, chipping and all the different shots around the greens. Some of the shots I had forgotten that I had over the years, I kind of remembered how to hit them again, which was kind of nice.

**Q. You talked about missing the rush of competing. Was there any kind of rush at all of coming to the course today for the first time since the U.S. Open, going through your routine of locker room, range? You're kind of officially back on TOUR.**

TIGER WOODS: I was talking to Elin earlier about that this morning, and she asked me the same question. I said, "It feels the same. Nothing feels any different." Just because it feels like I'm coming back to what I used to do.

I'm looking forward to the rush tomorrow, I really am, waking up tomorrow and getting ready for my round and getting focused and coming out here, warming up and getting fired up for my match against Brendan. I'm really looking forward to that more than anything else because I haven't had that in a long time.

**Q. It felt no different coming here?**

TIGER WOODS: Not today, but tomorrow will definitely be a difference.

**Q. We see a lot of guys at the beginning of the year, they come out, they're a little rusty, they take a little bit of time to come into form. When was the last time, maybe apart**

from when your father passed away, but when was the last time that you showed up at a tournament when you weren't in your own mind 100 percent ready and thought you were going to win?

TIGER WOODS: That was the only one. Yeah.

LAURA HILL: Tiger, thanks for your time. Good luck this week.

**FastScripts by ASAP Sports**

**February 24, 2009**



An Interview With:

## **SERGIO GARCIA**

**CHRIS REIMER:** We want to welcome Sergio Garcia here to the interview room at the Accenture Match Play Championship. Sergio, it's your first tournament out here on the PGA TOUR this year. You come in the No. 2 ranked player in the field. Just talk about maybe what it's like to come and start your season here at this tournament.

**SERGIO GARCIA:** No, it's great. I'm looking forward to it. I played, as you probably all know, three in the Middle East, European Tour, and I'm excited. I'm looking forward to playing here, and we know how match play is, but hopefully I can get on some good momentum and see if I can get as far as possible into the weekend.

**Q. Could you give your impressions about the golf course, please?**

**SERGIO GARCIA:** The golf course is good. I think it's a good driving golf course, typical obviously desert course.

I think it's in very good shape. I think they've probably gone a little bit overboard on the greens, maybe a little bit too much slope in some of the greens. But other than that, it looks great. I'm looking forward to it, new venue. We all start fresh, so let's see how we get on with it.

**Q. Is it a good match play golf course, if there is such a thing?**

**SERGIO GARCIA:** Yeah. Yeah, I'll say so. I think that it's the kind of course that you have to be very focused all the time around the greens more than anything, because you might hit a good

shot, and you might end up 40 feet away, and then it's a hard two-putt or something like that.

It can be a lot of changes going into a match. Somebody might be on the green and be 20 feet, and somebody might be 20 feet on the other side, and the guy that is off the green has got a better chance of winning the hole. You've just got to play smart around this course.

**Q. I know it's been a couple weeks since you've played, but you got off to a solid start, 11th or better, right around there, in your three starts? Does that sound right?**

**SERGIO GARCIA:** Yeah.

**Q. How have you felt you have played so far this year, and has it kind of carried over that great momentum you had at the end of last year?**

**SERGIO GARCIA:** I'll say so, yeah. I felt like I played very solid in the Middle East. I was only not happy with my first two rounds in Abu Dhabi. I didn't play good at all there, but after that I felt like I hit the ball nicely.

Unfortunately, I had probably a couple not great putting rounds that probably put me off from winning one of the tournaments. But other than that, I felt like it was a fairly solid start, yeah.

**Q. I think perhaps had you won one of those tournaments along the way, you might have been able to knock Tiger Woods out of the No. 1 spot in the World Ranking. Was that something that you were thinking about at all in the back of your head?**

**SERGIO GARCIA:** Well, not while I was playing. After the tournament you might think about it, but I don't think that one tournament was enough. I think that I probably needed to probably win two or maybe win one and then get two probably Top-3s or 4s or something like that. I needed to do something very, very extraordinary, and unfortunately I didn't, and now he's back, so

we're all looking forward to seeing how he's feeling and seeing how his game is going. We'll see what happens.

**Q. Yesterday you committed to playing Houston. No course is ever going to be able to replicate Augusta, but what do you think of Redstone and the changes that they've made as that being a setup for Augusta the next week?**

SERGIO GARCIA: Well, I've heard about it. Unfortunately I've never played it. I'm looking forward to it. I've heard very, very good things about it.

I haven't had great success at the Masters lately, so I'm just kind of trying to go in a different way. I usually take one or two weeks off before the Masters. I decided to play the week before this year, and with everything that I heard about Redstone and the Houston Open, I think that it can definitely help me build up some momentum for Augusta, so we'll see how it works.

**Q. The word of mouth, is that a thing that the players have been talking about? Hearing from other players talking about it, it's been good reviews and they say it's as good of a setup as you can get leading up to Augusta?**

SERGIO GARCIA: Yeah, that's what I heard, yeah. That is definitely one of the reasons why I wanted to go there. So I just hope that it works good for me. I hope that I enjoy the course and feel good on it, and I can play well, too.

**Q. Maybe you could talk as almost a segue to that, a follow-up to that, about word of mouth. You're designing a course now or helping to design a course in San Antonio. Can you talk about the progress of that course down there, and also, do you find yourself when you play on a course like this one that you're not real familiar with, looking at it with the eye of a designer more than you did before since you've been working more in that regard?**

SERGIO GARCIA: A little bit, I guess. We've done a lot of good work. I'm not the designer. I want to clear that up. I helped a little bit. Greg Norman designed the course, and it looked great.

We checked it the week of TOUR Championship last year. There were probably about four or five holes that had grass and

everything on it already, and it looked great. It looked like things were coming along very nicely.

I talked to some of the guys from the Valero Texas Open, and they told me that it looks great. It's coming along very, very nicely, so I'm really looking forward to see it, to have a chance to play it, and see how everything has kind of settled down.

I guess once you play it then you can get a bit of feel for the course, but on paper it looked awesome, so we'll see.

**Q. I imagine nobody is really too overwhelmed anymore by all the attention that Tiger gets wherever he is. That said, this has turned into a really big deal, that this is his return. Were you surprised by the attention paid it?**

SERGIO GARCIA: No, not at all. I think that we all know how good he is. We all know what he means to the game. So no, I wouldn't say so.

I think, not only you guys, we've been looking forward to his comeback, and seeing how he's handled it, everything that went on with his knee. So it's going to be exciting to see him back, back on TOUR, and we'll see what happens.

**Q. I'm not sure if you've played in a match play event coming off of a losing Ryder Cup. If you have, it's been a long time --**

SERGIO GARCIA: No, I have not.

**Q. So first time, so I'm just wondering are you a little more eager to get back into the match play coming off maybe a little bit of a bad taste at Valhalla?**

SERGIO GARCIA: Not at all. Not like any other year. No, not really. Just normal.

**Q. You probably don't pay much attention to this, but of course this is the stuff we look at late at night thinking of things to write about. There's only 17 Americans in the field.**

SERGIO GARCIA: Really?

**Q. What do you make of that? Has the balance of power shifted that abruptly? I know the World Rankings with so many ranked players in Europe now, if you play well over there your number goes up that much faster.**



**Maybe it's just that simple; I don't know.**

SERGIO GARCIA: Yeah, I think that shows the strength of golf worldwide. A lot of Europeans obviously have played here and moved up the rankings, and they still support their Tour, the European Tour. When you go back there, the guys that used to be 60th in the world, now they're 25th or 30th, and that's making the tournaments, the fields of the tournaments, greater.

The points that you can get at a European Tour event these days because of the level of play of the European Tour players and the Australians and the South Africans that play there, it's much greater than it ever was. I guess that's probably why now, even though you can still play in Europe, not full-time, but throughout most of the year, and still move up the World Rankings fairly well.

**Q. I guess as a follow-up to a couple of questions ago, I suppose you guys are used to the attention that Tiger gets on the TOUR. Do you ever feel overshadowed, especially at an event like this, especially when he's coming back?**

SERGIO GARCIA: Attention-wise?

**Q. Yeah.**

SERGIO GARCIA: Maybe, but it doesn't matter. Like I said before, we know who we're up against, so it's probably the greatest player to ever play the game, and it's supposed to be like that. I think we all get our moments, and we've just got to enjoy them.

**Q. Did Danny Lee break your record last weekend for youngest guy to win a European Tour event? Did I not read that?**

SERGIO GARCIA: Did he?

**Q. I think he did. How old were you, 19?**

SERGIO GARCIA: I was 19.

**Q. And he's 18.**

SERGIO GARCIA: I was 19 and two months.

**Q. We've had two teenagers win in the last month or two. What do you think of that? They're fearless.**

SERGIO GARCIA: Well, it just shows nowadays how well prepared some of the youngsters are. They come out, they know what they're doing on the course. They have a better

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game plan. They're very prepared, not only swing-wise but physically and mentally. I think it's great. Things like that for the game of golf are great, to see youngsters coming out and playing well, because they are the future of the game.

We're going to be here hopefully for some years, but we need as many of those 18, 19, 17 year olds coming out and doing well, because they're going to carry the game.

**Q. With this being a new golf course, you talked about the severity of the greens, but does it favor any one kind of player? I know you're a particularly good driver of the golf ball. Is this course good for a good driver, long driver, straight driver?**

SERGIO GARCIA: No, I think in comparison to probably last years where we played up the road, I think that the desert here is probably a little bit rougher than it was on that course, so probably you need to get a lot luckier when you hit a bad shot to get a decent lie in this desert. There's a lot of little bushes and rocks and stuff like that.

I think obviously driving the ball is going to be important, but wherever you put the ball on these greens is going to be huge. Like I said before, you've got to be very patient this week because you're going to hit some good shots that are going to end up 40 feet away, and you feel like you're getting robbed. But there's nothing you can do about it.

**Q. Just a follow-up, is there any holes out there that might be kind of turning points, something that may be some decision-making holes?**

SERGIO GARCIA: In match play you never know. I think there's a couple par-4s that might be drivable throughout the week. But you know, like I said before, the way -- as severe as these greens are, you might hit a good drive and miss the green just right and have almost an impossible chip, and somebody else lays up and hits a good shot, and then when you were thinking you have the upper hand, now you're up against the ropes.

I think you've got to be very patient this week because some weird things are going to happen. So you've just got to expect it, I guess.

CHRIS REIMER: Sergio, thanks for joining us. Good luck this week.

**February 24, 2009**



An Interview With:

**TIM FINCHEM**

LAURA HILL: Thanks for joining us this afternoon. I know you have a couple remarks and maybe some announcements you'd like to make.

TIM FINCHEM: Thank you for being here. I'm going to be brief, answer a few questions. Generally I'm here on the question of trying to get you up to speed and everybody on the same page as to where we are with the economy, sponsorship, economic impact from the downturn, which I'll get into in just a minute.

I would like to, first of all, thank Accenture for their partnership in bringing this Match Play Championship to where it is today. I'd also like to thank everybody with Dove Mountain for the hard work on the infrastructure here and moving this facility to the point where it'll be just a couple years now, when we get the hotel open, just a world-class spot for competitive golf at this level.

We've had a good start to the year here on the West Coast, culminating last week coming into the Match Play with Phil's 35th win and a very solid tournament for us, good telecast, good numbers, and certainly we're pleased with the direction of the Northern Trust Open. Northern Trust has turned out to be a fantastic partner, as we thought there would be, but also there's a lot going on to help build the quality of our tournament in Los Angeles.

This week I believe I'm correct when I say I think it's the first time we've had all 64 players off the list with nobody hurt, nobody injured, nobody pulling out, so all the top players here. You couldn't ask for anything better for Match Play.

To set all that off, Tiger coming back after being gone for, what was it, four, four and a half years now (laughter), and we're delighted to have

him back and look forward to, as everybody is, how he performs his first time back.

On to business, I want to give you sort of an overview and I'll try to answer some of your questions. I think that, first of all, we continue to be in this economic downturn. It continues to worsen. There is obviously an awful lot of activity going on to pull us out of this eventually, and kudos to governments in the United States and around the world who are pulling together to put together stimuli packages and tinkering to see if we can get things back on track.

From the PGA TOUR perspective, obviously we are impacted. Very few companies aren't impacted. And since we're a sponsor-centric and an advertising-centric organization in sport, we are subject to the vagaries of the economic climate to some degree.

We take this very seriously. I've seen some reports recently that perhaps we have conveyed the impression that somehow we're immune. I think we've been pretty consistent, going way back, well back into the first part of 2008, when housing started down big-time late in '07 that we were taking this very seriously, and we do.

I think to date we've had, if I can get us sort of to stop right at this point and see, where are we today, we've obviously had and are having some bumps in the road.

First of all, of course, the U.S. Bank determining not to extend after 2009. Not a particularly large sponsorship, but nevertheless a financial service company. The Ginn Championship going off our schedule as we came into the year because of Ginn being unable to fulfill their commitments, which resulted in a lawsuit; and then today I will tell you that FBR is not going to continue beyond 2010, and a press release will be forthcoming after this press conference.

And then lastly, not so much related to the economy, but questions raised about the viability of Stanford as a company, given SEC action and

resultant questions arising out of that.

Now, to put these bumps in perspective, however, in no particular order, as we've already indicated publicly, we will be playing, because of the strong support we have in the community of Memphis for St. Jude's and the relationship with St. Jude's, the Stanford St. Jude Championship will be played this year without question and in my judgment going forward, regardless of -- I'm not going to comment on the difficulties of Stanford, but regardless of the outcome of that situation, we're going to play.

Obviously in Phoenix, arguably our strongest community-based tournament on TOUR and a tournament that raises significant sums for charity every year and a tournament that actually progressed for over 60 years without title sponsorship, I don't have any hesitation in saying that that's not going to have an impact on our calendar.

We, of course, have some time until '11 and we'll be working with the Thunderbirds to bring in new sponsorship because that helps generate additional support for the community.

When I look at these bumps, I don't see any huge disruptions at this point.

On the flipside of the coin, we have had and continue to have some good news in a very bad climate. A couple weeks ago we announced an extension out of 2014 with Travelers. The CEO of that company is standing up in Hartford and saying, look, this is good business and this is good for the community, and we're there for the long-term.

Today I will tell you that we have completed work on an extension with Accenture to 2014, as well, and we are delighted and continue to be delighted with our partnership with Accenture and now are pleased that we can look forward to years to come of playing this very special match play format as part of the World Golf Championships on the PGA TOUR.

In addition to those title positions, we will have some additional extensions to announce as we go into the spring. But right now, as if we stopped right now, I could tell you that we have about two thirds of our title sponsors on the PGA TOUR secure through '12 or beyond, which makes us feel very good about the viability of our overall schedule.

In terms of additional sponsorships outside of titles that really are fundamental to our ability to support our television partners, support our telecast, and to support our tournaments, we, as

well, have some good news in the sense of our new sponsor, DePuy Mitek, for our exercise vans out here on TOUR, a major new relationship with Kodak, a new relationship with Mitsubishi Electric, another new relationship with Dow Chemical, and Johnson & Johnson, as well.

When you stand back and look at that in addition to title sponsors, we actually as we sit here today are in the strongest sponsorship position we've ever been in. We're in a record level number of sponsors and total investment in the TOUR.

If I had to look at it today, and you asked me a year ago and painted the economic picture of what we would be facing at the end of February 2009, I would not have been able to project us doing this well.

That's not to say, however, that we are not going to have more bumps in the road, I suspect we will; that we're not going to have more turnover, I suspect we will, as well. There's just too much pressure on too many companies. It would be unrealistic to think that we're not going to have turnover, we're not going to have problems.

The good news in that area is that I think I'm being candid when I say that, to a sponsor currently on the PGA TOUR, 100 percent of them want to stay involved with the PGA TOUR. These are companies that have concluded that it's good business from a branding standpoint, it's good business from a business-to-business aspect of generating business on-site, it's good business from an advertising standpoint given the audience that we reach, and it's good business to be associated with charities. Those are the four pieces of the value proposition.

That doesn't mean that all these companies are going to be able to stay with the PGA TOUR. We have companies that are faced with potential bankruptcy, et cetera, and we'll just have to see how that plays out. But right now we're pleased with their efforts to figure out a way to keep us in a reduced marketing budget in some cases, figure out a way to move forward with extensions, and it gives us heart that we have the companies of the caliber that we have that are making these efforts.

We have a long way to go through this. The only thing I can hope in the short-term is that President Obama tonight does a good job and starts to create more confidence in the country, because I think that's a missing ingredient of any



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turnaround; we have to have some confidence. We hope to see that turnaround. And if we see it, we'll start to move the other way. Right now we're dealing with issues and problems, but we're making great progress.

With that, I'd be happy to try and answer a few of your questions.

**Q. I have several questions. You have obviously signed up several sponsors as you just detailed, but how do you characterize -- I can't ask you specific numbers because I know you won't share, unless you want to share -- but could you characterize the value of those sponsorships as compared to prior sponsorships of that magnitude, a percentage increase -- essentially every other industry out there has said there's negotiating room, and I wonder if the PGA TOUR has negotiated a little bit more favorably in order to have the sponsors sign on.**

TIM FINCHEM: Well, yes and no. We never really release dollar figures on any deals, past or future.

I will say, however, one, that we're very, very pleased, very pleased with everything that's been extended, number one; number two, I think I've been consistent over the last year and a half of saying that in my view the best case scenario for us is if we maintain some level of growth. In these times, any level of growth is a victory, and if I had to guess right now where do we come out after another year of this, I would still say we are in a position where we can see lesser growth but growth.

If that's where we get given all of what's going on here in this downturn, I'd be very pleased indeed.

**Q. And the other part of that, when you look back five, six years ago, the banking industry was where all sports were going as far as sponsorships go. Having too many eggs in that one basket is obviously a risk. Did the PGA TOUR fall into that category of having too many eggs in the financial basket?**

TIM FINCHEM: Well, you know, that remains to be seen. I mean, luckily some of the companies that have taken the biggest brunt of the downturn weren't companies that were on our particular customer list. You know, two years ago, three years ago certainly it didn't look like that, although we did reduce our reliance on autos

about five years ago. It's just something we'll look at as we go forward.

I think I did say last year that we are putting more energy into different industry sectors than perhaps we've enjoyed partnerships with in the past, and we continue to do that. We'll see what develops.

**Q. And last on that subject, I promise, you had said, I think it was at TOUR Championship last year, you addressed the reserves of the PGA TOUR. You have enough reserves to withstand this. Obviously in the past eight months or so since Tiger has been gone, the Dow has gone down 5,000 points in the last eight months. How has that affected your reserves and are the reserves adequate to withstand this?**

TIM FINCHEM: Well, on the one hand the reserves have been impacted negatively because those are invested dollars. However, we've done a lot of work, going all the way back to '07, to reduce our cost structure, and that's helped a lot.

We are in a -- depending on, when you say "this", I don't know what "this" is, because I don't know how long it's going to last. But if it's anything resembling a normal downturn in length, we'll be fine. If it gets out to an extra couple of years, it may be different. Anything in between, we'll have to see. But right now I'm reasonably optimistic, especially if we continue to generate new business and extension of current business.

**Q. You went through all the title sponsors, but a lot of the tournaments, in fact all of your tournaments, are dependent on more than just that. With lower level sponsorships, pro-ams, corporate chalets, that sort of thing. A lot of tournaments seem to be hurting in that regard, too. Is there anything you can do to help them? That's a significant amount that they have to raise to run their events.**

TIM FINCHEM: Sure, we're working with all of our tournaments on a daily basis to generate more opportunities in the marketing and sales area, share information on the ways other tournaments are dealing with the issue. But I think it would be a mistake to characterize all of our tournaments as hurting. We have a number of tournaments where our pro-am has been oversubscribed this year.

We haven't been off -- the number of weeks we've already played, we know enough about the numbers to know that while we'll be off some in general revenue, we're not necessarily off on the charity side yet. So that's very, very positive.

But it's still early in this, and we'll have a better picture probably when we get into the summer.

**Q. Are you aware of other potential sponsors or current sponsors that might be a little bump in the road still where they might have an issue of staying on or not, and if so, how do you deal with those before they decide to actually pull out?**

TIM FINCHEM: Well, some of our sponsors -- it's not a question of dealing with them. I mean, we have partnership agreements with all these companies, so we're working closely with them to understand where they're at. But until a company calls us up and says, you know, we just are -- it's impossible for us to proceed, we're assuming we're going to move forward. And of course we've only had one of those situations arise, and that was the Ginn Corporation.

Like I say, every other company, they may be challenged, they may be in an industry sector that's very challenged, but thus far, to a sponsor, they are focused on figuring out ways to move forward. Some of these sponsors have been with us for a long time.

Until such time -- I was at the 50th anniversary of our General Motors relationship last year in Detroit, and half a century is a long time. As long as General Motors is viable, and this is a business platform that works for them, it's demonstrated over the years that it works for them, then we're going to be there until such time as something gets in the way of that happening.

**Q. Just to follow up, as you mentioned, with FBR leaving, can you say if you have any potential sponsors in the wings? Have you been actively going after that, as well, and how is that going?**

TIM FINCHEM: Yes and yes. We have some. We've been extremely active. We've made some progress. It's, as you know, a very difficult climate, but we don't have yet -- we're not at a point where we've started to say, well, Company X might be a good fit for Y because we haven't had to do that, and of course, it's one thing to identify a company that might want to use our platform,

wants to sponsor. It's another thing to figure out the right market, the right date. They all have their interests about what they want to see, so it's one thing to create interest; it's another thing to fit a sponsor with a tournament. We haven't had to go down that path just yet.

Candidly or not, that point, even a couple tournaments where we know we're going to have to change sponsors, it won't be until the '11 season, so we have some flexibility, so we're not rushing out the door saying, let's get Sponsor X in there, because we don't have to. Although sometimes it's better to move ahead.

In a couple of these situations, like today this announcement with regard to Phoenix, I mean, Phoenix is generally regarded as one of the biggest sporting events in the country. It has huge bigness, it has huge crowds, it's got a great charitable organizations, the Thunderbirds. I wouldn't be surprised if their phones are ringing tomorrow with some companies interested, and then we'll go from there. We'll take it as we always have.

We're not panicked. We have a very positive attitude. We've got our heads down and working hard, and we're going to just keep blocking and tackling and working through this.

**Q. Does the TOUR have any investments, pension plans, whatever, with Stanford that's in trouble?**

TIM FINCHEM: Any investments?

**Q. Yeah, pension plans, 401(K)s or whatever you guys do for retirement.**

TIM FINCHEM: No, we do not.

**Q. Are you talking to FedEx about stepping in in Memphis?**

TIM FINCHEM: We are not talking to anybody in particular right now. We know we have a base of support in Memphis that will help us if we need it, but candidly right now we have a contract with Stanford, and they are not in breach, so we will have to take that one step at a time.

**Q. Just to clarify, FBR is good through next year, correct? Or are they through?**

TIM FINCHEM: Yes, through '10.

**Q. So one more time around the block for them?**



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TIM FINCHEM: Correct.

**Q. And Memphis as of now is still going to have Stanford's nameplate on the event.**

TIM FINCHEM: The situation of Stanford is volatile given their situation. I don't know where that's going to come out. It would not be appropriate for me to speculate on what their issues are and what actions are being taken and what that means, so I just can't answer that question. It would be speculative at this point. We're just in a monitoring situation kind of mode right now.

**Q. Harkening back to the meeting that you had with the players at Torrey when you were trying to encourage them to go the extra yard to shake hands, kiss babies, and kibitz with sponsors and such, I guess there's been some discussion at the PAC on maybe a one in four rule or one in five rule or raising the minimum. What are your thoughts on that? Would those be doable? To the layman they don't probably understand why you can't ask a guy to play more than 15 times a year.**

TIM FINCHEM: Well, we can, and we have incentives built in to do so. But we also -- the culture of the sport is that the player/independent contractor can make up those decisions, and it's our job to create enough reasons why they should play to play. That's been the history.

By the way, I don't recall the kiss the baby request. I don't see a lot of babies at our tournaments most weeks.

But the players have been very cooperative, but they're great all the time. Media interviews are of particular interest to us, and I hope everybody is getting what they need from the players. If you're not, let us know.

It doesn't seem to us at this point that moving down that particular direction is necessary, but on the other hand, we've looked at it a couple times in the past, and we're looking at -- we are looking at a number of things we can do with the structure that will generate more value to prepare for the future.

So it's really about the future, though, and in times like this you want to take advantage of the situation if you can to take steps that otherwise might not be that easy to get done, take steps to improve your business performance in the future. And in our case that revolves largely around either

more value to sponsors or supporting our media partners more effectively.

**Q. We've heard kind of half-jokingly from Calc and Kenny Perry as they're getting closer to 50, hoping there's still a Champions Tour there when they get there. Do they have anything to worry about?**

TIM FINCHEM: I don't think so. I think the Champions Tour is performing quite well. I've watched it now for 20 years, and I think we have the best contingent of players from a sponsor-sensitive group since Sam Snead was playing.

These guys step up and do everything that the sponsor wants. It's also an attractive, positive group of players, and I think Freddie Couples by himself going out there is going to be another shot in the arm for that Tour.

You know, here we are well into this downturn, and the Champions Tour has moved along okay. I feel good about it. I think it's a good platform, and we look forward to working with everybody involved on that Tour going forward.

**Q. Are you going to watch Tiger play tomorrow? It's on TV, you know.**

TIM FINCHEM: I can't remember.

**Q. Do you have a meeting?**

TIM FINCHEM: I might catch a little bit on TV. I have some meetings, then I'll be out of here around 2:00, and I guess he goes off at noon. I've watched him play before (laughter), but I'm sure it'll be exciting.

LAURA HILL: Thank you.

**FastScripts by ASAP Sports**

**February 24, 2009**



An Interview With:

**PHIL MICKELSON**

MARK WILLIAMS: Phil Mickelson, welcome to the media room, Accenture Match Play Championship. Great start to the year winning last week and talk about your expectations this week and having Cabrera in the first round.

PHIL MICKELSON: We all as players love this event, and it's fun to be back playing the Match Play. We only get this once a year, really. Fortunately we have a chance in the Ryder Cup and Presidents Cup to play match play, but everybody loves this event. I know what a great player Angel Cabrera is. He won the Open there a year or two ago. But it'll be fun.

MARK WILLIAMS: I know you practiced this morning. Have you had a chance to see the golf course?

PHIL MICKELSON: I haven't been out there. I'll take a look as soon as we finish up. I hear it's quite challenging.

**Q. It's hard when you haven't seen the course yet.**

PHIL MICKELSON: I don't know what to say regarding the golf course yet.

**Q. Can you just make something up?**

PHIL MICKELSON: From what I can tell around the greens, it is very severe and will require some interesting shots, bump-and-runs, flops, spinning shots. It will be difficult to get the ball close to the hole, and I enjoy that. I like that challenge. I'm looking forward to that challenge. I feel like that gives me a slight advantage in some areas around the greens, being that they're so penalizing and difficult. If short game is a big

factor, which I believe it will be, I believe that that's going to play into my strengths.

**Q. What kind of lift did you get from Riviera, and do you think it's going to carry over?**

PHIL MICKELSON: Well, first of all, it feels great to win. You know, it feels great to be back in contention. It feels great to be able to pull through when I wasn't hitting some of my best shots and still find it there in the end.

I think that it's also kind of a platform for me to hopefully get better. I had a good session with Butch this morning trying to improve on it and build my game up as the coming six weeks come for Augusta.

**Q. I'm not trying to accentuate on any negative, but of all these WGCs this is the one where you really haven't had a really good chance of winning. I don't think you've reached the semis, have you?**

PHIL MICKELSON: I haven't. I've played well a couple times and lost some matches on the last holes. I lost to Davis Love when I was playing very well, and there was one other year, too. I think I lost to David Toms one year.

There's times I've headed into this event playing some of my best golf and just couldn't pull through. I'm going to need a little bit of luck. As we saw last week I have some hot rounds, and I think I'll be okay on those days, but I've had some less than stellar rounds and I'll need a little bit of luck on those.

Over six rounds, six matches, nobody is going to play their best golf. You do need a little bit of a break when you don't have your best stuff.

**Q. You need luck regardless, don't you?**

PHIL MICKELSON: Yeah.

**Q. More than any other tournament?**

PHIL MICKELSON: Probably so.

**Q. Obviously coming back this week, Tiger, everybody seems to be focused on that. A lot of players have even said that they're pleased to see him back, and it gives a lift to the sport. I wonder what your take is on what has happened on the PGA TOUR and elsewhere in the world and perhaps the return giving the attention and a lift to the sport and to people in general.**

PHIL MICKELSON: It's pretty evident to see what he has done for the game of golf. You know, I came here on a Tuesday practice round, and as I'm walking to the range I've never seen so many cameras and photographers and so forth, especially that early in the morning waiting for Tiger to get there.

It's amazing to me what he has done for our sport, and for us to have the most recognizable athlete in the world playing our sport is so fortunate for all of us, and we've all been able to benefit from it and to have him back is awesome.

We are going to have more of a challenge winning golf tournaments certainly, but also it will be more rewarding if we're able to win those.

**Q. Have you played Angel at all in Presidents Cup in any singles or doubles matches?**

PHIL MICKELSON: Yeah, we have played together. We played together in singles, we've played against each other in Match Play here I think once or twice.

I remember we played The Presidents Cup two years ago, and I was one back on 18. I ended up birdieing 18 to force a playoff, and that's when DiMarco birdied the last hole to close it out. We've certainly had tough matches in the past, and he's an incredible player. He won the U.S. Open. He hits the ball a long ways, great feel around the greens. I think that's going to be his strength. He's very good with his short game and with the putter.

**Q. You guys never finished that match, did you?**

PHIL MICKELSON: No, we didn't, because it was closed out with DiMarco.

**Q. You had him though, right?**

PHIL MICKELSON: I was looking good on the first hole, but you just never know.

**Q. If you could describe the differences of your mindset and approach opposing match play to stroke play.**

PHIL MICKELSON: Yeah, match play is like a final round every day, and you're starting even. You don't get the luxury of a four-shot lead like I had last week. You've got to go out and beat that player straight up every day.

But on the other hand you don't necessarily have to play your best if your opponent isn't playing his best. Again, it requires a little bit of fortune to be able to get through each match, but the great thing about this match play event is every day feels like a final round, so at the end of it, it's very draining.

**Q. Did you look at your bracket at all? Do you know who you would play if you were to win?**

PHIL MICKELSON: I haven't looked at it. Somebody was saying that the winner of Graeme McDowell against somebody, of his match. I'm not sure who he's playing tomorrow.

**Q. I'm just curious.**

PHIL MICKELSON: I actually try not to look at the brackets because when you start thinking ahead, it takes you out of your present match and your present focus, and so I really don't -- I almost make an effort not to look at it.

MARK WILLIAMS: Phil, we appreciate you coming in. Thank you for your time.

**FastScripts by ASAP Sports**

**February 24, 2009**



An Interview With:

**PADRAIG HARRINGTON**

RODDY WILLIAMS: Padraig, thanks very much for coming and joining us. First, can you give us a few initial thoughts on the week ahead and whether you've had a chance to see much of the course and your thoughts on that, please.

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Well, I played 27 holes at this stage, so I've seen some of the golf course. It is a difficult golf course to fully remember. I think it's a golf course you need to play and play and play competitively before you understand all the pin positions, if you ever can understand the pin positions.

There's a lot of pins that can be out there, and it seems to be impossible to cover all angles. There's going to be a number of times during the tournament that players are going to hit shots, obviously before the guy can even read the newspaper, there's going to be a number of shots during the week where you're going to be presented with a challenge, and you're not going to be quite sure where to miss, if there is a miss, whether you should hit it short left of the pin or whether you should be aggressive up and around the pin, that it's open around the pin.

It's just one of those golf courses that because of the undulations in the greens, you'll never fully -- you'll always put doubt in your mind in the approach shots because you just can't hit it middle of the green every time. Middle of the green sometimes are worse than missing the green.

It's one of those courses you're just going to have to put up with and keep firing at the flags, which is good for match play. It is actually a match play golf course. You really can't judge that much until you play competitively.

RODDY WILLIAMS: We'll take some questions.

**Q. Have you ever played a course where it could be penal to be in the middle of the green?**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Oh, yeah, there's plenty of golf courses where hitting the green -- Torrey Pines, one of the best golf courses we play on the TOUR, I hit it up on the 4th green this year and had to chip it, the one with the little bank in it -- there's plenty of greens -- if you hit it on the left side then you can't hit the ball close.

Here there's a lot more of them, but it's something that we're familiar with. But as somebody described it to me the other day, usually you're presented with one or two greens like that on the golf course, whereas here there's a number of them.

**Q. Given that you're coming off three of your favorite courses on the U.S. Tour, do you think your form will pick up now that you're here?**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: You know, it's match play. I think my form has picked up. I'm very happy with -- I reckon I'm two weeks behind where I should be, but I'm very happy with where I am and where I'm going, that sort of thing.

But Match Play is a difficult event. You can go out there and play great and lose and you can go out there and play average and win. It's one of those weeks -- you can never judge your form based on a week like this.

As I said, if it was a stroke-play event, I'd probably be a lot more comfortable, because as I said, I am -- I suppose I'm looking to show some form, and it would be easier to do that in a stroke-play event because I know I have 72 holes to do it.

Here you've got to be good from the start, and you've got to sustain it for -- how many rounds do we play? Seven rounds this week if you win it?

It's a long week to sustain it, as well.

It is difficult to show form or to use to judge form anyway, for a player to know how he's playing.

**Q. You said you didn't need to see Bob Torrance, that it was Bob Rotella that you needed to see. Have you seen him this week?**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I've been working with Bob Rotella. Yeah, as much as I even knew that I needed to work more on my mindset, actually working with him even certainly helped -- even though I knew, as I said, I know what Bob is going to say to me, but when he's there I do it better. Yeah, it has been a distinct step up there.

**Q. Just a word about Pat Perez. He said he was a guy in form. He heard about the draw and he says he's quite tired, playing six in a row. What do you know about him?**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Pat has got the mindset like me that he likes to keep himself down and build himself back up (laughter).

Pat I believe is a very good ball-striker, hits the ball quite a long way, which should suit this golf course. I've built him up quite nicely in my head, too. That's the nature.

I don't think anybody can go out there -- I've tried this over the years. It doesn't matter who you play in the Top 64. They can all play. I think this is one of those courses that you don't know could be taken in any way, shape, or form.

If somebody goes out there -- if Pat Perez plays good golf tomorrow, he's going to be very, very difficult to beat. I've got to go out there and believe that I've got to play my game and bring -- and still, you don't know if that's going to be good enough. You have to accept, go out there and play, and see what happens. But certainly I think in my mind Pat is a tough competitor to go against tomorrow.

**Q. When you talk about the slope in the greens, does it help that the speed seems to be quite slow?**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I think it's the only reality to have the speed at a slower pace, because it gives more pin positions. You need more pin positions.

It gives pins where -- there are greens out there that if you're 20 feet inside of it, if the green was fast, it's possible your ball would roll down the

other side, which would probably mean you can't get within ten feet of the hole.

So with the slower pace you can putt on the greens to the pins in certain places. I don't think they could do anything but slow the greens down here.

It doesn't help putting uphill because it can be very slow putting uphill, but I think that's the design of the greens, so you've got to keep the greens a certain pace to deal with it.

**Q. There were a lot of 64s, 65s last year down the street. What would you guess would be a typical --**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I couldn't tell you. I really, really couldn't tell you. I have no idea. I know that somebody -- I'll bet you, it doesn't matter how tough the golf course is, somebody is going to shoot 64 or 65 if the weather is as good as this.

I think the design of the golf course has been set up to really, really test the players, but somebody is going to play well and hit it down the fairway and hit it long and hit it close.

One thing you will see, you're going to see an awful lot of shots hit close. Once you hit a good shot, it does gather to the pin. An average shot could move away from the pin. You'll see quite a lot of people hitting it to three and four feet this week, much more so than you'll see people hitting it to 15 feet, because as I said, the ball will spin towards the hole if you hit a good shot.

**Q. How has your anticipation of Augusta changed this year, or has it changed?**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: It hasn't changed. In what sense anticipation of Augusta?

**Q. Looking forward to another major, having won --**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I'm always looking forward to another major. If anything has changed, I'm interested to see what this one is going to be like with the other focus.

My actual preparation and what I'm thinking about is the same. The only thing that will change is the fact that maybe I'll need to manage myself and certainly maybe even talk a certain game going into it to manage myself mentally, so I don't get carried away with thinking -- carried away with putting myself under more pressure to go out and try to win Augusta, as if -- I'd settle for



playing -- how do I put it? You can't turn up at any event and put yourself under that pressure that you must go win it or anything like that.

So I'll be trying in many ways to deflect that tension or pressure away from me and just go out there and try and play my normal game of golf, knowing that my normal game of golf is good enough to win normal tournaments. But the key is that I don't focus too much on the results and instead spend more time focusing on what I'm doing.

That's the only area that I suppose -- it's not a question of changing, it's the only area that is new, and I have to be aware of and work on.

RODDY WILLIAMS: Padraig, good luck this week. Thanks a lot more coming in.

### **FastScripts by ASAP Sports**

**February 23, 2009**



## **AN INTERVIEW WITH: RORY McILROY**

RODDY WILLIAMS: Rory, thanks for coming in and joining us and welcome to Tucson, Arizona for your first tournament as a professional in America. So how are you feeling toward your debut?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, obviously I'm coming in here with quite a good bit of form. Yeah, it's great to be over here and it's nice to be able to play a schedule that consists of World Golf Championships and Majors. So it's been great.

I got in last Thursday and I spent a couple of days in Carlsbad at TPI. And I have been enjoying myself. I've had two good looks at the golf course now and that's nice. It's interesting. The greens are still pretty tricky. It probably takes a little bit of time to get used to. But the course is in great shape and it looks like it's going to be a good week.

RODDY WILLIAMS: Terrific win in Dubai a few weeks ago, what did that mean to you, reflecting on it now a couple weeks on.

RORY McILROY: Obviously I have come close a couple of times and I was putting myself in the position to win quite a lot and I wasn't just able to pull it off.

But then I got myself into a very nice position in Dubai and nearly let it get away, but somehow I held on to the end and was able to pull it off. So it was great to get the first win as well. It's nice to get it out of the way and try and concentrate on getting a few more.

RODDY WILLIAMS: Let's open it up to some questions, please.

**Q. Congrats on that win. It was fun watching it on TV.**

RORY McILROY: Thank you.

**Q. Very eventful down the stretch.**

RORY McILROY: Yeah.

**Q. You just had another teenager win a European Tour sanctioned event and the Ishikawa kid is playing over here off and on in the States now. Is there anything you think about teenagers these days, I guess, I sound like an old man putting it that way, but why do you suppose guys are doing so well at such a young age? There always seemed to be kind of a ceiling you had to break through and over here in the States it's always been after college.**

RORY McILROY: I think that we're playing tournaments since by the time we're eight and nine years of age. So obviously, I've always grown up with golf and I started playing at the age of two. I'm sure that most of the guys that are doing well also are there. They have taken it up at an early age of the.

I suppose the technology as well. When you don't have to be a big guy in order to be able to hit it far and to be able to compete with the bigger guys. And I think that's definitely helped.

The opportunities that you get at home, you play amateur golf and you're traveling all around the world to play. Danny Lee won the U.S. Amateur last year and he's traveled all around the world. He played in Abu Dhabi on the European Tour. He played and obviously won down at the Johnny Walker there.

And Ryo, he's won twice in Japan and I met him once before and I think that -- I mean, I don't know if it's just if we have all just came along at the same time or it will be a reoccurrence in the future, but it seems that golfers are becoming a lot better a lot younger and I think it's great for the game.

**Q. At a TOUR stop in San Diego, Harrington said that you've had a couple of**

**patches where he wondered, you wonder where, how you'd come out. And then that you've come out stronger. What do you think he was referring to and could you talk about those patches?**

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I think when I first, at the end of 2007 I came out on to the European Tour and I got my card in two starts. And I just played four events that year.

And then came out in 2008 and started off pretty well. And then I hit a bit of a bad patch in the middle of the year. I missed a few cuts in a row. And I wasn't playing that great.

Then I picked it up again after and I think that at the end of the year I think I finished in the top-10, I think it was seven out of the last nine events or something like that.

So yeah, I had a bad patch probably from April through to the end of, the middle of August anyway, and it wasn't half bad but I still was able to finish in the top-10 a couple of times in that patch. But I think that it's obviously nice for Pdraig to say those things. And I've got to know him over the last couple of years and he's a great guy. And anything that you need, he comes, and if I need advice or anything he would offer it.

But, no, I think getting used to playing on TOUR as well helped. It's a lot different than playing amateur golf. You're playing a lot more golf, you're playing maybe 30, 35 weeks of the year. Where, in amateur golf, all your golf comes in the summer and you're only playing maybe 15 or 20 weeks, so it's a bit different.

And I had to get used to that, life on TOUR, living out of a suitcase and being away from home for quite long periods of time. So it was just an adjustment that was something that I had to get used to and once I was able to do that I find my feet and obviously I played well since.

**Q. The past couple years here people have talked about how match play reminded them of when they were younger and they played match play growing up. With you what was your experience with match play and as a younger guy and do you think that might help you?**

RORY McILROY: Yeah, all the amateur golf I played growing up was match play. And playing in the -- playing for Ireland in the European Championships and the Home Internationals. And, yeah, it's a game that most of our amateur events in Britain are match play events as well, so it's a format that we have grown up with. And I think

that my game suits match play because I make quite a lot of birdies and I'll be able to throw in the odd double bogey here and there.

(Laughter.)

But, yeah, we have grown up with match play and it's a great game as well. I mean, it's head to head and it gets the juices flowing. So I'm looking forward to it this week.

**Q. Do you feel like you missed anything by turning pro so early and do you feel like you've had to grow up faster? How do you think that's affected you?**

RORY McILROY: I try to -- obviously when I'm on TOUR you're hanging around people that are a lot older than you and you have to grow up faster. But when I get home from that maybe I take two or three weeks off I'll try and just chill out with my friends and just be a normal teenager again.

And it's something that I really enjoy doing and, but, yeah, it's nice, it's like two completely different lives. You're out here and you're practicing and working hard and trying to win golf tournaments. And then when you get back home you see your friends struggling to try to get results in the exams at university and doing all that.

So I'm very fortunate to be where I am at the moment and when I go home I see my friends studying and it puts everything into perspective.

**Q. Curious, I take it you're going to be in the States here for awhile through Augusta. I guess you'll be playing Doral, Bay Hill, is that pretty much the plan? Any others sprinkled in there? Tampa?**

RORY McILROY: I'm going to play obviously this week, I'm going to play the Honda Classic next week, and Doral. And then I'm going to head back home for a couple of weeks and then to Shell Houston Open, Masters, Hilton Head. And I'm going to head back for another couple of weeks and then come back out TPC. So that's the plan at the moment.

**Q. Have you asked for a spot at Wachovia before the TPC?**

RORY McILROY: I think there would be -- I think I probably would be able to get into it, but I don't -- I've heard that it's a great event and it's run really well and obviously it's a great field.

But I feel that I need to -- I would be being

in the States maybe 10 out of 13 weeks or something, I think it's just a little much. And I would rather just get home for a couple weeks and chill out and then come back over for TPC, because if I play Wachovia I would have to go Wachovia, TPC and then back home for the Irish Open and PGA at Wentworth and the European Open. So it would be, five in a row would be a little too much, I think.

**Q. Is there anything in your past memory bank of golf at Royal County Down or elsewhere that prepares you for this out here?**

RORY McILROY: Well it's actually quite funny, I played Walker Cup last year -- well near, well, about a year and a half ago now, and at Royal County Down. And Dustin Johnson, I played my first foursomes match against Dustin and Colt Knost. And I have seen Dustin today and obviously he won Pebble Beach a couple of weeks ago. So it was nice to congratulate him and say well done. Obviously he's had a good start on TOUR. But, as I said, I've grown up with match play and obviously I'll probably --

**Q. I was thinking more of the actual course itself, the actual topography, the greens?**

RORY McILROY: I don't think I've ever seen greens like this, to be honest. It's quite firm. For a new golf course it is very firm. And you have to -- but I don't think you can run the ball into the greens or anything because they are so undulating, you have to fly it all the way there. So I can't really see any comparisons.

**Q. Have you at any stage woken up to the thought that it's possible you might meet the great man at some point?**

RORY McILROY: Whatever happens, happens. We'll have to see how it goes. But, yeah, obviously it would be a dream come true for me to be able to meet Tiger. And just to play with him or play against him, it would be great to do.

But I have to focus on my first match and that's all I'm thinking about at the minute.

**Q. At this age how do you not let all this go to your head or do your friends back home bust on you enough to make sure that you don't get too much ego?**

RORY McILROY: Yeah, they definitely do. It's nice. I've got my dad up with me this week.

And my mom and dad keep me very grounded as well, which is great.

But, yeah, I mean I just want to go out and play golf. That's all I want to do. I want to go out and play and see how good I can get and try and win. And if I can keep that mindset for the rest of my career I think I'll do pretty good.

**Q. As a kid growing up what were your early impressions of American golf? I should say growing up, you're still there, but when you watched golf in the States what were your impressions?**

RORY McILROY: Actually, I played quite a bit of junior golf in the States. I played, there was always a junior tournament in Doral just before Christmas. I always went over to play in that. I played the Junior Worlds over in the San Diego area. I didn't play Torrey Pines, I played Presidio Hills and the Golf Resort I think. And played the Orange Bowl a couple of times. So I played a bit of junior golf in the States. And it was great.

I remember back in the final round of the U.S. golf would always be on a Sunday night for us back home, maybe start at 7 until 10. I was allowed to stay awake to watch it and not have to go to bed too early.

So, no, I think the style of golf over here suits my game. I hit it quite high. And I'm able to get the ball to stop pretty quickly. I'm pretty long off the tee.

**Q. As far as watching the TOUR though what were the attitude of the Europeans, Internationals, versus the Americans, because it seems when you look at a tournament like this there's a lot more international players that are in the field now. I was just curious, it was kind of like a shift there.**

RORY McILROY: Yeah, a little bit. I'm not sure. Even whenever I was growing up and watching the golf there was still quite a lot of international players Greg Norman, Nick Faldo, Nick Price, there was still a lot of great golfers from outside the states.

But then obviously you had Freddie Couples, Davis Love, Tiger, you know. But, yeah, I don't know. I think because a lot of the international guys play an international schedule and split their time between playing over here and playing in Europe, I think that the gap has become a lot closer.

**Q. You coming to Houston have you had a chance to play Redstone?**

RORY McILROY: No, I haven't. But I've heard great things. I heard that they're trying to get it in great condition before Augusta the week after, for the week after. So it should be hopefully good preparation for Augusta.

**Q. From Carnoustie forward what's been the best piece of advice you've received from whom and what did it mean?**

RORY McILROY: I don't know. I got this, I only got it a couple weeks ago, I got a nice letter from Gary Player after I won Dubai. And he said to me, "The more you practice, the luckier you get." So that's a pretty good piece of advice.

**Q. Tell you to do any sit-ups?**

RORY McILROY: No.

(Laughter.)

RODDY WILLIAMS: Rory, welcome to America and thank you very much.

RORY McILROY: Thanks, guys.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports



**February 23, 2009**



## QUICK QUOTES FROM:

### HENRIK STENSON

Henrik Stenson

Preview Interview

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February

You have a great record in this tournament and it is clearly a format you enjoy playing?

Match play seems to bring out the best in my game and from myself. It is fun to come back to a tournament where I have played well in the past and in a format I have done well in so I hope this will be another one in the making.

Only thing is that I had three weeks off. Got sick with a stomach bug and a cold in the middle so I was flat out for ten days or so and it is only the last couple of days I feel I have regained full strength again. The golf might be a little rusty but it is one of those tournaments where hopefully I can play my way into it and keep on building as we go along. But then you can play great and get knocked out or play so-so and win a couple. You never know what is heading your way.

How do you adjust to this format?

You have to get to play with the mindset you have to win every match. There will be a couple where you don't play great but you still have to scrape through but that is why it is so difficult to win a tournament like this.

Do you consider yourself a pretty good match-play exponent?

The record says so and I would say so. You have to beat your opponent or you are going home. You only have to beat one guy on the course. It is very clear what you need to do and I enjoy all the situations in match play, the swing arounds you

always get in a match and the decisions you make based on what your opponent is doing. Sometimes it doesn't always work out but there are a lot of things going on. I have always played quite a bit of match play and I love the Ryder Cup and World Cup. It is something different where you can play a bit more aggressive and I guess that is the same in match play where I can play a little more aggressive than stroke play. I get into the mindset of match play.

Different course this time?

It wasn't on my request that they changed! It is the same for everyone as nobody has played round here. The biggest change is the greens and the undulations on the greens. It will be a harder course to score and not as many birdies. It is a tricky course and you have to be in the right spot. You have to be very careful on some of the greens. You can get it to a couple of feet away and then all of a sudden you are 30 feet away so you have to be careful. If the shot doesn't quite come off the course can bite you back.

Is the course significantly different to the Gallery over the road?

The look and feel is the same tee to green but the greens are the big difference. There are some reachable par fives and short par fours. I have only played the back nine so far and will leave the front nine to tomorrow. It is the greens that is the main difference. The long par threes are also tough. The reachable par four 15<sup>th</sup> could be a key hole. But it is a desert golf course and if you are not on the grass you are in trouble.

First round draw against Davis Love III?

He is a legend and a fantastic player. Seems like he has made his way back into the top 64 so obviously has been playing well recently. It will be a tough match. I don't think there are any easy matches in a tournament like this. He was a player I grew up watching, even if I was cheering for the

Europeans, but he is a fantastic player and a good guy. I think it will be a good match and I just hope I can get a good game going.

Much talk of Tiger comeback this week – what are your thoughts on that subject?

He has been missed. There is a lot of hype in the media and it is countdown by the minute or second until he hits his first shot and it will be interesting to see how good form wise he is. He has proven everyone wrong before when they have thought he might not be in good shape and then he goes out and wins tournaments. But even being World Number One, I don't know if eight or nine months without tournament play will affect him. That is left to see for Wednesday and the rest of the week. I am sure he will be hungry to play.

He brings something to every tournament and you want to measure yourself against the best players. When he is playing that is the ultimate measurement. If you can win a tournament where he has played it gives you an extra satisfaction. He has been missed and it is good to welcome him back and congratulate him on the new addition to the family.

Ends

**February 23, 2009**



## **AN INTERVIEW WITH: BRENDAN JONES**

LAURA HILL: Brendan, thank you for coming and spending some time with us, I know we were chatting you are not used to all of the craziness that's surrounding what's going on this week, maybe just give us some comments on it.

BRENDAN JONES: Normally if I'm in a press conference there's quite a lot of Japanese asking all the questions. So yeah, I'm, it's a big style for me. I'm trying to enjoy every moment of it.

LAURA HILL: We'll take some questions.

**Q. You've been kind of locked in on 64 and Tiger obviously decided to play, what was your reaction, were you glad he did or sort of hoping he didn't or either way you were going to play somebody pretty tough, but obviously microscope on your twosome Wednesday is going to be unbelievable.**

BRENDAN JONES: Obviously being 64 in the world I'm going to be playing No. 1, 2, or 3 in the world. But really I've come a long way, if I get beat by anybody, I would like to get beat by Tiger.

So, yeah, it's a chance of a lifetime, really. I'm excited, I'm nervous, I'm just really, really happy to have made the 64 for a start, because I've been watching the rankings since the end of the year and because I haven't played anywhere I've been sliding and sliding. And I'm thinking to myself, should I be out playing? Should I be out practicing?

And one week I jumped, lose five spots, and I would say, no, I don't need to do anything, so I'll just sit on the lounge, play with the kid, my little boy.

And then I sort of just hanging in there week after week and when the Pebble Beach was washed out I thought there would be a chance to

get into the 64th position. I think it's a pretty lucky spot.

**Q. When Tiger made his announcement, on Thursday, how did you hear about it and how soon did your phone start ringing?**

BRENDAN JONES: Well, we're actually getting landscaping done at our place and the landscapers were there very early in the morning and my wife got a text message from one of her non-golfing friends to say that I think Brendan's 64. I think he's in.

But then Tiger came out and said that he was going to play and I was overjoyed, really. The chance to play probably the best player of my generation anyway. So yeah, very, very excited to have that opportunity for one of the most anticipated comebacks in any sport, really. And to have a front row seat to all of it is, you know, it's a great honor, really.

**Q. What kind of messages did you get from friends when Tiger announced he was coming back?**

BRENDAN JONES: They have been very nice to me, my friends. They have all said, you can beat him, you can beat him. It's a different format, match play's a funny game, anything can happen.

Pretty much everybody has said, if things don't go your way, just take out his knee.

(Laughter.)

I hope it doesn't have to get to that. But even the people in Tucson, you know, talking around the course here it's, just knock his knee, see how it's going, you know. Yeah, everybody's been very encouraging, they all know it's going to be a tough task. But if your friends aren't nice to you, who will be?

**Q. What do you think your chances are of beating him realistically?**

BRENDAN JONES: Well I'm an Australian, so I got some sort of chance. Obviously I know that I'm a long shot. I have got nothing to lose. I can just go out, be a lot more aggressive than what I normally would be. And if you say what are my chances? I have some sort of chance. But I couldn't give you a percentage number, no.

**Q. If you were a betting man would you put money on yourself?**

BRENDAN JONES: I would probably put the house on Tiger, but.

(Laughter.)

But I'm not, I didn't fly all this way to try to lose. I'm here to try to beat him. And there's been some funny things happen in sport. And I'm up against it, but I'm hoping that I'll put in a good effort.

**Q. To clarify, you found out last week both that you were in and then that you were in and you were going to play Tiger?**

BRENDAN JONES: I found out on Tuesday morning Australian time that I was actually in. And I found out I was 64. And there was talk back home that Tiger was ready to come back. And I was hoping -- and then I think it was maybe Thursday or Friday morning back home that it might have been Thursday that somebody said Tiger's announced he's coming back. And I got a few chills up the back of my neck, but I'm here now and two days away from it, so I'm very, very excited.

**Q. Have you ever had an injury-induced layoff of your own? Any kind of major injury?**

BRENDAN JONES: Not at all. I finished the year at the Australian Open last year. And I play the Japanese TOUR and Japan doesn't start until mid April. So I'm -- I'm a golfer that likes Tiger's schedule, although I don't quite make his sort of money on my schedule.

(Laughter.)

I like to play in the 20 tournaments a year and I do that in Japan, which starts in April and finishes in early December. Last year I got to play the three WGC's and the British Open, the PGA, and I just think that it fits into my schedule really nicely.

**Q. I meant in your career have you had an injury layoff that you've come back from.**

BRENDAN JONES: Oh, yeah, you know, in 2006 I had some back problems, but I haven't had any problems there since pretty much the start of 2007. And I'm injury-free now. I got a few aches and pains in the mornings, but I think that's just from age.

**Q. Talk about life on the Japanese TOUR and especially as it compares to maybe an event like this.**

BRENDAN JONES: Well there's no rental cars or there's no cars given to us. We have to buy our own lunch. You don't have the media to a point that we have got here or America in general.

It's very friendly tour, it's very easy for foreigners to get around. Like I don't speak much Japanese, but with my little Japanese and their little English we can always get by. But it's a fun place to play. The people are very, very friendly. The golf courses are very good. The greens are the best pretty much anywhere in the world week after week.

**Q. Have you heard from Peter O'Malley? That would be my first question.**

BRENDAN JONES: No, I haven't.

**Q. What do you think the difference will be had you played Tiger a couple of years ago when he was just playing as opposed to playing at this stage when we haven't seen him in eight months and there will be a lot of attention on him?**

BRENDAN JONES: Well Tiger's made more history in the last two years too. I think I'm a better player than what I was two years ago, so I've had that couple more year experience.

This is, Tiger went out, he had his injury when he was the best in the world and he's come back when he's the best in the world. And everybody's wanting to know, is he going to be the same Tiger, is he going to be better?

Time's going to tell on that. But any chance you get to play Tiger is a wonderful opportunity.

**Q. Who did you play last year and how many people followed your game in the first round?**

BRENDAN JONES: I played Adam Scott last year and I think there were a few Australians out following us, but that's about it really. A few

young girls watching Adam too.  
(Laughter.)

**Q. Off point, but since you play over there and you can speak English, what's the fallout been for the Ishikawa, the kid in Japan, I understand that he's almost a Tiger echelon over there if that's possible.**

BRENDAN JONES: Well Ishikawa will probably be the hottest property in Japan in as regards to movie starts, sports people, he's the king right now or he's the prince, really.

He's good looking, good with the media, he's great with the galleries. He's just a complete package. And he's got the game to back it up.

You haven't really seen the best of him over here yet, but I've got no doubt that he'll be here in the future. But right now I hope he stays in Japan, because the Japanese Tour's going quite well.

**Q. What's the strongest part of your game would you say? Driving the ball, irons, putting, what would you say?**

BRENDAN JONES: Generally I would think my iron play is quite good. I hit the ball quite a good distance so when I'm on my iron play is pretty good.

Now my preparation for this week hasn't been great. It's the first tournament of the year and my next tournament after this is in another two months. So I've had pretty much a week and a half to get ready for it.

But I think that iron play, good driver of the ball generally. In this format though it's the other part of your game that really needs to be good, so hopefully it will be all right.

**Q. Is it going to be difficult not to watch him a little bit tomorrow to kind of do your own thing given that none of us have seen him in eight months, we're all going to be kind of looking at his left knee and you're probably as much of a fan of the sport as anybody and we're all a little curious as to whether he's going to get back to where he was and how soon.**

BRENDAN JONES: Of course I'll be watching him. You watch the best to see what they do and hopefully you can learn a few things from it as well.

Tiger's come back so obviously his knee isn't bothering him. I'll just be out there to watch

his game up close and at the same time try and beat him.

**Q. Curious, you were in this week, how close did you come to being in the field for Doral or have you watched that? Did you come close at all?**

BRENDAN JONES: Well I don't know when the, what's the cut off Doral? Like I was 53 at the end of the season and I was thinking about the Masters more than anything.

But, yeah, it's out of my hands once the end of the year comes around. So I've sort of set my Japanese schedule and if I happen to get into any of the Major tournaments, then I would come on over for it.

**Q. Did you consider trying to get in a couple European or PGA TOUR events in January just to maybe get that ranking up or is that your off season?**

BRENDAN JONES: No, that is my off season. I like to get away from golf. I don't practice an awful lot, but I find for me I play the best when I'm fresh. And I'm quite fresh now, so hopefully that's going to work for me.

**Q. Is it your intention or goal to get back over here on the PGA TOUR at some point or are you content with what you're doing?**

BRENDAN JONES: I love what I'm doing. It's a family decision to a point playing in Japan. I've got a young family now and my wife doesn't travel a lot with me, so it's good that she's able, her parents, my parents can always help out with the little fellow.

But, yeah, Japan is great. I played in three tournaments, fly home for three weeks, fly out for two, home for four. It's, I get to sleep in my own bed, my own house. And I love the Japanese culture. So it's, for right now, I'm very, very happy playing in Japan.

**Q. Couple of questions, number one, what would it mean to you to beat Tiger?**

BRENDAN JONES: Oh, it would mean everything. I would have bragging rights with my friends back home. But I tried not to think too far ahead I know I'm up against it, I'm looking to go out and I think if I have the round of my life I'm going to win, you know, you've got to just take it as it comes.



I've been thinking if I could win the first and then hang on, you know, that would be great, but I don't think that's going to happen somehow.

But, yeah, it will be a dream come true to actually play Tiger and win, but I'm not going to get too carried away just yet.

**Q. The follow-up, because of the sort of the historic significance of the comeback, you talked, it almost sounds like you would prefer to be, to play Tiger as opposed to say coming in at 63 where you would have had Sergio. It sounds like you would rather play Tiger.**

BRENDAN JONES: Yeah, of course. I would have enjoyed playing Sergio as well. They're world class players and when you're 64 in the world you know you're going to be playing the top players. But there's one person that gets to play Tiger in the first round and I think I'm very, very fortunate to do that. Plus it makes for a better story if I win.

(Laughter.)

**Q. What time is it in Australia?**

BRENDAN JONES: It's early.

**Q. Could you describe Tuross Head?**

BRENDAN JONES: Tuross Head.

**Q. Describe it.**

BRENDAN JONES: Describe it? Oh, sorry. Well it's a town of about 2,000 people. Just pretty much an older sort of retirement place. It's not really a lot that goes on in Tuross. Nice beaches, fishing, prawning, but it's just a nice place for me to get away. I grew up in a small community, everybody knows everybody else, so I enjoy getting back there, I only get a chance now at Christmas time, but just really enjoy going back. Mom and dad still live there. Yeah, it's just a really nice place, good holiday destination.

**Q. Australians have made a few headlines in the past against Tiger, have you had a chance to talk to them about coming up against Tiger and then their results?**

BRENDAN JONES: No, I haven't had a chance to speak to Nick O'Hern or Peter O'Malley, but I spoke with Stephen Ames and he had some good advice for me.

(Laughter.)

But to answer your question, no, I haven't.

**Q. Just to be clear, it's a little tough to tell on the phone whether you were tongue in cheek there or not. Did you actually talk to Stephen Ames?**

BRENDAN JONES: No, I didn't.

(Laughter.)

LAURA HILL: Any parting shots before we let you go?

BRENDAN JONES: No, well, I've never met Tiger either, but I would like first thing I will probably say to Tiger is, you know, can I have three a side.

(Laughter.)

Maybe one more on the front, in case I don't get to the back. But, yeah, I'm excited, I'm nervous, it's a big deal for me, and I'm going out to do my best and who knows how it's going to be, but I'm really, really enjoying myself this week.

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