

January 13, 2018



An Interview With:

JOE DURANT

Q. It's not the finish that you wanted, but you played well for the majority of the day, wouldn't you say?

JOE DURANT: I did. I played nice. I just hit a bad wedge shot. Didn't hit it hard enough. One of those things, I was in between clubs, took the longer club, and took too much off of it.

I played nice today. Had a lot of fun. Had a great group. Just looking forward to tomorrow.

Q. Conditions kind of like you expect in Hawaii?

JOE DURANT: No, I'm ready to get to Hawaii to get in some warm weather. It's been so tough on the East Coast the last few months. Even in Pensacola, we didn't get out of the 40s last week. Ready to get these bones unchilled.

Q. You are from Pensacola?

JOE DURANT: Yes, born and raised.

Q. I'm over in Gainesville. I work for the Orlando Sentinel, but I cover the Gators. No, I get out to Destin every year for the SEC Spring Meetings.

JOE DURANT: It's nice. It's a nice place to live. I was born there, so I'm kind of biased, obviously. Haven't been that warm and toasty lately, though.

Q. He was telling me this kind of serves as a warmup for Hawaii. You did it last year. You liked it.

JOE DURANT: Yeah, it's a thrill for us to get to come down and play with these Hall of Famers and these legends. It's a nice golf course to play, work some of the rust off of your game. It helped me last year get going, and hopefully it will do the same this year.

Q. How did you do in Hawaii last year?

JOE DURANT: We only played two days. I was in eighth or ninth place going into the last day, and then we got winded out. We only played two rounds. Hopefully, that won't be the case this year.

Q. I've heard about you for years as one of the best ball strikers, right? That's your reputation. What does that mean?

JOE DURANT: I think it's just hitting the ball consistently solid and not hitting it way offline. I tend to hit a lot of fairways and greens. I'm never going to overpower a golf course anyway. So I've got to do that. I've got to put the ball in play and put the ball on the green to give myself opportunities. That's just what I've always tried to do.

Q. Has that always been kind of your knack?

JOE DURANT: Well, driving. I've usually driven the ball pretty well. I'm average length. But I'm usually in the fairway. So it sure makes it a lot easier when you do that.

Q. This week, how is that part of your game?

JOE DURANT: Pretty good. I'm a little rusty. Hitting some squirrely shots here and there, but for the most part, I've been okay.

Q. You took a six-week layoff?

JOE DURANT: Yeah, I've been battling tendinitis in my right elbow. I can't hit a lot of balls. That's a little frustrating. I'd like to practice a little more than I have, but just take it as it comes.

Q. How serious will you be tomorrow?

JOE DURANT: This is a golf tournament. We showed up to play well and try to win a golf tournament. No, it will be fun, though. I've been having fun all week, and I'm not going to stop having fun tomorrow just because I'm in good shape.

Q. Are you in the same group?

JOE DURANT: No, we'll re-pair tomorrow. Regardless, it's a thrill for us to play with these guys, like I said. Just looking forward to getting out there tomorrow.

Q. What's the story-telling like in these groups? You know what I mean? Do they want to hear stories about your exploits? Are you interested in hearing about Josh Beckett winning a World Series, things like this?

JOE DURANT: Yeah, you'd love to pick their brains about what they think about, when they were at the top of their game, what helped them to be successful. You get some of the inside scoop on things that happened over the years. They like to hear the same from us too. It's a lot of fun to interact with these guys.

Q. So you said pick their brain. I mean, is there anything like that you heard today or yesterday?

JOE DURANT: I played with Kevin Millar the last two rounds, just talking about the process of hitting, talking about so much of it is instinctual once you get into the batter's box because you don't have time to think about a whole lot. And golf's the same way. If you're thinking about a lot of things on your golf swing when you're swinging, you're in a lot of trouble. Chances are you're not going to hit it very well.

Q. Yeah, you're looking at it.

JOE DURANT: That's why you go on the range and hit a bunch of balls so you ingrain the good things and kind of take your mind out of it when you get out on the golf course. I know thinking only hurts me. If I have one good swing thought a week, that's when I tend to play my best.

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