

**CHARLIE RYMER**

**Q. How are you feeling?**

**CHARLIE RYMER:** It's fine. I'm thrilled to be playing here. It's a tough week because I've been at Augusta for 10 days before I came here, and I love going to Augusta. I get in for the Drive, Chip and & Putt and then do Morning Drive every day. I've been fortunate, this is my 10th year being the lead analyst for Westwood One radio and I love doing them. I'm always at 18 green at Augusta, but we're exposed. Between the pollen and a little bit of an upper respiratory infection, I'm about wiped out right now. Fortunately, I've got a couple days to try and get things taken care of.

**Q. So I know you're familiar with the Atlanta area, but that pollen has to be really --**

**CHARLIE RYMER:** Yeah, it's weird, it's like the pollen popped in Orlando and it hit me at home, and then I went to Augusta and about the same time. It's like pollen is following me around, so I don't have much voice right now. I feel better than I sound, just trying to catch up on a little bit of sleep from last week.

I'm not playing tomorrow in the pro-am, which is great. I probably won't do much tomorrow. Masters is always fun for us on the broadcast side but it's pretty long days, too. Not much chance to practice. I'm trying to sort of cram for the exam in these few days that I've got here.

**Q. I read that you mentioned you had some jitters before Boca Raton?**

**CHARLIE RYMER:** Hell, yes, I had some jitters, yeah. It isn't like I was making millions of dollars when I was playing the Tour 20 years ago and had a chance to get into broadcasting. These guys, they were good back then and they've been practicing, playing for 20 years, so I'm a little behind the curve on that.

Coming back and trying to get my game in order to come out and play some has been probably one of the biggest challenges I've ever taken on in my life. I tell folks that if you're in the business of talking about golf on TV, similar to my wife who's a nurse has to go back for continuing education, recertifications and all that, golf announcers ought to every three years play like five holes on live television because it's a lot harder than we remember it being.

It's been particularly fun for me to get back curious of how to play golf again. I think that this last year that's been reflected in my TV work because I'm sort of digging into places that I wouldn't be digging into otherwise because I'm trying to help my own game along with trying

to help our viewers' game. It's been good but it's also been tough as well.

One of the things I found is when you're a touring pro and you set up your whole schedule around golf -- practice, setup, practice rounds, things you're trying to get into -- when you've got a full-time job and you're trying to practice golf on the side, one of the things that you have problems with is like focus. Everybody's got the iPhones and all that. Just trying to find enough peace and quiet to go focus on something is a real challenge. I think a lot of businesspeople struggle with that. It's just hard to disengage from your job and go focus on golf. I hadn't really considered that until I tried to do it and it really is a challenge.

**Q. Just bringing up changes in the game since you were last a pro. Is there anything technology-wise or philosophy-wise that's sort of come up more recently that you're taking advantage of?**

**CHARLIE RYMER:** How much time do you have? (Laughs.) It's changed. Going back and, for example, trying to get a competitive bag back together. I was very fortunate early last year I signed with Titleist and I get to work with the Tour people, which they're amazing folks, but every club in my bag I've gone and tested and had access to the latest and greatest. That's been fun.

It can also be confusing and overwhelming as well because there's so many different options. So on the equipment side, that's one thing. Matching the golf ball. When I was playing 20 years ago we didn't have any ball launch monitors, Flight Scope or TrackMan or any of that, so that's been very helpful.

Then on the other side of it, I've been spending some time with some folks that they use like EEG to get personality profiles and find areas that you need to work on and help your focus. A guy I work with out of Orlando, in fact I'm doing a piece with him right now for our TV show, he might work with children on the autism scale in the morning or children with learning disabilities, reading comprehension, and then in the afternoon he might use the same sort of techniques to help fine tune Olympic athletes. So that certainly wasn't available 20 years ago. Breathing techniques and all of this. I'm trying to apply some of that.

It's sort of hard, there's just so much technology and science now in the equipment, in playing the game, it's a little bit overwhelming. But I'm trying to sort through that to help my game, but again, the main reason I'm coming back and playing is to help our viewers play better golf. It's a lot of fun.

**Q. That was my next question, any feedback you've gotten so far from the show?**

**CHARLIE RYMER:** Yeah, I think folks have -- first off, I've gotten a lot of encouragement, which is good. My early scores haven't been very good, but I'm hoping they get better. I feel like they will. I feel like I'm playing a lot better than when you add the math up.

My first event I got to play on Saturday with Hale Irwin and on Sunday with Jose Maria Olazabal. While I was struggling to play decent golf, I had the good sense to play with my head up and watch these two World Golf Hall of Fame members play golf and wow, did I learn a lot. I wasn't even supposed to work on Monday. I called up the producers and I said I want to get on Morning Drive and talk about this, playing with these two guys. So from that point of view, I've learned a lot, I'm trying to relate it to our viewers.

**Q. How familiar are you with this course? I know you played BellSouth a while ago, but has it changed since then?**

**CHARLIE RYMER:** I hadn't been on this course since I played BellSouth a couple times. I remember one year I sort of got in the mix on Saturday and then I got tangled up, I think it was No. 12 that sort of wrecked my weekend. But it's a challenging golf course, in particular off the tee. You've got to play some different kinds of tee shots off the tee. It's not a blast-away golf course, there's certain areas that you have to play to and it's pretty much in line with what I remember. The greens are really good, nice and smooth, and I think it's a really good test.

**Q. With you being a Georgia Tech guy, can you just talk about maybe why you wanted to play in this field and what this tournament means coming to the Tour?**

**CHARLIE RYMER:** Yeah. So in fact I spent some time yesterday at the Georgia Tech practice facility in downtown and I was there with a camera crew working on a feature I think is going to air on Morning Drive maybe tomorrow or Friday, so that's always fun. There's a fourth-year senior, James Clark, who sort of gave me a tour of the facility, which was nice, I was happy to do that.

But I've got a lot of friends and family in this area, that's why I was hopeful to play in this event. My wife grew up here in Sandy Springs and my family's all from Chattanooga, so they're all going to come down and watch. Even though I don't live here anymore, we consider this area home, so being able to come here, play and see all family and friends is going to be a lot of fun. In fact, I'm about to go hit up the tournament director for a bunch of tickets, so I've got to promise that all my folks are going to eat a lot of hot dogs and drink a lot of beer so it's worth the investment to give them some tickets to come in. But it will be fun. We'll have some dinners and that sort of stuff. My schedule with TV is so crazy that I don't get to spend a lot of time with my family so I thought this would be a good opportunity to do that as well.