

**PNC Father/Son Challenge
Pre-Tournament Interviews
Dec. 14, 2018**

**JACK NICKLAUS
GT NICKLAUS (Grandson)**

Were you on the range fixing GT's swing?

JACK NICKLAUS: GT's swing doesn't need any fixing. He just needs his grandpa to give him some support. He's got to beat all the pros and then hope that I help him for one shot.

Why does this tournament mean so much to you, spending it with your family?

JACK NICKLAUS: You answered it. Why would I not? That's why I'm here. I wouldn't be here for any other reasons other than to play with my boys or my grandsons.

Take me back to the ninth tee at Augusta when GT made a hole-in-one during the Par-3 contest.

JACK NICKLAUS: GT had hit my pitching wedge on the practice range. First time he ever saw (the club). He had a jumpsuit on which was pretty tight. He doesn't use a glove so that doesn't make a difference, but he never plays the ball I play and he made a beautiful golf swing. Knocked it on the green, into the hole. Gary Player was jumping up and down. Tom Watson was jumping up and down. I think I was crying. He was obviously ecstatic. It was great. Walked down the path and Curtis Strange was in the booth. He looked back at me and said how does that rank at the Masters and just went like that (holds up one finger). With all due respect to my six Masters, that was number one for me. What I do is what I do. Something with your own kids or grandkids is far more important than anything I have done.

GT, what was the experience like for you last year?

GT NICKLAUS: Last year was my first taste of being inside the ropes. I walked away a better player because I learned how to zone in a little bit more. This year, I think I have evolved as a player. I've played a lot more golf in preparation. Last year was an experience. This year, I'm more out there to win it.

JACK NICKLAUS: Good attitude (laughter). Last year, we weren't particularly good as a team. It was his first experience. I didn't play very well. I've played five of the last six days, which is really unusual for me. I've gotten worse each day so I have to get better tomorrow.

On the new rules of golf in 2019.

I have no idea what the rules are. I don't play enough golf to care about rules right now. My rule is about the same as when I finished. If I don't like the shot, I hit another one and if I hit the first putt and it's not close, I pick it up. I took my tennis buddies to Augusta after I retired playing and I said guys do you want to play the golf course or play by my rules. My rules are if you don't like the shot, hit another and you don't three-putt if you hit the green. We played in three-and-a-half hours and they shot low 80's or maybe broke 80. They had a great time. The next day, they say, can we play the golf course today. I said, you really want to? Six hours and none of them probably broke 95. To me, when I got done playing competitive golf, it might as well be fun. Not a grind. I made enough four footers in my life. I don't have to grind over every one. Unfortunately, I have to grind this week, but (GT) will make a lot of them, OK?

Jack, at the Memorial, you were really optimistic that Tiger Woods would win again.

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, he did pretty well, didn't he? He won the tournament nicely and played well. A big monkey off his back. It's good for the game. It's not good for anybody if they're playing badly, but it's

good for the game when he's playing well because of the following that he has. I would sum it up by saying that I was very happy for him. He drove the ball beautifully, made a fair number of putts. That's what he always used to do. I think his swing now is much better than I have ever seen it and the reason is, Tiger was up and down with his head and that put a lot of pressure on his back. His swing, to a certain degree, is one from the caddy yard where guys are dipping down and they got away with that because they use their legs to soften it. Tiger couldn't use his legs anymore because his knee was hurt, but he was still going up and down and that put tremendous stress on his back. The fusion he had was something he didn't want, but it's something that he needed. I never thought he'd play golf again. I shouldn't say that. I didn't think he'd every play golf as well as he's playing again. I felt like Tiger never did hit the ball that straight. He's going to hit the ball still fairly long. He's got a great short game. Tiger will win again, but I never dreamed that he would play quite as good as he has and that the operation would level out his head and his swing which I think is a great benefit for him.

Tiger has had success at the major venues in 2019 – Pebble, Augusta, Bethpage.

JACK NICKLAUS: I think he'll do well. He came off that win, played poorly at Ryder Cup and Bahamas, whether that's reactionary from working so hard for that win. Or maybe he let himself drop, but he didn't play particularly well in those events and probably much to his dismay. Tiger never allowed himself to play poorly. We'll have to wait how hard he'll work and see how much he wants to put himself back into the game. I think it's a very reasonable question, too. 42 years old, great success, broke almost every record in the game. Do you put yourself back just to break my record? Or have you proved that you can come back and win and is that satisfying enough for him? Probably not for him, but I just don't know. I don't know what goes through his head. My guess is that he will continue this work ethic and play, so there's an excellent chance he'll probably win one or more of them.

Has modern equipment changed the game for the better or the worse?

JACK NICKLAUS: Depends who you are. If you are a modern player, you say for the better. If you're my age, you say for the worse. What I mean by that is, a modern player, that's all they grew up with and that's what they had. A golf ball that doesn't curve a lot, but goes a long distance. Clubs that are tailored totally to themselves. When we played, we took what was there. We didn't have enough sophistication to know whether we had good clubs or bad clubs. All the balls were the same. It just depended on who made the ball better. My personal mindset is, I think guys in my era learned how to play golf better, more golf shots because they had to. They had a golf ball that wasn't as forgiving. They had clubs that weren't as forgiving, so they had to learn to be better golfers. The guys today, the golf clubs and balls do more work for them. That doesn't mean that they couldn't do what we did, but they aren't asked to do what we did. I don't know whether that's good or bad. We have more good golfers today than we ever had, a lot of it do to equipment.

Jack, what role do you think events like this play in growing the game?

JACK NICKLAUS: It's a great event from the standpoint of I love to play with my boys, with GT. I alternated with them. Last year, Gary said he'd rather have me play with GT than with him and I said, you really want to do that? This year, it was Jackie's turn to play and he said, dad, you go play with GT. He has a chance to be a pretty good player and the experience is important for him. He said, I love playing with you, but stick with GT. My kids have been pretty considerate of cousins, nephews, I guess, so I think that's pretty nice.

And before we go I just have a couple questions for GT. Are you going to drive it straight?

GT NICKLAUS: Yes.

JACK NICKLAUS: Are you going to putt good?

GT NICKLAUS: Yes.

JACK NICKLAUS: Hit some good irons?

GT NICKLAUS: Yes.

JACK NICKLAUS: OK, we're ready then.