



INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT: TOM LEHMAN
May 3, 2011

MODERATOR: Tom, we'll go ahead and start. I thought I would have you in with two early victories this year and you're our Charles Schwab Cup leader early on. Your first trip to Shoal Creek so you don't know a whole lot about it, but this being the first major championship of the year, just some thoughts about playing in the Regions Tradition.

TOM LEHMAN: Well, I'm happy to be here for a number of reasons. I think being it is the first major, that's a big deal, a huge deal. I think being here after all these tornadoes have gone through, it's a big deal. You know, life obviously goes on and you need to kind of keep doing what you're doing, but it's also an opportunity to plug in for a week here and maybe do something that makes a difference in some small way, so I'm happy to be here for that reason, too.

MODERATOR: Have you heard any talk about Shoal Creek from your fellow players since you haven't been here before?

TOM LEHMAN: Yeah, I've never played the course, but the guys who've played it before like it. They seem to feel like it's a real shot-maker's golf course. Always in good condition. Everybody that I've asked about it, you know, they say the same thing, I think you're going to like it, so I'm sure I will.

MODERATOR: And just sort of summarize the early part of your year with the two victories.

TOM LEHMAN: Yeah, it's been a good start, six tournaments and two wins, a second and a third, and the other two starts I played well, I just didn't get the putts to drop. But so far, so good. It's been a very steady and solid start.

Q. It's been a long time since a lot of these guys have played this course, but is there an advantage for those guys who have played this course as opposed to somebody who hasn't played the course?

TOM LEHMAN: If I had to just guess, I would say that there is some advantage. I would have to imagine that the course in August is far different than the course in May in terms of maybe firmness or thickness of the rough or whatever it might be. So I think knowing the course, maybe knowing the spots to avoid will help, but it may play differently now than they are used to.

Q. For you tomorrow in the pro-am, is that your chance to kind of feel your way through and sort of educate yourself, I guess?

TOM LEHMAN: Well, this afternoon, I was planning on getting here this morning and spending the afternoon on the course, getting to know it a little bit, so this afternoon is really important to me. I had an opportunity to make the trip with some people, which I would have love to have done if I could have been here earlier, but today was the day for me for learn this golf course.

Q. What's gone well for you early in this season? What are you doing well now?

TOM LEHMAN: You know what, I really have not done anything different than I've been doing. I've had a couple good years leading up to this year. So I look at last year and feel really good about the way I played. I had a lot of good tournaments. I played very well nearly every time I teed it up. Just that someone always played better or maybe I just missed a few putts that I needed to make, but I really felt good about the effort, felt good about my game. So I think this year, maybe hitting the ball just a little bit better and maybe making a couple more putts but doing the same thing. It's really a very simple approach to golf.

Q. In golf and I guess in anything, does success sort of breed success? Do you feel yourself getting more and more confident when you have the success?

TOM LEHMAN: I think -- well, that's very true, but I think more than anything being a little frustrated with the results is what's always motivated me. You know, being -- I feel like played well last year. I didn't play a full schedule last year, I think I played 15 or 16 events only, had a good season, but frustrated with the fact that I didn't finish better in some of the tournaments, didn't win more. I felt like I was very capable of doing that, so the frustration has always been the driving force behind how hard I work and how well I do.

Q. Did you do anything different in this off season --

TOM LEHMAN: No.

Q. -- with the frustration?

TOM LEHMAN: No, just keep on doing what I was doing. I've really been very committed to my game over the last four or five years. Seemed like there was a bit of a lull after the Ryder Cup when I was the captain for a couple years. I still played, still worked hard, but I kind of renewed interest as I neared 50 and I've been working very consistently on my game. Every day I'm home, I'm out practicing.

Q. When you first started on the Champions Tour, did that sort of recharge you a little bit, too, changing tours, a new beginning, I guess?

TOM LEHMAN: It actually started before that. I think when I was 59, realizing I was nearing the end of the PGA TOUR and some of these tournaments were my last go-round, that's kind of what got me I won't say remotivated, but just added motivation, because I've always been a pretty motivated person, just added motivation to make the last go-round a good one. 2006 was a Ryder Cup year, so 2007, 2008 were a little slow for me. But then 2008, starting there when I was 49, I was really kind of like, okay, I'm going to get after it.

Q. You say you didn't play a full schedule last year. Was that just --

TOM LEHMAN: I played a number of PGA TOUR events.

Q. Okay, all right.

TOM LEHMAN: There's probably eight or nine or whatever the number was, then about 16 out here, or 15, I forget, 14, something like that.

Q. You kind of touched on the tornado and the victims. Have you or any of the players that you know of been able to go out and see kind of the devastation? And if not, what does a tragedy like this -- you know, what does sports mean to a tragedy like this to kind of get people's minds off of all this devastation?

TOM LEHMAN: I think you can get sports to draw a lot of attention to something, not that it needs any attention. But for example, I think everybody was planning - I had a couple suitcases of clothes packed, or boxes I should say, of clothes to bring and then I got the e-mail saying bring all your extra clothes. Then you get on the Twitter and on your Facebook and say I'm going to go and take some extra clothes. Anybody wants to do that, I'll give you an address and you can send it, I'll make sure it gets delivered. So you can use sports and that kind of notoriety for that.

People who love golf will find a little bit of a break in the action by watching the tournament and paying attention to that. I'm sure if it were football season there'd be a lot more interest in taking a break and watching some football, but I think sports can create an outlet and I think sports can create a partnership

between those who are suffering and those who want to help, so it's -- I think it's a good thing.

MODERATOR: Thanks, Tom.