



INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT: NICK PRICE
May 4, 2011

MODERATOR: We welcome Nick Price into the interview room for the 2011 Regions Tradition.

Nick, a win earlier this year in retro fashion at the Toshiba Classic. Just a few comments about coming to play in the first major championship of the year on the Champions Tour.

NICK PRICE: It was funny. I was trying -- obviously 21 years is a long time ago, but I played here in '84 and '90. Was trying to picture some of the holes when I came up here and as usual you remember a few of them sporadically, but today when I played, obviously they all came back. Some of new tees they've put in aren't really for us, thank God, I hope. I kind of wore out my 3-iron and my 4-iron today.

You know, the course, it's so different for us now because we don't have the rough that we had, which was so memorable for those of you who may remember '84. It was so deep here and you basically felt like you were walking on a tightrope the whole time playing. But the course set up's really good, it's in good shape. It's a little soggy still from the rain, but that's to be expected. I'm sure as if the sun stays out and the wind dries it, the conditions will firm up a little bit, but there was quite a bit of mud on the ball today.

The golf course is tough. I mean, it's not -- this is going to be a really good test of golf. I'm hoping that they just don't play it too long because, you know, a 491-yard par 4 is not for us 50-year olds, and there's a couple on the front 9 at 460 that play into the wind that play just as long. So it's a great shotmaker's course here. You've got to hit a lot of draws and cuts off the tees, and going into the greens, you know, you have to be pretty specific with your distance control here. Some of the greens are so deep that it's fine to hit it straight, but if you end up, you know, miscueing it or hitting it a little too hard, you're left with some pretty severe putts here.

I suppose the noticeable thing is the difference in speed to the uphill into-the-green putts and the downhill down-green putts. There's an extreme change in the speed and that will just become, I think, a little more exaggerated as the week goes on with the greens getting a little firmer.

But all in all I think you're going to have a great champion this week, I have no reservation about that, and the guy who wins around here deserves to win.

MODERATOR: Maybe a comment or two about your game coming into this week.

NICK PRICE: You know, I hurt my back at the Outback about two weeks ago, three weeks ago, and I've struggled and I didn't hit any balls last week until Saturday, just trying to rest it. I've strained a muscle in my back. It's not -- knock on wood, it's not a spinal thing and I've just been trying to strengthen the corresponding muscle on the other side and it seems to be working. I can still feel it, but it doesn't hurt nearly as much when I swing now. Two weeks ago at Legends I was in a lot of pain on Saturday and Sunday. In fact, I don't know I've ever taken that many Advil in two days, but that's just part and parcel, I think, of getting a little older. I feel like I'm still in good shape, but obviously I was doing something in my swing that I needed to change, and I changed a couple of things and it seems to be better, but I'm not as sharp as I would like to be coming in here. I'm normally a little more prepared for any event, not just a major championship, but not being able to hit balls for the whole of last week was kind of hard.

MODERATOR: We'll just go to questions. Wait for the mic if you could.

Q. Talk about, I mean, what is the feeling about coming back here? I know the memory's kind of old, 20-something years, but is it a course that the players like playing?

NICK PRICE: Yeah, I think, you know, the way it's set up for us, there's not a lot of rough. You know, I think the only negative thing about the whole week will be see how long they play it because without -- you know, as wet and as soft as the fairways are, even though, I looked at the card, I think from the tips it's like 7,280 yards, nearly 7,300. Even if they play it like 7,100, that's going to play like 7,250 for us without any roll on the ball.

The saving grace right now is the greens are soft. As the fairways firm up, so will the greens. I don't know how much the fairways are going to firm up though because you guys have had a lot of rain here, but I would like to see it firm up, certainly the fairways.

I think everyone's going to be -- you know, will sing praises about this golf course. It's a wonderful fit for us to come to Birmingham. I remember playing the

Bruno's when it was -- before then, Greystone, yeah, because I know some of the guys I spoke to said they had the best crowds on the Champions Tour here and I don't think that was the case over at the other course. But I think we're going to get a lot of people here this week, which will be good fun for us, too.

Q. If my memory is correct, in '84, despite the rough, there were some low scores though the greens were soft then. Do you think that could help scoring this week, the fact that the greens are --

NICK PRICE: All this is different to this time of year. We won't have the heat so they won't have to pour as much water on them. I don't remember the course playing as long as it does right now. I remember it being -- you know, the par 3s, they put new tees on the par 3s and it seemed like I had almost the same yardage on just about every par 3 today, which was weird. When I think, 197 down to about 188 yards. So a lot of sort of -- if you're into the wind, it's a 3-iron; if you're downwind, it's a 6- or 5-iron.

I was a little disappointed with what they did on number 8 because that was a great 8-iron, 7-iron par 3 or maybe a little -- I mean, I hit 6-iron from the back tee and it was blowing downwind pretty good. You know, I've always been outspoken about adding length to courses and I'm not -- I mean, some places it's justified, but I just think our Tour staff has to be very careful because if they played it at the length they played today, you're going to cut out probably 75, 80 percent of our field. There's a lot of good players that don't hit it that far, so that's going to be a key.

MODERATOR: Nick, thank you very much.