



INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT: HALE IRWIN
Friday, August 26, 2011

MODERATOR: Okay, Hale, 68, 4-under par, and Jeff said it could have been a lot better, but obviously the highlight of the day was the ace there at the ninth hole. Just go through that and we'll go through the rest of the round.

HALE IRWIN: Okay. Shall I have the ball do the talking? Ball, what happened? Well, you hit a 6-iron and you really had to hit it well because it was at the outer limits and I flew over the bunker but just a little short of the green about a foot because that's where it's a little softer. I didn't know that at the time. I bounced up on the green and I rolled right in the hole. Is that what you wanted me to do? Yeah, that's fine. I'm whipped.

It's a shot that if you land on the green, as Jeff was alluding to the firmness of the golf course, if you land it on the green, you're probably going to be long. The distance for me was kind of like a 5-and-a-half iron, but that was not going to have any spin, it was going to land on the green and run through. So I thought if I can really muscle up a 6 and I hit it really solidly, and as I indicated, it landed about not far from the cut of the green so it was kind of on the -- over the bunker certainly, but it was a little softer there so it had a nice soft hit. I didn't see it, we couldn't see the bottom of the flagstick, but it was going close the whole way. It wasn't kind of a fluke, I hit the flag and fall down. I don't know, they had it on the opening, I guess, of the show. But it was right at the extreme.

I kind of had almost the identical shot except for a 4-iron the hole before. The greens are -- again, they're firm and some hole locations are testy. Boy, they're not -- as Jeff said, I hope there's no overreaction, there's too much water put on it, because the course we played today is different than the course we played yesterday by a long shot. Of course, the greens were a little softer yesterday and the hole locations were a little more timid. They were strong today, but look at the scoring, it's still good.

MODERATOR: Do you just want to take us through the rest of your round?

HALE IRWIN: No, not really, it was nothing special.

Sure. Where should we go? Number 2, I hit a nice 7-iron to within about four feet, made a nice -- excuse me. At 5 I hit a really terrific shot, landed short of the green -- I mean short of the flag right where I wanted, took a big bounce through the green and made a really nice up-and-down for a par. Hit it just over the green with a 4-iron at number 8, a great drive, and made about a three-foot birdie putt there. Then of course the one. Then I missed successive putts at 10. 11 I made a nice par putt from about eight feet, seven feet. Missed a birdie putt at 12. Birdied 15 hitting a wedge to within about three feet. I missed a birdie putt at 18 from about six feet.

MODERATOR: 13, what happened?

HALE IRWIN: Oh, I keep forgetting. 13 I made a bogey. I tried to hit a 5-iron. I pulled it a little and it buried not in the bunker but in the lip of the -- just outside the bunker, and it was an embedded ball. Played the embedded ball rule. I dropped it, ended up having to place it but I couldn't hit it right-handed, I had to turn a wedge over and pitch it left-handed and I had about a 10-foot putt to save par and missed that.

MODERATOR: Questions?

Q. Two top 10s (inaudible.) Do you expect to win again?

HALE IRWIN: I don't know as you ever expect to win. I think anybody that expects to win might be expecting too much of themselves. Let's put it this way: I'm playing well enough to win, but I've got to kind of get rid of some of the little things I'm doing out there. I've got a putt a little better. I can't go out and make the longest putt being a six-foot putt. I can't do that. I had innumerable chances to improve upon that today. If I can improve there and continue hitting the ball reasonably well, then I wouldn't be surprised to be in the hunt. I've never wanted to be anything other than in the hunt on the last nine holes. That's what I've always striven to achieve. If you can do that, then it kind of takes its own path.

Would I be surprised to win? No. But do I expect to win? No, I never expect to win. I have confidence in my abilities, but I don't expect to win. That doesn't enter my vocabulary.

Q. When was your last hole-in-one?

HALE IRWIN: 2004, PGA Championship, Whistling Straits.

Q. Does that count recreational play and everything?

HALE IRWIN: My first one was NCAA championship '67. It counts some kind of official kind of pro-am things where you're playing for some cash. There are guys that made a lot more than mine, but I count 10. There's officially about five, six, seven.

MODERATOR: I've got you five on the PGA TOUR and one on the Champions Tour.

HALE IRWIN: So the NCAA, that's kind of eight really official ones and there's two that came in pro-ams where you're playing for money.

MODERATOR: Anything else for Hale? Hale, keep it up, thank you very much.