



**INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT: MICHAEL ALLEN**

**Wednesday, June 27, 2012**

**MODERATOR:** Michael, welcome. Maybe get us started, you talked briefly when we were walking in. Maybe you had a chance to play the course this morning. What are your overall impressions of Fox Chapel?

**MICHAEL ALLEN:** First of all, I really thought I just wanted to throw some plus fours on out there, get a little jacket and tie and go out there and play. It's a throwback to the older era, you know. It was it's just a beautiful place. It's exciting. It will be a lot of fun to come out here and play every day. You know, people think it's going to be a little easier. I think there was a lot of good holes out there, hard holes. So it's always fun to come out and play these great older golf courses that, you know, just follow the lay of the land and build up a few little bunkers, greens here and there and it's just a beautiful concept out there. I'm just going to enjoy playing out here a great deal for sure.

**MODERATOR:** Last week, birdied 18 to retake the Schwab Cup point lead by five points. Maybe just talk about that. You're back where you were for the previous five weeks.

**MICHAEL ALLEN:** Yeah, you know, it was a fun week. Montreal is a great city. I just love being out there. You know, I had to get a different caddie for the week, so you get the bid back for my regular caddie, at least that's what he keeps saying. You know, it was nice to be back on top. Obviously, you know, I want to be there at the end of the year. It's not as important now, but it's nice to be up there where I have a chance to be very competitive each week, and each week counts, so this is you know, these are the big weeks that really count a lot too, these weeks, this and the Open and, you know, these big tournaments. So this is going to be a great venue for it too.

**MODERATOR:** Again we have some questions. Just put your hands up. We've got a mic.

**Q Mike, I guess just to get it straight from the source, can you say again how many times you went through QSchool when you were on regular tour?**

**MICHAEL ALLEN:** Well, I think I believe I got my card nine times through the QSchool, eight or nine times. You know, it's I've done it so many times I've lost count, I think. Most of my first part of my career, certainly in the '90s, I only kept my card once, and I had my card seven times. So I've been there more than anybody ever should. So thank goodness I was able to get through that, and I've tried to the tour school probably you know, I've been to the final like 12 or 13 times, you know, made it about nine. So

but I've tried it a few other times than that too, so I've been there a lot.

**Q Can you also talk about what you did, I believe there was maybe a sevenyear hiatus between when you were playing on tour until you returned. And can you talk about some of the jobs you were doing then? I think you were a stockbroker and**

**MICHAEL ALLEN:** Well, I was trying to be a stockbroker when I first started. But at that point when I quit playing in '96 or '97, I started out, I built some homes. I was trying to get into medical sales. I had a good friend that sold hips, knees, different joints, did a bunch of the surgeries, enjoyed that business. Kind of thought my golf would help me get in with some doctors, entertain the doctors and all that. I really thought being an old tour pro, everybody would just kind of want to hire you. Thought people would start calling and giving me jobs, but it didn't work out that way. So I did different things. I worked at Winged Foot for a year as an assistant out there, I worked at SunRidge Canyon in the golf business, did my went through the whole program to get my PGA status, you know, A1. So I did a lot of different things, and then I realized how hard that really was to make a decent living in the real world. Some friends helped me kind of put some money together to come back out, which I didn't even know. So then I played the Nationwide for about two years before I got my card back in 2002.

**Q Did you leave at first because of some injuries or did you need to take care of family, was it out of frustration?**

**MICHAEL ALLEN:** Yeah, my biggest injury really was to my brain. I was I just wasn't very good to be honest with you. I was perfectly healthy. Knock on wood, I've always been very healthy, never had too many injuries. So really I just left because I wasn't very good at it. I was frustrated, always being at tour school. The game was so hard for me. So I just thought I could do some other things. I know I'm not the most brilliant guy in the world, but I'm not stupid. I could do some other things, you know, and I could be around my family. It was growing. I just had some young kids. So I just wanted to try some other things and see what else I could do. I didn't want to be a guy going to tour school every single year, you know. There's got to be other things to do in life. So it took a little while, but then when I was on the Nationwide, big change in points, my daughters thought it was cool that everyone I played while I was in the newspaper and doing all right, you know. That kind of, when I was traveling, kind of gave me the impetus to keep going, that it was okay to keep doing this and they were there for me.

**Q Mike, you said the game was too hard for you. Specifically what aspect of the game was too hard for you?**

**MICHAEL ALLEN:** You know, basically everything. Number one, I wasn't having any fun out here because I wasn't playing that well. I wasn't the guy I was working with, I just, my swing was okay. I could hit a lot of good shots, but if I didn't practice every single day I just like it was gone the next day, you know. It was such hard work to maintain what I was trying to do. So that was hard. And then when you're not worried you're worried about your ball strike, am I going to be able to get it around, then you're also worrying about your putting. Now am I missing a threefooters, the whole thing was

trying. It was a very tough game, and at that time in my life I wasn't very good at it. Everything I was doing I was just kind of questioning and not not that I was questioning. I just wasn't consistent.

Now I get up and I kind of know if I take care of my body and keep things going, then my swing is going to be close. It may not always be perfect. Some days are better than others, but I know I'm always in the ballpark. At that time I could just get up, and Byron Nelson, I was in fifth place after two days playing so well. I couldn't practice that evening, so I came out the next day and I shoot 77 or something. It was like I had never played before. You know, I was always it was hard to get my swing to work properly every day.

**Q Calcavecchia was talking about you earlier and he said that you'd always been a good ball striker, but that you were not a good putter and that when you became a good putter it kind of went through your game?**

**MICHAEL ALLEN:** Yeah.

**Q Is that accurate?**

**MICHAEL ALLEN:** Well, I think I've always hit the ball right, but I don't know if you know, now I've been a pretty consistent ball striker. And certainly my putting is a lot better than it has been for the last while. When I had my last par before I stopped playing I did, that was when I started the first time I ever used a long putter was at Oakmont here on the Open in like '94, which was a very bad idea. But that was at a time I was really starting to try different things with my putting, you know, because that was an issue too. So, you know, the whole game was just kind of I didn't know where I was going with any of it. My direction wasn't great. So now, you know, I just feel things are a lot more consistent. I'm always close, I'm always in the ball game. And in the last certainly few months my putting has been great and, you know, I've putted pretty well for the last few years overall. The long putter has been good to me.

**Q Can you just talk a little bit about your confidence level coming into the tournament this weekend?**

**MICHAEL ALLEN:** I'm going to win. Oh, no. You know, I feel as I say, I feel comfortable with my game and right now my challenge is just kind of getting some energy back. I've been playing a lot lately, like four weeks in a row. So, you know, I feel very good right now. Today I played a very, very tired round. I didn't have the energy to really play. So hopefully I can kind of get some energy back in, get my body moving a little better, make sure I'm ready to go. If I, you know, if I am feeling a little more energetic tomorrow and feeling comfortable, I feel like I should at least have a chance this week for sure.

**Q Calcavecchia said that he isn't surprised at all by your success. Are you yourself surprised considering what you said you have been through?**

**MICHAEL ALLEN:** You know, it's very nice of Mark to be saying. That's great. Yeah, I

mean, Mark's game, he's never tried to learn to swing. He's always been so such a wonderful natural player, you know. You know, am I surprised? I feel like I've been very close for a long time even on tour. I've been competing the last five, seven years pretty well on tour. So am I surprised? No, I've kind of been working towards this. You know, when you're here and it's happening and you're beating all these guys that have beaten you your whole life, you know, it's always a little bit of a step back going, okay, you know, pinch yourself, make sure you're still going. So I'm not really surprised, but I am. I'm flattered that people are saying nice things and I'm flattered to be leading the Schwab Cup. It's an honor for me, but I know that it's also a lot of hard work to keep this thing going. I've got a lot of good golf I need to play.

**Q Wasn't it a couple three years ago you were playing over at Congressional this week, you were in contention?**

**MICHAEL ALLEN:** Yeah, uhuh. I was like I said, I won in 2009 I won the Senior PGA and then, yeah, I was in the second to last group there. Yeah, that was yeah, I enjoyed playing the tour. That was kind of my career. I was for some reason my last five, six years I never had to go back to the tour school, you know, from the time I was 45 on until really two years ago I lost my card because I stopped playing so much out there. More out there. I needed to find some security for a job for the next few years. My kids are still going to college, starting to.

**Q What did you expect of yourself at Olympic?**

**MICHAEL ALLEN:** You know, realistically, I mean, I probably didn't think I could was going to win, but I thought I could be competitive. I thought I could go out there and shoot close to par every day or shoot par, around there. So after two days I thought I'd done pretty well, but certainly not my best. And as it turned out it was better than I was going to do the next two days. But I really kind of thought that if I could play really well, I could certainly shoot close to par for the tournament. That was kind of my goal. I didn't know how good that would be. The way the rough was early in the week I thought that, you know, the guys would shoot under par, I really did. But the roughs got tougher and tougher every day, they never cut it. So hence when you got in the rough, you couldn't get to the greens like you could earlier in the week or before that.

**Q Were you disappointed?**

**MICHAEL ALLEN:** I was a little let down and disappointed especially on Saturday because I thought I was really ready to play well and I really thought I kind of had a chance there. And the fact of the matter is I felt great playing. I really did. I thought I was going to I got out and hit two great shots on the first hole, and I played a lot of nice shots that didn't turn out very well. As it happens, you start missing a couple of fivefooters and all the sudden making bogeys instead of pars. It was hard to make a lot of birdies out there, that's for sure.

I birdied the second hole the last day, I thought, okay, I'm really on my game, I'm hitting good shots, ready to go. I didn't realize it was going to be the last birdie I made for the tournament.

**MODERATOR:** Any more questions? Okay. Thank you, Michael.

**MICHAEL ALLEN:** My pleasure. Thank you, guys.