

**Zurich Classic of New Orleans  
TPC of Louisiana  
Avondale, La  
April 29, 2005**

**Second-round leader quotes**

**AN INTERVIEW WITH ARJUN ATWAL**

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Arjun Atwal into the interview room after a 4-under 68 today followed up from your 65 yesterday.

Why don't you talk a little bit about the two rounds, how they differ and how they were the same.

ARJUN ATWAL: Well, the putting was the same as yesterday. I didn't hit it too well in the first few holes when there was no wind actually when we started. But, you know, I got it up and down a few times and, you know, it was just steady stuff.

And then the wind started to pick up. And as the wind started to pick up, I kind of started focusing a little bit better and hit it closer and made a few putts.

I think the only short putt I missed today was on number 9 from about three feet. But I'm not going to complain, I have been putting really well.

THE MODERATOR: You opened up at Pebble Beach this year with a couple of 68's I believe. And you weren't in the lead or anything, but a good start. What sort of experience did that give you for this weekend.

ARJUN ATWAL: You know, I really haven't thought about Pebble at all. I know I played well there, but it's totally different conditions. Here it's hard and fast. There it was really soft and the greens were a little bumpy. As far as experience goes, I think BellSouth helped me a little bit more to play well here than any where else.

I played well across everywhere else, except in America. My best finished before BellSouth was sixth at Greensboro last year. I won a few times in Asia and Europe, but never come close here. And BellSouth gave me a little bit of confidence going into this week, and last week as well. I just didn't play well on the weekend. This week I kind of like the golf course. It suits my game better.

Q. Arjun, how does winning on the Asian and European tours, and being in the lead over there, how does that translate into doing it over here?

ARJUN ATWAL: Well, the last two events that I won, the Singapore Masters and The Malaysian Open, those were joint with Europe. I beat pretty good players; guys like Retief Goosen and Pdraig Harrington and all of these guys. As the field, it was a pretty good field. I was leading both of those events after three rounds and I held onto my lead and won by 4 in one and 5 in the other one. So it was a good experience, and I think it might carry over here. Hopefully, it does. Who knows, we will see what happens.

Q. What concerns you about the weekend? What concerns do you have about in an event like this?

ARJUN ATWAL: Nothing really. I mean, you know, I don't think people to know who I am and don't expect it. So even if I mess up, they are going to say I wasn't expected to win. I'm just going to go out there and play my game and see if I can handle it or not.

Q. Do you like being in this position?

ARJUN ATWAL: Yes, definitely.

Q. As the underdog so to speak?

ARJUN ATWAL: Not about being the underdog. I like being in the lead.

Q. Not being known here, I was looking on the internet and saw in India's first golfer, and all of this, how well are you known at home?

ARJUN ATWAL: Well, you know, there is a billion people in India of which I think 200,000 maybe play golf. Out of 200,000 people know me. If you look at the whole country, no one knows me.

Q. (Inaudible.)

ARJUN ATWAL: If I was playing a different sport, Cricket, I could be president of India.

Q. I know we had a Korean golfer who won, and it was huge in the Korean community here. Among the Indian communities in this country are you well known?

ARJUN ATWAL: You know, I seen a few people, it's not really crazy. I don't know. I don't know. Maybe they don't like golf here either. I don't know if they know about me or not. I haven't seen too much.

Q. You talked yesterday about how the wind Europe helped you learned better in the wind?

ARJUN ATWAL: Right.

Q. Has that paid off the last two days?

ARJUN ATWAL: The thing is, it did help, in Europe a lot. It's been windy here every week that I played. This year, at least. Pebble, the final round, was amazing. It's was only like 30 miles an hour. Last week, I believe, Tucson it was like 15 miles an hour. Guys learned how to play in the wind here as well.

Q. (Inaudible)?

ARJUN ATWAL: Yes. Europe was definitely a good learning experience. It's was a lot colder. I didn't like that.

Q. Arjun, you are trying to retain your card Europe, right?

ARJUN ATWAL: Yes. It's my last year as an fully exempt player there. I don't think I'm going to go back.

Q. I was trying to think if that is catch 22 here, you are trying to win your card here, and retain your card over there, is that hard for you?

ARJUN ATWAL: That's what I had in mind when I started this year because I knew I was going to get into many events in the beginning of the year here. But I didn't know which ones I was going to get into. I couldn't plan a schedule ahead, so I could go over to Europe and back. I played 4 in Europe, but now it just seems really tough to do it.

Q. This is what you want to do, you want to play on this TOUR?

ARJUN ATWAL: Yes, definitely, no doubt about it.

Q. Is the biggest change in your game confidence, or have you made changes in your game this year. It seems like all of a sudden you are earning a lot more money?

ARJUN ATWAL: You know, our baby was coming along. We had no family in America at the time, so every time, you know, the last time I missed a cut, or was close to making a cut, I wasn't even thinking about the cut, I was thinking about going back to my wife and taking care of her. It kind of had an affect on me. As soon as the baby came along, I started doing well again. If you look at my year last year I started off pretty okay. Then I had this long spell of two months where I didn't make the cuts. When our baby came along I started playing okay. I kind of crept into that 150 category.

Q. Now you need money with the baby?

ARJUN ATWAL: Yes, exactly.

Q. Arjun, are you considered a rich man in India?

ARJUN ATWAL: My dad is okay, well to do. He started off -- he didn't inherit it. He worked really hard. I saw that. Now he is pretty well off.

Q. What does he?

ARJUN ATWAL: He is in the construction business. Now more into earth moving and stuff.

Q. If you weren't playing golf, what would you be doing over there?

ARJUN ATWAL: I would be working with him. It would be easier.

Q. Do you think construction is easier?

ARJUN ATWAL: Well, you know, the thing is just knowing you are going to get paid every week is a lot easier than this, you know.

Q. When did you learn to play golf, I saw that you started at 14. Did you come here to high school?

ARJUN ATWAL: I went to high school when I was 16 in Long Island, New York. Three years of high school and two years of community college. I played golf over there as well. It was cold in the wintertime. Nothing that serious.

Q. Where did you learn?

ARJUN ATWAL: I learned in India when I was 14. At 16 I was about a 2 handicap. When I got to the states in college I became a scratch or plus one, whatever.

Q. Was there a shot or a hole today that was key to your round for you?

ARJUN ATWAL: I think, you know, I hit it in the water hazard on 16. My second shot from the fairway bunker. I actually got unlucky, I hit the side of the green, it runs through the bunker and into the water. I pitched it to about 15, whatever, 14 feet, and I made that putt. That was really important today.

Q. What does Arjun mean in Indian?

ARJUN ATWAL: It's a name from one of the epics like Alexander. Basically, one of them. (Scorecard.)

THE MODERATOR: Any other questions?

Q. Arjun, you thought this was the best you could play score-wise?

ARJUN ATWAL: In this wind definitely, there is no way I can play better.

Q. No shots you left on the course?

ARJUN ATWAL: Except for No. 9, the short putt I missed, I hit a great bunker shot to three or four feet. I don't know what it was. There is no way I could have played better.

THE MODERATOR: Arjun, that's for coming in.

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