

**PODS Championship  
Innisbrook Golf Resort  
Copperhead Course  
Tampa Bay, Fl**

**March 8, 2007**

**First-round leader quotes**

**AN INTERVIEW WITH CLIFF KRESGE**

**JOAN vT ALEXANDER:** Thank you, Cliff, for joining us for a few minutes here in the media center at the PODS Championship. A nice round today, great start on the front 9, a 31.

A couple of hiccups there at the end, but all in all, you still have to be pretty proud of yourself. Why don't you just talk about what you did well today and maybe the conditions.

**CLIFF KRESGE:** Well, the first nine holes was kind of a dream nine holes. I drove it down the middle of the fairway and hit every iron right at the flag. And I really didn't make any putts until I got to No. 11 where I made a 10-footer for an eagle. Other than that, I holed it on one hole, and hit it to like a foot twice. My irons were really sharp for a little while there, and I was driving the ball well. And then I hit a couple of loose drives on 16 and 18, and I paid the price. So that's the thing out here, you got to drive it in the fairway.

Q. You said bitter sweet when you sat down?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** Well, I mean, I'd much rather be 8-under than 6-under. 6-under is a heck a score out here so I'll take it. It's a great round. But it's probably putting a little bit of the brakes on a little bit coming in, maybe playing a little too protective instead of just keep going, staying aggressive. Like I said, I paid the price by missing the fairways there.

Q. Can you talk about 6, incredible hole?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** Yes, I think it was. I hit a nice drive, right down in the middle and I got into a divot. I got into a the very front edge of a divot. I was in between 6 and 5. And I thought I was going to hit a little cut 5, and it was kind of a hook lie, so it was really going to stay pretty straight, and it landed perfectly. I will tell you, I hit 2 other shots right before that that we said go in on. 3, I hit it a foot. The par-5, I hit 5, or whatever it was, I hit a foot. Jerry, my caddy goes, go in this time, and it did. It was kind of cool.

Q. You talked about playing protective on the back 9. Jesper said he is playing it more

like a Major course trying to be more conservative. Is there a fine line?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** Well, you can't miss by much. Those last three or four holes -- the last three holes are tough, I mean. To get it in that fairway on 16 is not an easy task. And 18, the wind was kind of cross, and I thought I hit it half decent, it just swung it into the left rough, and I hit it into a bunker and I make bogey. You just have to continue to hit good golf shots, or you are going to be struggling. That's a lot like a Major.

Q. Do you hear from anybody in the gallery about UCF at all? Any Golden Knights?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** No, I didn't hear anything. There wasn't a gallery for a while. Charley Wi said something, what's going on out here. There is no cameras or nothing. You're lapping the field and nobody is out here. I said, I don't know, man, they only show up when I play bad, I don't know what the deal is.

Q. When did you start notice the presence of the media?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** Probably 14 in there, a couple of more cameras started coming out.

Q. You were 8-under through what?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** 11.

Q. Tell me what you were thinking about, the potential?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** When I made that putt, I knew I had gone 8, but the fact of making three more birdies, or whatever, so to speak, didn't enter my mind that much. I did have a couple of good looks at it on the next hole, and then the par-5, I just didn't make them.

It's hard to get any birdies on the last four holes out here. I was just trying to play a good round. I knew 8-under was a heck of a score, if I could have shot it, it would have been wonderful. 6-under is still a darn good score.

Q. Cliff, did you see a leaderboard at all, an electronic drive by leaderboard?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** Yes.

Q. Was it more jarring at all to see 8-under through 11 or 12 or wherever it was when you saw it, or the fact that no one was in within five shots of you?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** I know, that was kind of funny. I said to my caddy, I said, man, they are out there going, what course is that guy playing? It's not a course that's going to give up 8-under after 11. Everything was just happening. I hit my irons next to the hole, made 2-putts. For 11 holes it was a dream round really. And then it kind of got in my way a little bit at the end. Still, like I said, 6-under around here is darn good.

Q. If this was a 9-hole high school match you would have kicked some butt today?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** That's right.

Q. Cliff, you had something happen at Q-School a few years ago, how much have you been asked about it?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** What are you talking about? I'm kidding. I'm teasing you. I try to pretend that that wasn't me. Actually, every time I do anything good, somebody is going to bring it up.

I don't know. If that thing did anything to me, it hardened me a lot. I just was determined to not let that fact that I fell in the water keep me from getting my card, I was so close and playing well. I said, you know, this is not going to stop me.

And for once in my life, I didn't really get in my way. I stepped on the gas and played the

last nine holes like you are supposed to.

I wish I would have had more of that mind, maybe I should have jumped in the water on that 12th hole back there, maybe I would have parred the last two.

Q. Cliff, who said you were lapping the field and no one was out there?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** Charley Wi. He, goes, what's going on? There is no cameras or nothing out here, you are lapping the field. I said, I don't know, it's probably better that way.

Q. What did you hit on 6?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** I hit a 5-iron.

Q. Is that such a bad thing, you know, until you win out here and have something else to be remembered for, I mean, at least you got something, right?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** I guess, I guess. You're right. I guess I have nothing else.

Q. I mean for the mainstream sports fans.

**CLIFF KRESGE:** Yes it's something different that happened that nobody has ever really done. It's unique. I guess until I do win one they will keep asking me about it.

Q. We won't stop then.

**CLIFF KRESGE:** Very good.

Q. Do you get a kick out of being kind of a home grown guy, self taught to a large degree. Given that's become the non-traditional route for 99 percent of them it seems like?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** Yes, yes. I don't know how to answer that question to be honest with you. I appreciate -- I obviously was luckily born with some talent that I kind of just kept practicing, practicing, practicing. I don't know if my swing has really changed a ton over the years. So I am probably more thankful of that, you know.

I talked to a couple of teachers over the years and let them see me from time to time. I just never really gone to one all the time, stuck with one, you know?

I think the bottom line is you have to be the one to figure it out when you are on the golf course. That instructor can't hit a shot for you. And you got to find out what it takes for you to get your ball in play and in the hole. That's between you and yourself, you know.

Q. If your swing hasn't changed much, what's different about you this go around on the TOUR? Why are you a better player now?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** Well, I think I'm a little bit mentally different, maybe a little bit mentally, more prepared. Back when I was playing in '03, I had a pretty decent year, I felt my ball striking was very good.

I don't know if you guys know, but I finished 10th in The Open, and I played with Tiger, and I had some pretty good success.

You know, you start hitting some bad shots, you start hitting some left, and then I start losing some of that confidence, and it's an uphill battle to get back to that. And there is so many good players, if you slip a little bit, you're down on the other Tour. Fortunately, at least we have that other Tour where I can work on my game and get back to where it should be and I can get back up here.

Q. Is it a let down to have to go back?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** To the Nationwide Tour?

Q. Yes.

**CLIFF KRESGE:** No, because I had already gotten my card to that Tour before. I knew that I was capable of doing it. I felt if I keep working hard, and paying off, I knew I could do it. I felt confident. I didn't know if I was going to do it right away. I didn't know when I was going to do it, but I felt like I could do it. I've already done it before, so I knew I could.

Q. You've done it both routes, what's harder getting your card through Q-School, go through three stages? Did you go through three stages?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** That year I probably did. I would say probably Q-School is tougher. You only get one shot. If you mess up that week, you're out. If you get on the Nationwide Tour. I think the Nationwide Tour is a better proven ground. But I think it's tougher through the Q-School, I think. Because you get 30 options on the Nationwide Tour to play if you are fully exempt. Opportunities, I should say, to play your way onto The Tour.

And I won one of the smaller tournaments out there last year, I just had a nice solid year, I made a lot of cuts, finished in Top-10 a lot and the next thing you know I'm getting my card.

Q. Cliff, what was your first year at Q-School ever?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** My first year was probably the fall of '91 or 2. I think I got out of school in '91.

Q. So straight from college?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** My senior year was '90 but I stuck around an extra year to graduate. So I stayed amateur for a year. And then I turned pro like at the end of my fifth year in college.

Q. Your register year or whatever?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** I didn't do anything, I just went to school and finished.

Q. College to Q-School, and the next time you went to Q-School had you been on the mini tours then?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** Yes, I played a lot of the mini tours. For about four or five years I played part-time because I didn't have the financial aid to play full time. I would work for a week just to play in a one day event.

Q. So given that background, and all of that said, if you can talk about the equity or inequity of giving more cards to Nationwide guys or to Q-School guys, what do you think is right?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** I think it goes back to what I said before, the Nationwide Tour is a better proving ground, you got to do it over the whole year. You can't just play well for a couple of weeks and then get your card where you can at Q-School.

Q. If you're Cliff Kresge from early 90's, and not having the financial means, you're going to have to get through at least two stages, maybe two and a half to get to that proving ground?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** Right, right. You're right. There is also Monday qualifying, the Top-25 gets you into the next tournament. There is opportunities to play your way onto the TOUR and guys have done it every year.

Camilo Villegas didn't have his card three years ago, whatever, had no status, plays his way onto the PGA TOUR the next year. Somebody is doing it every year. So the opportunity is there.

Q. Should they do away with Y school all together in terms of cards?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** You mean have no TOUR cards at all. No, because I think -- I know they talked about it. You should be rewarded for making it through there and finish. That's a difficult thing to do.

Q. What's a good number do you think, cards out of Q-School?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** They might be getting pretty close where they are right now. Half and half. Half the guys come from Q-School and half the guys come from Nationwide. Maybe 5 more on the Nationwide Tour. I think 25 is plenty enough opportunity on the Nationwide Tour and on the Q-School. That's a good place to be right now.

Q. After a round like today do you put clubs away for the afternoon?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** Well, you know, I'm going to eat some lunch and go hit some balls and make sure I forget those things I did on the last few holes and try to do that swing that I was doing earlier. I got my son coming in this afternoon,, can't wait for him to get here, play with him and enjoy that.

Q. Are you good at forgetting those kind of things?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** Sometimes, you know. If I feel like I can, you know, get back on the range and hit some shots like I was hitting earlier, I think I could probably forget pretty easily.

JOAN vT ALEXANDER: Can we go over your round? Birdie on No. 1.

**CLIFF KRESGE:** You want me to do this? You want me to tell you a play by play type thing.

I hit driver, 3-wood right in front of the green, it was a tricky little shot, I had to bump it through the fringe and I bumped it up there to about 5 feet or so and made that for birdie.

3, I hit a rescue off the tee, hit 7-iron to a foot.

No. 5, laid up perfectly, I hit sand wedge to about 18 inches maybe, it wasn't very far.

JOAN vT ALEXANDER: You said you had an eagle on 6?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** 6, I holed a 5-iron.

JOAN vT ALEXANDER: How far was that?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** I don't remember, I think it was 89 or something like that. It was a little into the wind, something like that.

10, I hit a wedge in there to no more than a foot.

JOAN vT ALEXANDER: You hit your second shot to about ten feet on 11, an eagle?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** I made that one, yes.

Q. What did you hit on 11?

**CLIFF KRESGE:** A 3-wood in there. Right-to-left and trying to hit it perfect.

16, I hit it left off the tee and hit it up there in the left rough short of the green, right off the green, and I chipped it up to about 8 feet and missed it.

18, I hit it in the left rough again, hit it in the trap, bunker shot heavy and 2-putted from the fringe there.

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