

**60th Annual Bank of America Colonial
Colonial Country Club
Forth Worth, Texas
May 18, 2006**

First-round Quotes

AN INTERVIEW WITH STEWART CINK

THE MODERATOR: Okay, leader in the clubhouse. Stewart Cink, great round today, 6-under 64. You birdied the first three holes. You are off the races. Maybe some opening comments about a good day for you.

STEWART CINK: It was a great day. I played well from the start. I gave myself a lot of chances for birdies. And with the course like it is, it's in great shape, it's as good as I have ever seen it. And no wind to speak of out there. Club selection wasn't that challenging. If you swinging well and thinking well you will get a lot of shots close, and I did and I took advantage of some of them.

THE MODERATOR: This is your 10th start here at the Colonial Country Club. You had a close call in 2000 let's talk about your history playing here.

STEWART CINK: This is one of the courses I love playing every year or I wouldn't be back here 10 straight years. It's a old-style course that you have to really think off the tee, and plan your shot. You can't just stand up there and hit it, and go find it. You really have to know what you are going to do, and I enjoy that. I enjoy the challenge this course give you opportunity. And I love putting on the greens, the whole area. I just feel at home here.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q Swinging well, thinking well in the same round, how hard is that to come by out here? I mean you have few and far between days like that?

STEWART CINK: You work as hard on both parts of your game, the swinging and the thinking. Sometimes one is a little off and sometimes the other is a little off. When you can get them both going on a day like this with calm conditions, it almost feels like it's too easy to play. I wish I could bottle this feeling it's valuable. Guys out here would pay a lot of money for it.

Q Was this a round that you left anything out there (Inaudible)?

STEWART CINK: I definitely left some out there. I had a chance on 9 from close range, 6 or 7 feet. On the back 9 like every hole I was 15 feet at the most. I had a few long putts, but for most I was looking for birdies. I putted well. To shoot that low you have to putt really well, and you are not going to make 'em all. It could have been better. I'm not complaining. Everyone is going to come off their round saying they could have done a little better. I'm pleased with the way I played. And if I can keep going like this, you know, stay in the present and just keep on doing my thing, then I think I might be there at the end.

Q Stewart, considering your experience here would you kind of like to see the wind pick up a little bit to where some of that local knowledge would come into play? We have a lot of first timers that picked it clean today.

STEWART CINK: This course shines when the wind blows. I think the forecast is for more wind as we go. So, I don't know if experience has much to do with it. You have to execute pretty good shots around here to make birdies when it's windy. But, yeah, I would like forward to seeing it that way. I'm used to playing it that way. It's always better when, in the real challenging set up, and you have conditions like that, as opposed to playing an easier set up. I mean they can't control the weather, and the golf course is perfect like it should be. But Colonial really comes through when it's windy.

Q Stewart, what was kind of your frame of mind when you showed up here this week? I mean you had the huge 2004 where it really looked like -- I mean you really stepped up. And I think you and a lot of people had big expectations last year and it didn't quite happen the same. Where are you mentally?

STEWART CINK: Well mentally I'm trying to not -- not trying to think of living up to anything in the past. Yeah, I had a good year in 2004. I had a couple of wins. But I'm just trying to go day-to-day. And you know, just do the best I can every day and whatever, it adds up to. In the end at the end of the week it adds up to that. And I can't do more except to prepare my best for the next shot. It's not a glamorous story line or anything, but it's a pretty good way to approach this game. It's paid off for a lot of people in the past. I'm trying to go from here forward and not look back too much. I'm proud of the year, I'm proud of the two wins I had that year, and a lot of really high finishes, but I'm not trying to play out here according to that benchmark. You know, it's a slippery slope to go down to start thinking of yourself that way. I'm really trying to stay more here forward.

Q Along those lines, talking about that slippery slope, what did your near miss here -- how did that affect you at the time and did it affect your career beyond that? Teach you something?

STEWART CINK: It really didn't. I wouldn't say it taught me a lot. It was my first real -- I thought I threw the tournament away. It was the first time I did that. And it's the first time I felt that sting and it stung. I didn't like it at all. I would like a chance to redeem myself from that. But as far as learning something. Everybody out here you play -- I have been out here for 10 years now. You play enough, you will play well, and you will throw some a way, and you will play well and you will win some. So you definitely don't want to throw any of 'em away, but it will happen to you. If anything I learned from that week, it's just going to happen and life goes on after it. You know I went on to play pretty good the rest of that year too, and made the Ryder Cup team the next year and played well at the President's Cup that fall. Being in contention is a good learning experience no matter what happens to you whether you finish 1st or 10th. It's a good learning experience. You learn you can handle it.

Q You mentioned earlier that you would like a chance of being here at the end of the week given the way you are playing. I'm wondering, is your state of confidence higher than it's been for a while?

STEWART CINK: Right now I just shot a 64 so it's pretty high. I know what you are saying. I have been showing some signs of playing really well since about -- well after TPC I missed Bay Hill and TPC, I missed those cuts. And I'm really sort of doing an overhaul of my whole attitude and I changed a couple of little things with my swing. Mainly just my set up. And just, you know, I tried to get off my own back basically. I was being too hard on myself. And I have shown a lot of good signs since then. You know the matches I had a really good tournament there, solid. And I haven't played poorly since then in any tournament. I haven't had any super high finishes but playing really well. So I think today, very few of the bad things were here and a lot more of the good things were here. So I have been working really hard. And I have got confidence on the greens right now, which is nice. Everybody fluctuates in that area. I'm looking forward to see what I can do this week, and it's going to be fun.

Q Was it a minor thing with the shot up, or can you tell us what it was?

STEWART CINK: It was simple. I just noticed that my ball positioning was a little too far forward and my swing was having to account for it. And I just eliminated the moving part, and threw the ball back a little bit. And I also tried to just forget about where the ball was going basically. You know, just hit it and go find it. If you can approach each shot with a really blank mind and, you know, that alone is confidence. Because my swing is good enough to play on the PGA tour, so it must be all right, right? So the only thing you can do to mess yourself up is to mentally get in your own way and over think things and guide your shots. And that is what I was doing. That is no way to play.

Q Stewart, everybody starts a round looking for early confidence, but to get three birdies straight out of the shoot particularly knowing that the tougher holes out here 3, 4, 5 are coming up. What does that do for you today?

STEWART CINK: It definitely calmed me down. Not that I was real anxious starting today or anything. I hit it on the green in two on the first hole on 1, and only had a 25-footer for eagle. So that was a stress-free birdie. And then, good drive on 2, and an L-wedge to about 2 feet, which is a stress-free birdie. And I then had a moment of stress on 3, I had about a 20-footer and I made.

Q At that point do you start feeling like, man?

STEWART CINK: Again I'm trying to take everything as it comes. I was not getting too up and excited. I knew the hard holes were coming. And just trying to take each shot for what it was. And see what I could do. It is what it is. I was telling myself that all day. Some shots are a lot harder than others and some putts are harder than others and really all they are is just shots and putts. The more you can approach your shots like that, and not really think about how much danger there is out there around the hole or around the fairway, at least the way my mind works, I perform better that way.

Q Stewart, this sounds like it would have been an easy day to be nice to yourself. Were there any points at all that you --

STEWART CINK: There were a couple of times out there where I hit what I call "anyway shots", I didn't feel like I was totally ready to hit but I hit anyway. But when those shots happen a lot of times you mess those shots up and you wish you had them back. But really the most dangerous times is when you hit those types of shots and you hit them perfect. Then you lull yourself into thinking you can do it every time. I really have to watch that. That is my goal every week when I tee up. I rededicated myself this week to really guard and be aware and alert of those and back away. This week when I may annoy my playing partners by backing away 3 or 4, or who knows, unlimited amount of times on a shot but when you see it you know that is me being my best.

Q Maybe you can play with Ben Crane?

STEWART CINK: He is my friend you better watch it.

Q He is a nice guy. What were some of those anyway shots you said you hit a couple of those?

STEWART CINK: Let's see going back there was a couple, No. 3 off the tee. I just I hit a 3-wood there but I thought it was possibly a driver because it was a little into the wind. And so as I was over the ball about to hit my shot I was a little bit doubtful about whether I was hitting the right club or not. I hit it anyway. Just thinking that I would be okay the follow through would be fine. And I hit it fine. I hit it down the center of the fairway and made a birdie on the hole. But that type of shot there a lot of times if you are not sure about it, a lot of times your swing will try to make up for whatever you think is wrong with the selection. And we're very instinctive out here. A lot of people say we're robotic. We're also very instinctive and play by feel. And you know we can't fool the body. The body knows if you have too much club or are not playing enough break on your putt, the body knows it, and it will try to over correct it. It will try to self correct in process. And that's when you get in trouble. That is when you see shots that are really off the mark one way or another. That is an example of one that I could have lulled myself into a false sense of security there and just said, well I can do that every time now. And next time I have one of these feelings I will go with it and hit it anyway. But, I know better. And so, I caught myself most of the time the rest of the day, but it still happens.

Q You kind of touched on it just then. In terms of playing with feel and being mechanical have you in the past worried a lot about mechanics. It sounds to me like you may be playing more on feel?

STEWART CINK: At times I have because especially at a course like this. It's a narrow course off the tee, and I'm not the straightest driver and my stats don't lie, and I don't try to hide behind anything. I'm a little crooked off the tee sometimes. A course like this will make you tighten up a little and try to hit the ball straight. And that is really the worst thing you could do, but it's counter intuitive. The harder you try to hit it straight, the more crooked you are probably going to hit it. And the less you care about where the ball goes the more likely you are to hit it perfect. It sounds crazy, but it's true. You have to let go to gain control. In the past I have been mechanically oriented to swing perfectly, and make the ball go perfectly straight down the fairway. And I gave that up. I am still very mechanical. I know my swing better than I have ever known it because I have been working with Butch Harmon for three years now. Now when I hit a bad shot and it's a mechanical fault, I know what I'm doing wrong, which is great. I try not to think about that too much on the golf course, and just try to hit the ball.

THE MODERATOR: Stewart Cink, thanks.

[Scorecard]