

59TH ANNUAL BANK OF AMERICA COLONIAL
Colonial Country Club
Fort Worth, Texas
May 20, 2005

Second-round interviews

AN INTERVIEW WITH D.J. TRAHAN

THE MODERATOR: D.J. Trahan current leader in the clubhouse. Thanks for joining us. Great few days 64 and 67. If we can start with opening comments on a good start at Bank of America Colonial.

D.J. Trahan: Yeah. The first two rounds have been great. I felt like I had a good game plan going into Thursday. And so far I have executed very, very nicely. A few bogeys here and there, slip ups, but for the most part I would say striking the ball very well and I'm making putts, and that is something that wasn't happening for me in the beginning of the year. I was struggling a little with the putter and now I feel like things are coming around. It's a great feeling. It's such a struggle when you go out there and feel like you hit the ball well and don't make any putts. And to have that start happening it's great. I have been doing that for two days, and hopefully I can continue that.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q What was the game plan today, and going into the week?

Player: I actually have kept an aggressive game plan. I have been hitting the ball well, and I had said to myself, if you are hitting the ball well this is the kind of golf course you have to play to your strength. And right now, with that in mind, I probably maybe have been playing a little more aggressive than I should be. The confidence I'm hitting it with has been great so far.

And I hit a driver on 9 today, for instance. I don't think I would normally do that. But I'm a feel player. When I stepped up on that tee today I knew I probably should have hit a 3 wood. The swing felt good, let's hit a driver and get it down there. I hit a great drive, and wedged it up and made birdie, and that is the way it goes for me.

Had I stood on that tee and not felt it, I wouldn't have hit the driver. But I set a pretty strong and aggressive game plan and I stuck to it. And with the swing holding up nicely, I have been able to execute it well.

Q With the struggles that you have had with your putting this year, have you been experimenting with a lot of different things to get yourself out? What are you doing right this week?

D.J. Trahan: I went to a belly putter. But got God bless that day I switched back. From that I got myself a longer putter. I have gone back to the short putter, and I have extended the putter a little bit. I'm putting with a Bobby Grace Mallet Putter. And I can line it up and I feel I can get it centered and squared really nicely. I have been stroking it well. I think adding a little length to the putter has made a big difference to me. It keeps me taller. I don't feel I have to extend my arms where it gets unnatural and uncomfortable. I feel like I have put myself in a better position to make good strokes and I have been stroking better as a result.

Q What is the time line going back and forth?

D.J. Trahan: Interestingly enough the week I changed to this longer putter was New Orleans, which was my first top ten and I top tenned the next week.

Ever since then I really have been stroking the ball better, and I'm so pleased with the way I'm putting. It's so nice to stand over a putt and say, I

feel good about this. I know I can make this putt. When you are standing over putts saying, okay let's see if we can put the a good stroke on this one. That is not a good feeling. That feeling has changed to one of positive. I am pleased with it and I hope I can continue the trend.

Q You are talking about the aggressive mind set, how often are you hitting the driver, and are you going after pins this week that maybe, when you are feeling it, maybe you wouldn't go after?

D.J. Trahan: No, that part of my game plan has not changed. When you play on tour they are cutting these things three or four from the edge you have to respect it. That doesn't mean you can't fire at pins. You have to have that consideration in the back of your mind. We have to be careful. You can't short-side yourself. And it's inevitable that every once in a while you will do it. That is the one first of the first thoughts in my mind is, okay let's make a good swing here. Let's not get greedy and get aggressive. You have to pick and choose your time. When you get those wedges in your hand that is when you fire at them. When you are hitting 7 and 6 irons in the greens and they have pins tucked over the bunkers three from the edge, you really don't need to. I don't feel you need to go at those pins 15 feet left of the hole, or at the hole whichever side the pin is on, it's not a bad play. Especially if you feel good with the putter, give yourself a chance, let the putter do the work for you. You can double cross yourself and making bogeys when you play too aggressively and making bad decisions.

Q (Inaudible) you are trying to get into position and get those wedges?

D.J. Trahan: I think so. I really do.

I think that is an important part of the golf course. Probably the most important part is driving the ball. You have to put yourself in position. This is an old style golf course and demands accuracy, and off the tee if you put yourself behind the 8-ball there is no way to play this golf course well. You can't do it.

Q There is a lot of guys going for their first win up there on the board. Is there anything to that or is that just a coincidence.

D.J. Trahan: Every week out here you never know who is going to play well. Each golf course sets up so differently. And it's amazing how one week you can go out and get absolutely nothing out of your game, and the next week things are clicking for you. I think it's a coincidence. It's not abnormal is what I'm trying to say.

Q I'm wondering how much of a change there has been in your confidence level, say in the last month. If you go back in the month of the calendar, you haven't had a top ten, you are fighting your putter. And here you are, boom, you have this nice little run and then a guy your own age group just had a chance to win a tournament last week?

D.J. Trahan: That is right Shawn, he played awesome last week. I think my confidence is higher. In all honesty there is one aspect of the game that is my putter. It's unreal how you can get so down on yourself when you shoot a 1-over or something because you have missed 35 putts. It's the most deflating thing in the world. The PGA golf courses are hard, you are not going to shoot a 5 or 6 under unless you are striking the ball well. And to do that you have to putt well. You can't hole out two or three times a round. You have to make the putter do something for you. It's all been really been with the putting, and on the green. And it's a welcome thing for me. I mean, I'm really enjoying it right now. And like I said, I hope I can continue.

Q Is that something you have always thought or has that been a this year thing?

D.J. Trahan: Unfortunately for me, yes. It's been somewhat of my Achilles heel my entire life and I have had my moments where I putted well. I have never considered myself to be a poor putter, but if I had to pick one thing about my game that has always, you know, hampered me or held me back that little bit, I have always felt like it's been the putter. And with it coming around here I am very, very happy. And like I said, God willing, hopefully I will keep it going.

Q You are pretty tall guy. Do you know how much you added to your shaft?

D.J. Trahan: I think I'm 38 and a half or 38-inches, which is extremely long for a putter. Most guys are 33, 34, or 35 at the most. I like the way it stood me up taller, and it feels like it freed me up for swinging the putter. It's shown I don't know how much better my stats are, but I feel I'm putting better. And I'm sure my statistics are better.

Q You have gone from conventional to a belly?

D.J. Trahan: Yeah. I didn't go out of the belly in desperation. I was so mad about my putting I was like, forget this short putter thing, I will try this belly for a while. I was not desperate I was fed up with putting poorly. I thought what the heck, we'll try a belly putter and I eventually came around to my senses that it was not for me. And I would just pop into my head in New Orleans I was standing there talking with a putter rep, I want to try to make this one longer and see how it feels, the rest is history I'm putting better.

Q I was going to ask you if you did it on your own?

D.J. Trahan: It was me. Yeah. I didn't like the way I felt over the ball. I practicing in New Orleans and I thought maybe I needed something longer and sure as heck I had a putter made up and I have been putting better ever since.

Q All parts of your game seem to be on right now. You said you had a very solid round.

D.J. Trahan: Yeah.

Q Some players yesterday like Sheehan got it around, but was hitting it poorly. One of the things about this course is nice you can be creative and find different ways to score out there?

D.J. Trahan: Yeah.

Q Particularly scrambling?

D.J. Trahan: Yeah, in all honestly that was an incredible round they put together. I don't believe this is a scramblers' golf course. I think it's a ball striker's golf course. If you play four rounds of golf and continue to do what Patrick did yesterday for four rounds it's going to be difficult to continue at the rate he did yesterday. You know, he played phenomenally with 8-under-par. He said it himself. He felt he really didn't feel like he hit and played an 8-under round of golf. And for him to shoot 8-under it was awesome.

It was amazing to see his numbers going across the board. It was kind of neat. I think he will tell you if he was sitting where I'm sitting this is not a scrambling golf course. That is a headache waiting happen if you are doing that to yourself for four days out here. Look at the people that won this golf tournament, I don't know if you have looked at the stats of the guys that won, they are hitting a heck of a number of fairways and greens.

Q Looking up a the board what does it look like to see your name at the top?

D.J. Trahan: It's great man. Nobody's upset about seeing their name on top. You see it up every week. God knows you can't win every week, and you certainly can't play well every week. But you know you always tee it up with the idea to play to win. So when you see your name at the top of the board, mission accomplished so far.

Q When was the last time you were holding the lead halfway through last year, on the Nationwide maybe?

D.J. Trahan: I don't know if the tournament I won I held the lead. This may be the first time for me as a professional. Like I said, when you struggle with the putter it's hard to get on top of the leaderboard. That is what hampered me last year on the Nationwide. It deflated my tire last year all year, and I finally put together a good tournament in Miami, the last tournament of the year, and won. With that in mind I feel like, gee D.J., if you can get out and make putts and hit the ball like you know how to, you can have a chance to win the golf tournament. And so far this week it's

been the case and going into the weekend hopefully I can keep it up and I will have a chance.

Q (Inaudible)?

D.J. Trahan: It was. I shot a 65 on Sunday and Nick Watney had the lead going into the final round and I caught him with that good round on Sunday.

Q What would you consider to be your biggest accomplishment to date in golf? Would it be that victory in Miami?

D.J. Trahan: No, that is not. That is not. That was great. Because I had actually had myself behind the 8-ball. That was awesome that I was able to come through in a clutch there. It's hard to say. When I won the Ben Hogan award that was a big thing for me. It wasn't one event, it was a reflection of an entire year. My amateur golf and college golf. And it's hard to say in all honesty winning an NCAA championship with my team is awesome. I had the option a lot of people thought I would leave school early after winning the Ben Hogan year. I chose to go back because I loved Clemson and college, and I had such a great group of guys. All of us from South Carolina. All of us grew up playing golf together. We were a tight-knit bunch there, and I knew we had a chance to win the NCAA. And to go back and I'm not going to say sacrifice turning pro, I was 21 years old it was not like I had a long career ahead of me hopefully. So I made that decision with that in mind.

I really wanted to win an individual NCAA. I didn't do that, but I wanted to go back for that NCAA championship and we won. We had a phenomenal year. We were the first team to win the conference regional and nationals. It was a Cinderella year.

Q Being a Hogan award winner, does that give you a special vibe walking in Hogan's alley?

D.J. Trahan: I don't know about that. But it was an honor to win. It was such an honor to win because Ben -- everybody knows the man Ben Hogan was, the work ethic. And nobody has ever worked harder in golf than him. Everybody knows how hard Tiger Woods works and nobody really

understand how hard that guy actually works to be as incredible as he is. But Hogan, that guy, he was an iron man, you know. And it was great to be able to be apart of that to win that award. And it's even more special to be able to come out the first two days and play so well. If I was to win this tournament this week, words couldn't describe how much it would mean to me having won the Hogan Award and this being the home of Ben Hogan. The guy is unbelievable.

Q In what way does the heat maybe affect the playing conditions other than being uncomfortable.

D.J. Trahan: Well the golf course is getting baked out. It's firm and fast. It's playing like Texas golf courses are supposed to play. Everyone says you get out in Texas, you get the Texas wind and hard golf courses. The greens are firm too. I'm telling you it's going to be interesting this weekend. The forecast is for a lot of heat and a lot of sun. So this golf course is going to be brick hard come Sunday. And you will certainly see how the play goes. It's definitely going to be playing more difficult as the week goes on.

Q I also want to know what did you hit it into 4 and, what did you hit off 5?

D.J. Trahan: 4, the par 3, I hit a 2-iron over the green. I wanted to hit a 3, but I went back for the 2, and I landed pin-high. I went over the green. And 5, for some reason I want to hit a driver off that tee, and I'm going to hit a driver off that tee, and I overcooked it into the hazard, and took a drop, and got it up in front of green and made 5. It was a good bogey. I was disappointed with the tee ball. I sucked it up. I had 229 to the hole. I had to drop way back there with that big balloon ball into the hazard. I had 229 and got it down in three from there. I was pleased with that. That could turn into a six real quick on that hole, real quick.

Q (Inaudible)?

D.J. Trahan: On 5, yes.

(Scorecard)

Q D.J. thanks.

D.J. Trahan: Let me see here. I made a great save on 2 today. God, I hit a great drive on that hole, and had 70 yards into the green and just picked the wrong club. I pulled out a lobe wedge and tried to fly it back there towards the hole. And with all of that green on 2 I was looking at it, I should have hit a sand wedge and sawed it in a little lower, and cooked it over the green. And the chip went by 12 feet and drilled it right in the heart and that was big. I made a good start on 1, with a birdie and I didn't want to birdie/bogey it, especially with a horrible horseshoe coming up. You are thinking don't make bogey when you have to face those three holes. And I had that stretch 2 over today. Hopefully I will get the best of it the next two days other than that it was steady. I made good putts that was the biggest one for me today.

Q Okay D.J., thanks.

Q (Inaudible)?

D.J. Trahan: I think it's going to be a huge factor. It's going to be 95° today. The guys when he stepped into the scoring tent they said it was 90° when we stepped off the golf course. It's going to be hotter and you have to drink a lot the water. I don't think the humidity is up high, but when it's that hot you sweat a lot. And it's really the first heat we have seen this year. I think it's going to be a factor. I don't know if it will be a big factor, but this is something we haven't seen yet. This kind of heat, it's a new thing coming into the summer now. And it will play a little factor over the rest of the week.

Q Okay, thanks.

- - -