
**Mitchell Company Tournament of Champions
Magnolia Grove Golf Course
Semmes, Al**

Nov. 14, 2004

Final-round leader quotes

AN INTERVIEW WITH HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Really good playing this week, your second win.

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: Yep.

THE MODERATOR: 19-under par. And a very impressive four days, a 4-shot win. You must be very pleased.

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: Yes, I'm really happy. The second win is way more sweet than the first win, and I'm not sure why. It just feels so much better and maybe it's because when you win for the first time you don't know if it's a fluke or not. And when you win the second time you know you are here to stay. Especially to win by 4 over the field, the quality of field that was here this week. I'm really satisfied. It's a real satisfying win.

I have never been 19-under. Probably a lot of firsts for me this week. My first 64. I think it's my first 4-day tournament where I was under par all four days. It's my lowest 4 day total. So a lot of firsts today.

Today I was a basket case. I was nervous on every single shot. I thought I could just go out and play, but it sort of dawned on me that all week I was playing because I felt like I had nothing to lose. Then I had a 3-shot lead and now I did have something to lose, which was the lead. So it made me nervous. I did not settle down. For a little while in the middle of the round, I sort of settled down a little bit. But I sort of never relaxed. I wasn't relaxed at all all day. It just goes to show what you could still do. It shows that you can still perform even when you're feeling the pressure. So that was good for me to learn that today.

THE MODERATOR: You looked very relaxed.

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Scorecard.

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: My scorecard is very easy to go over today. The first two holes I didn't hit a good shot at all the first two holes.

The third hole I had a perfect yardage I had 123 to the flag. It was a perfect 9-iron. I made one of the best swings I ever made. I could still feel the swing. It was a

perfect swing. It landed maybe 8 feet, ten feet short of the hole and rolled it. I couldn't see it from the fairway but everybody was screaming so I knew it went in. That sort of made me relax a little bit because now all of a sudden I'm 2-under for three holes and my goal was to get off for a good start and that was the good start that I needed.

7, barely hit the fairway. I think only the second fairway. It wasn't a very good drive. I had 150 yards there. I hit a 6-iron about 25 feet. It was the longest putt that I made all week. I have been hitting it so close to the hole the last three days, today I was hitting it 25, 30, 40 feet all day. So I had to lag putt a lot. That was a great putt to make especially because Sophie had made her birdie putt before me then I made that 2-footer right on top of her.

18, I did not hit a very good drive. I had lost my concentration. I knew I was playing well, although I hadn't really looked at a leaderboard. So I had to hit a 4-iron into that green. It was sort of a downhill, a little bare lie. We just waited so long in the fairway. I completely lost my concentration. It was just a horrendous shot. It was a bit embarrassing. Then I had to this chip was the hardest shot that I had all week. I just chipped it up there on the second level. By then I had looked at the leaderboard and saw I had a 5-shot lead. I asked my caddy after the drive, I hadn't looked at the leaderboard, he said you got plenty of room to play with, so don't worry about it. Then I followed the leaderboard, and I said I have tons of room, there is no way can I screw this up. I didn't even care that I bogeyed the last hole. It doesn't matter. I knew I had lost my concentration. I was ready to get that trophy in my hand.

THE MODERATOR: How far were your putts?

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: 18, first putt I chipped up to maybe 35 feet, then I hit it maybe eight inches by and tapped it in.

Q. What are you going to do the next couple of months?

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: I'm going to have a happy off season for a change. The last couple of years I really struggled with my golf game and struggled to make every cut that I made. In particular, this year, I feel like I fought for every dollar that I made this year. Nothing came easy all year, and then boom I shoot 19-under. So it's a much more relaxing off season. I'm not going to grind it too hard. I'm going to go home for the next couple of weeks and do absolutely nothing. Play with my nephews, have fun with my husband and my family. I probably won't play much golf. I will play with my husband and the guys that he plays with on the weekend. That's about it. It will put me in a really good mindset to start next year knowing that I finished this year and I beat an exceptional field. It will change my outlook a little bit. Now, I got Soleheim points. It will be exciting to start next season now.

Q. The eagle again, you went from 3 to 5 just like that. Sophie actually came back and hit a great shot on four. I guess describe all of your feelings for me.

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: It went in. I almost said well this must be meant to be. You just don't hole a shot. That was the first shot that I holed from a fairway all year. For it to happen right there, when I'm a nervous wreck starting out the day. I hit two bad drives on one. A bad drive on two. Well, I didn't hit that bad of a shot. I hit a bad drive on three. I didn't hit it where I was aiming but I ended up in the

fairway. It just seemed that well maybe nothing is going to go wrong today. Maybe this is my day to win. I did sort of have that feeling.

On the other hand, I think Sophie might have had the feeling, how is it going to get bad when now she is holing go shots? It was a great way for me to start.

Q. (Inaudible)?

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: Yes, I made that hole much more difficult than I should have. I shanked my lay-up shot but I had a funny little lie in the rough there. I was just trying to hit it down there to hit a wedge on the green and then hit a bad wedge. I lag putted great today. I mean, I made so many 3 to six-footers for par today because I was leaving everything short. If I had a 40-footer, I was leaving it short.

At the beginning of the day I was knocking everything by three or four feet. At the end of the day I was leaving everything short by three or four feet. I made a lot of par saves which is what kept me going. The putting was great this week.

Q. (Inaudible)?

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: I didn't look at it at all.

Q. (Inaudible)?

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: No, I didn't sneak a look. It's just a feeling. My husband and I said before we started the day if I could get to 20-under, that would be good because that would mean someone would have to shoot a 64 or 5 coming out of the pack. The course was playing too tough today. That would have been a phenomenal round of golf. It was windy today. The greens were more firm. The speed was tricky. They were quick at the beginning of the day. And then as the day wore on they got a little moisture on them and they slowed up. It just wasn't a type of day that I didn't think that somebody would be able to shoot a 65. I figured Sophie was my competition. It was unfortunate that she did have that big number on that hole but it did give me a little more breathing room.

Q. You talk about your frustrations on this course, what about in your career, was there ever a point where you thought it was time to do something else?

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: Oh, my gosh many times. Before I even got on the LPGA that was in my mind every year. I went to TOUR school five times before I qualified. I was always thinking about doing something else. Since I've been on the TOUR, once I got through the first year -- the first year on tour the was very difficult for me because I didn't know that many players. I did not play well. I missed something like my last 12 cuts my rookie year, but I manage to keep my card any way.

Since then I never doubted that this is what I should do for now. And then the last couple of years I think I want to play 10 years. And then maybe do something else. Right now I'm fully focussed on golf. I love it. I love the competition. I love the travel. I love the people. I miss my friends on the off season when I don't see them. I miss the energy and the lift I get from tournaments. It's a high. It's a high to play. It's to play a professional sport.

I'm going to ride it out for a few more years and then maybe do something else. I don't know.

Q. Are you the smartest woman to LPGA TOUR?

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: Well, I don't know. We have some really smart women on our TOUR. We have a couple of Stanford grads, a couple of Duke grads. I'm the only Ivy League grad but that doesn't necessarily make me the smartest.

Q. (Inaudible)?

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: I took a semester at Oxford. My mom is Irish. Yes, she is Irish.

Q. My last off-the-wall question, you are going to be president next year on the player's committee, is there anything that you can do in that role, or on the committee, to encourage everyone to qualify for this event to play in this event? The tournament changing, obviously referring to Annika.

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: Yes, I mean it's hard to tell a player what they should or shouldn't play. Of course, I'll be in a position where I will be happy to talk to her, to try to encourage her to play her. She made statements that she is not fond of the golf course.

I wasn't fond of the golf course either then I turned around and won, so I don't know if that's necessarily a valid argument. I would be happy to talk to her about coming because it's a great event. And the Mitchell Company has really stepped up and sponsoring the event another three years. They've increased the purse. They are doing a great job. I would encourage her to come.

Q. I talked with your husband about watching you come up 18, what was it like for you coming up 18?

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: I had a big sense of relief really because it was such a tough -- a mentally tough day on me. When I saw the leaderboard, saw it was five shots, it was pretty euphoric actually. The last time I won a tournament it was by one shot and it came all the way down to the last hole. So it felt great. I mean I admit it, it felt great.

Q. You shot a 69, you thought you could do better, what was it like for you because of your history here?

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: Well, when I shot the 66 I told my husband, it's difficult to back up a 66. And then I looked at the leaderboard and Laura had two really low rounds back-to-back the first two days. I said, well, it's possible to back up a 66 because she did it. So then I had a 64. Then he said last night, he said I don't know if you can go lower than 64. He said, well, maybe you could have made a couple of more putts and shoot 63. I had it in my head that I wanted to get to 22-under. I thought that would be in the clear. That was me expecting conditions to be the same as they were the last three days, and they weren't the same today. And he said no, don't worry about it. He said 69, just concentrate on shooting 69, and you will be fine. So we knew we didn't have to do better than 64.

Q. What was it like to have him out there? I know he has been with you a long time through all of that, and watching you putt out he was standing there smiling the whole time, what's that like? Were you able to glance over and see him while you are out there?

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: It's such a huge help for him to be out. He was there when I won the first time and he was there this week. Although I had a hard time finding him today, because he was blending in with all of the people. But Raymond has been with me, through everything with me in golf. He was my first teacher. He still is my primary teacher. He knows my golf game and he knows me better than anybody else. We have spent hours and hours on the range together. A couple of weeks ago we were on the range, for a period of two days, 8 hours total, just working on my swing. He is the be-all and end-all for me as far as my golf game and my career. There is no way I would be here now without him, no possible way, because he gives me so much support and encouragement and help with my game. He is the best person to ask if you want to know how to play a certain shot. Or want advice on course management. I mean he has made me the player that I am today. So it's so much more rewarding for me to win and have him here and see it. And I know he enjoyed himself. He said yesterday was the first time he was never nervous over one shot. I bet he was probably nervous all day today, I don't know. Because I really did not have good control of my game.

But I just ground it out anyway. I wish my husband would come out here. He has a business and he loves to play golf himself. I said, I always do so well when you come out. It's nice to have the company to go out to dinner, and talk to somebody with, go to a movie with. He is just good company. That helps me stay in a good frame of mind.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.