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**HP CLASSIC OF NEW ORLEANS**  
**English Turn Golf and Country Club**  
**New Orleans, Louisiana**  
**April 29, 2004**

**First-round leader quotes**

**AN INTERVIEW WITH JOE DURANT**

JOAN vt ALEXANDER: Thank you, Joe, for joining us for a few minutes. You started on one.

JOE DURANT: I started on No. 1.

Q. You had a great started this morning with the quick birdies right out of the box, 33 on the front side, why don't you talk about the day then we will go into questions.

JOE DURANT: I just played pretty solid round. I hit a good drive, almost holed my wedge on the first hole, made an easy birdie. 2, I hit a driver and fairway wood up by the edge of the green and made about a five-footer.

Made a good birdie on 4. I hit it behind the hole, about 15 feet, made a good putt with a wedge.

And par-5, No. 6, was my other birdie. I hit a driver and fairway wood just short, chipped it up on and made it there.

The only bogey there was a 3-putt on 7, that was from about 25 feet, 30 feet. I hit my first putt five feet, jammed it and missed it coming back.

The back nine I birdied 13. I hit a driver in the right rough. I was fortunate I had a very good lie, I hit a sand wedge about 15 feet and made that.

The par-5 15, I hit a driver. It was into the wind, I didn't think I could reach so I just laid it up with a 6-iron and hit a wedge about 15 feet and made that. Parred in from there. I played pretty solid. I didn't hit the ball great, but I hit it good enough.

Q. It's hard to complain with that round, but I know you probably go back to 11 and 16 as holes where there is a difference between first place and second?

JOE DURANT: 11, you need to birdie that hole three out of four days. Obviously I didn't birdie it today. I need to get after it the next couple of days. I hit a poor drive. I hit a good second shot just over the green, I had a tough pitch, and I left it short a little bit and missed the putt.

I think the key to this golf course in doing well here are the 3's and the 5's. The 5's you can birdie all of them and even throw in an eagle here and there.

A couple of the 3's are pretty tricky. The greens tend to slant away from you a little bit. So club selection is crucial.

Q. 16, that putt, that's one that you would like to have back too?

JOE DURANT: Yes, I hit it right where I wanted, it just didn't go. Vijay, it looked like he did the same thing. Sometimes you hit good putts and they don't go in.

Q. You talked about it the other day when we talked to you, you played well here, you played bad here, have you played better than this?

JOE DURANT: I've had better scores, yes. I think I shot 65, or 6 or something. I don't know. I had some good rounds here. I have had some decent finishes here. I feel comfortable here. This is about as close as I get to home. It's nice to be in familiar surroundings.

Q. When you look at the history of this tournament, it has many first time winners and all of that, it's a tournament that people that are in your position, kind of not so well known, you seem to jump up and do well, it gives you a little encouragement that maybe this could be your week?

JOE DURANT: I hope so. I would like to say I have been in contention more than I have. But I haven't. I had a good track record of when I get close to the lead of doing well. It's a question of putting myself in the hunt going into Sunday the last nine. Then it's anybody's ball game. That's all you have to try to do, is put yourself in position.

Q. Joe, talk about the conditions out there today, when you started this morning, what is was doing when you finished it up?

JOE DURANT: The first five or six holes were pretty calm. When we got around to the 6th fairway, the 7th hole, the wind started coming up a little bit. We had a little bit of rain but nothing significant. More aggravating than anything, it rained just hard enough to get your umbrella out, by the time you get it out it's time to put it back up.

But as we got around to the last three or four holes it started getting windy. There may be some weather coming in this afternoon.

Q. Thank you, Joe.