

Crowne Plaza Invitational at Colonial
Colonial Country Club
Ft. Worth, Tx

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PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEWS

AN INTERVIEW WITH J.J. HENRY

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome former TCU star, current Fort Worth resident. J.J. Henry here in the interview room of the Crown Plaza Invitational at Colonial. You would really like to win this one, wouldn't you?

J.J. HENRY: Well, it's funny, it's kind of like playing two Majors, and I was able to knock off the other one last year in Hartford. I grew up in Connecticut. I went to college at TCU. My wife is from TCU. We call this home now, and I live 10 minutes from here. I figure if I can do it last year, I can do it this year here. This is probably one, when I got back to school here in '93, ironically living in those apartments on the other side of 18 for two years, looking down this fairway. For some reason it's the same old song and dance. You want to try too hard, play well, at home and things. I'm even thinking about watching the tapes from Hartford where I won last year. It's a place that it's the same similar pressure you put on yourself at the event, you went to as a kid, and now you live here. The area is a great area, Fort Worth. It's a family type environment, the whole TCU connection. It's a drive from the 16th tee. It's a special week for me no doubt.

THE MODERATOR: Obviously a great round in the 65, Pro-Am today, talk about the state of your game.

J.J. HENRY: I hope I didn't shoot my wad today on Wednesday. I played really good. I didn't come close to making a bogey all day. Five birdies, no bogeys. With that being said, I struggled a little bit this year but I wouldn't say I kind of played quite like the way I thought I would have come out and played. This is my 7th year out here. I always seem to play well from this time of the year on. If you look at my past record, I haven't played well at the start, the West Coast, and Florida. For some reason it's like clock work, I kind of turn on, and have a pretty good second half of the year, so I'm pretty excited about it.

Q. I have you on my fantasy golf league, so if I follow you around pretty closely, you know why. It seems like lately you've done a better job of eliminating mistakes. You had more like a one bogey round?

J.J. HENRY: I did, I'm a more consistent player. Again, I probably played 13 events and made maybe 11 cuts. I played pretty consistently. But I haven't put four rounds together that I can threaten and win a tournament yet.

Again I feel like I've always been a very good ball striker, and my putting has been kind of what's withheld me back. My putting feels great the last two or three weeks. It's always something in golf. Maybe my golf game isn't where it is supposed to be. A pretty windy gust today, I played pretty well on the golf course. The golf course I played -- with the exception of maybe (inaudible). Again, I played out here once or twice a week in college. My apartment is 18 from the 18th fairway or 18th tee. It's neat to kind of remember back where you came from playing back here as a TCU guy and hopefully 10 years back to win the tournament it pretty neat.

Q. (Inaudible)?

J.J. HENRY: Colonial to me, I felt it's a difficult golf course. You can work the ball both ways, left-to-right and right-to-left. There is only two par-5s. One, the first hole, starting hole, so if you don't hit a good tee shot, you are playing up and having to come with some kind of a wedge. 11 usually plays downwind. It's close to 1,600 yards. I hit two really good ones today and got it to the front of the green. It's not like there is any lay-up hole out here. Everybody talks about the horseshoe, 3, 4 and 5. The rough is up this week. It's very long, not real thick. You can't control the spin, but you can get a club on it and advance it up to the green. It's not like we are chipping out of the rough. I think it's perfect the way the golf course is playing. We've had a lot of rain. So it's playing softer than it has in the past. The fairways, greens are more receptive, depending on the whether.

Q. Then from your apartment, you pretty much see the 18th green?

J.J. HENRY: Yes, I lived there in '95, or '96 and '97, I guess, two years. A lot of the TCU kids, kind of an off-campus type apartment. There is a lot of kids in there. It's not a bad place to live for a couple of years absolutely.

It kind of worked out believe it or not. There I was looking down the 18th fairway there it was fun.

Q. (Inaudible)?

J.J. HENRY: Yes, it wasn't like a quick access cross. We had to walk back. We would joke and set up a plank. It's like an inlet on the Trinity River there. There is a fence with some barbwire. We tried to. But it never turned out like that.

Q. (Inaudible)?

J.J. HENRY: Never, come on.

Q. You were across 14. Your view?

J.J. HENRY: I was right -- there is a bunker in the right fairway there. It's on the 18th teem and you turn around and you look across the 18th fairway. There is a fence and an inlet. You will see a bunch of apartments right there. I was the bottom corner number. I was right there and looked right down the 18th tee. We used to joke. I figured I seen that tee shot a lot of times. Hopefully if I get a chance, hopefully I know where to hit it. If I get a chance, I need to hit it in the fairway on Sunday.

Q. Do you think if you weren't on (inaudible) fantasy team, that see he would be rooting for you to shoot 80 every day?

J.J. HENRY: (Inaudible).

Q. The Texas events this year lacked the Top-10 players? San Antonio gets, what is it opposite?

J.J. HENRY: It's the week after the President's Cup.

Q. Any solutions, given the rich Texas tradition?

J.J. HENRY: It's disappointing. It's disappointing. I mean obviously I can't speak for other players or other things. But as somebody that's respected the history, and the tradition of Colonial, and Fort Worth, and Ben Hogan and all, I have to offer. With that being said, I know I'm excited. We have a great response with Crowne Plaza. I got to know them well. I started a foundation here in the area. I've got the deal with a lot of people with Crowne Plaza, and they are very excited about this event and really restoring it to what it used to be. And I think that being said, the membership, the people at Colonial, and Crowne Plaza in general, are committed to do what we need to do to attract the players again and make this a Top-5 event.

Q. What is that?

J.J. HENRY: Again, obviously, you can say that we are a necessity where there is a lot of tournaments leading up to The Open. A lot of players want to play. I know going forward, I think next year I'm involved with the redesign of the Nelson. I think that's the week of Harbortown, or maybe the week after. So there is going to be some movement. I don't know where this one fits in next year coming up. You know, obviously, a lot of the international players, it's a big week in Europe this week.

At the same time, I can only speak for myself. I've always loved this event, growing up, Ben Hogan, and what he has meant to the game, his worth ethic and what he meant to Fort Worth.

And getting a chance to know the people from Crowne Plaza, I think their commitment is top notch. A lot of it is word of mouth with the players. We've had a lot of rain, the course is soft. The rough is up. I have to talk to my old buddy Tiger and see if we can get him this way.

Q. Offer him dinner?

J.J. HENRY: Stay at my house.

Q. Can you talk about winning there last year, it was a hometown event and being able to do that, what that means this week?

J.J. HENRY: It's a home state event to me. But this is my hometown event. And that being said, it's even more special because you know it's hard. I consider myself a friendly, fun guy. I will see my neighbors as friends, or people I went to school with. I got a good buddy of mine, not my regular caddy on the bag this week. A guy that grew up here. We play a lot of golf. He is looking forward to that. He can't sleep at night, he is so excited. I'm trying to be low key the whole week. We are trying to go out and play, have fun. If I play great, great. If not, it is what it is. If I just go on out and enjoy myself. If I did like I did today I will probably play well.

Q. What is his name?

J.J. HENRY: Kevin Pedigo, P E D I G O. We play a lot of golf together at home. He grew up here. He is a member here. A good week with him, if will be fun. He's already spent the 10 percent. His wife -- his little daughter, about 10, she says Mr. J.J. is it true if my daddy wins the tournament he is going to win \$100,000? I said we'll have to see about that.

Q. When you take a person out there like that, obviously he knows the game and everything?

J.J. HENRY: He has played mini tour golf. He caddied out here for a year, year and a half. I wouldn't have somebody because he is a good friend that doesn't know what he is doing out here. Again, he is a scratch golfer. He is a pro for years. He used to carry for me an event or two any way. And I thought, what the heck, let's go out and have fun. He is a good green reader, good

putter, so I think he will come in handy.
