

**Toshiba Classic
Newport Beach Country Club
Newport Beach, CA**

March 10, 2011

Pre-round leader quotes:

INTERVIEW OF JOHN COOK

DAVE SENKO: John, this has got to be a fun week for you. Obviously having grown up in the area and living part of the time here to come back to play here at Newport Beach.

JOHN COOK: Yes, I pretty much consider this a home game for sure. It doesn't take me very long to get here. A couple of minutes. Steve and I talked about this the other day, any time you can play in front of family and friends and people that have been so supportive of you and your career and your life, basically my friends I've known since sixth grade, they are the same friends. I have had the same friends. They will all be out. They've seen me play hundreds of rounds. They love coming out. It's always fun to play in front of them.

I feel like my game is in decent shape, obviously. So I feel confident with that.

I've either done really well or done really poorly in hometowns. I don't know why. A lot of times you put a lot of pressure on yourself. You just don't feel comfortable. There is a lot going on. But I don't use that excuse. I love having my family around. I love having my friends around.

You know, it's a conformability factor. I'm playing in front of them. And knowing they are pulling so hard for you, you don't want to let them down and you kind of put a little too much pressure on yourself. We've learned to relax.

The good weeks that I have had, either in Palm Springs, LA, or even down in San Diego, or up in Pebble, or here, have been those weeks where nothing bothered me.

So I'm trying to go with that good attitude this week where I can take care of everything now, so the rest of the week we can just go play.

I think it's an important event. Not only for me but for our Tour. Toshiba is a phenomenal sponsor. Mark Simon and his group are so behind the event with Hoag Hospital. We are very fortunate to have Toshiba and Hoag part of this event and this community. We get good crowds, which is great. The weather is going to be good. It should be an exciting three days.

DAVE SENKO: Do you remember the first time you played this course?

JOHN COOK: Well, I'm sure I played in high school when I was called Irvine Coast. This is early '70's. I'm trying to think who we probably played here. Maybe Newport Harbor, maybe CDM back in those days. I'm not even sure. Maybe it was Astanzia. I don't know who came over and played back in the early '70's. I don't know but I know we did come down and play. I know we played Huntington Sea Cliff a few times. I know we played Irvine Coast a couple of times.

Q. What high school did you go to?

JOHN COOK: I went to Miraleste High School which turned into Peninsula High when PV, Rolling Hills, Miraleste all joined and became one. I was at the other school, Miraleste. We were Pioneer League mostly. Sometimes Ocean League. We go back and forth depending. We kept moving up and down in classes because some years we were really good in everything, and they would move us back down. We were a small school, then we would get killed and they would move us back down. We were all over the place. The Bay League and all of that. I know we came down and played Newport Harbor in football one year. I do remember that. I know we played -- I think we also played them in basketball. They would come down.

Q. Talking about your game, you came out of the chute with a win, then you played very well at Mayacoba on the PGA TOUR event?

JOHN COOK: Yes I obviously played good in Hawaii. I was really ready to play. I felt comfortable. You never know the first week of the year what the heck is going to happen. But I felt good and did everything right. I shot 3 really good solid rounds. I shot a lot under par. I thought I played pretty well at Boca. I just didn't score very well. My finish at Naples wasn't very good. I didn't play that poorly. I had one bad 9 hole stretch on Friday. Other than that, I kind of played okay. So I wasn't like discouraged going into Mexico. Because I thought that I had struck the ball pretty well. And I knew if I just did that down there, I would go down, have some fun, see what it was all about again. I knew right when I got down there the golf course was very similar to the course we had just played at Naples, except the mangroves were ten feet high. There wasn't a lot of space which I kind of liked and the wind blew hard which I did like a lot. As the week went on, I just kept feeling more and more comfortable and put together two nice rounds to start. I made the cut. We

don't have to make cuts out here anymore, except for a couple of weeks.

So Friday I really never thought much about it. And I got enough under par where I was thinking more of being really competitive instead of making a cut.

And then I played a good weekend. And played good on Sunday. The wind was blowing pretty good, and I played a good round.

I obviously gained a little bit of confidence from that. I just kind of put it in the back of my mind. I did play well against the young guys. It was a big bonus, a big bonus week for me.

Q. Not to put any pressure on you, it will be more special to win here?

JOHN COOK: Yes, definitely. Outside of the Majors that we have, this would be the one that I would put as much emphasis on as anything. I know so many people from just walking around and being around the area. I've got my friends over at Big Canyon and L. Niguel, Virginia Country Club up the road, just knowing a lot of the restaurant people, just a lot of people around town. They are all excited about it and all big golf fans. We will have a nice little following out there the next few days.

Q. You were at Big Canyon and played nine holes?

JOHN COOK: Yes, we played yesterday. I had my son out, played a few holes with the Armour boys, and they joined up with some friends of theirs. I like going over there. People are so nice to me over there and nice to my family. There is some really good players over there. So there is always good games. If you can get around that golf course, it will test you. I enjoy the club a lot.

Q. What's a good score there?

JOHN COOK: For me to beat these guys I've got to shoot 5- or 6-under par. They are going to shoot under par. They're all scratches or better. I have to give them shots. It's not a fair game. I know that. I can usually go around there at 3 or 4-under par, I think is a good score around there. They've got some great par-3s and some really good par-4's that aren't terribly long, but they can play long because the air is cool and the wind blows. I just like being over there. Robert, Bob Love, they've been great to me. I really like being over there.

Q. Tiger and Ai Miyazato are both members, have you ever played with her?

JOHN COOK: I've seen her out there, but I have not played with her. Tiger doesn't spend much time out here anymore. But when he does, that's where he goes. I think he is going to be out some time in the next couple of months. He has to be out for his foundation. I know he played a lot of rounds around there.

Q. Can you envision a 61 out there?

JOHN COOK: No.

Q. I saw him that day.

JOHN COOK: No, I can't, I really can't. You can get off to a good start, obviously. Those first three holes, you can do some damage. I don't see 61's out there. No.

DAVE SENKO: I have one last question, I was asking playing at Shoal Creek this year. Have you played there?

JOHN COOK: '84.

DAVE SENKO: Do you know much about it?

JOHN COOK: Yes, I do. I remember if you hit the ball in the rough it might have been a lateral hazard. You chipped out. You couldn't hit it. You just chipped out and went from there. That's probably why Trevino had won because he couldn't aim it off line. Back then he was hitting it so straight. It was perfect for him. I remember the golf course being a lot of character, narrow in spots, and if you kept it out of trouble you could play it. So we certainly look forward to that. Our Majors are kind of squashed together. We have The Tradition, and then two weeks after that the PGA. Then in July we've got two in a row. Actually, 3. We actually have three Majors out of four weeks, I think. So our Major season gets bunched up. That's actually good. If you have a good stretch, a good couple months, you can do what Bernard did last year and win a couple. So we look forward to getting back to Shoal Creek. It's going to be a wonderful event as well.

Q. Birmingham is a good city?

JOHN COOK: A great city for us, now with a Major title. I know the golf course is close to town.

Q. Do you still play Crosswater?

JOHN COOK: No, that's what they moved that tournament from Crosswater to Birmingham. Very deserving. It's going to be wonderful.

I think our five Majors. Five Majors, it's hard to say. They are on phenomenal golf courses this year. It's the tops of the top. I think with the players going to Westchester, which is an old classic that we always love to go play. And then Inverness for the U.S. Open, and then Valhalla for the PGA which people know from Rider Cups and Tiger's PGA there. Walton Heath is as good as it gets in London. We are lucky.

Q. Are you playing anymore PGA this year?

JOHN COOK: I've been looking at the schedule. There is really nothing I could play in. The ones that I feel like I can compete, or have a chance to play in are opposite our events. Like we talked about.

I'm committed to this Tour and I don't want to really skip one of our events to play in that. If I was to be fortunate enough to win a Major, I would go play in that Major the following year. But those Majors are not on our event weeks. So I would do those. Maybe the schedule changes, and I could maybe play in a couple of events the next couple of years. But I don't know see any the rest of the year. I could play the one in Jackson, but then I have to get from Jackson to London overnight. I don't think there is an easy way to do that, Jackson, Mississippi.

Q. If you won the Senior Open on this Tour you get to play the U.S. Open?

JOHN COOK: All of them. I know The Tradition doesn't get us to The Masters, that's kind of our equivalent. But the Players does, The PGA, U.S. Open and the British Open all get us in that event on the regular TOUR.

DAVE SENKO: Thanks, John.

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