

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

May 23, 2008

Second-round Interviews

## AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHNSON WAGNER

CHRIS REIMER: Talk about your day a little bit if that's all right.

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** I started off well, made a good par on 10, good birdie on 11. 3-putted 13. I made a bad swing on 15 and ended up in the hazard and made double. Just from then on I played very solid, very consistent. I didn't make any putts, left everything short. It was a good day. I'm still only one back. I'm not real happy with it but it's over.

CHRIS REIMER: Is this a round you felt like you were close to a better score or were you happy?

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** I definitely could have played a lot better today. I didn't hit as many fairways, have as good looks at birdies. I take being one back going into the weekend every week.

CHRIS REIMER: Any questions?

Q. Was it mechanical?

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** No, it wasn't. I saw Mickelson post 7 and all day I kept thinking about, I got to separate myself. Thoughts like that probably weren't the best things to be thinking. Probably something I should have learned a long time ago. But still two rounds to go, still learn from my mistakes today. I kept thinking that I wanted to play with him tomorrow. Maybe Sunday would be better any way.

Q. Why would you want to play with him?

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** I just never played with him. He's the second best player in the world. He is Phil Mickelson. Playing in the last group with him on Saturday or Sunday would be a treat and a good chance for me to learn and test

my game against one of the best players of all-time.

Q. Can you talk about leaving your putt short, the putt on 9 is typical of your day?

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** Very typical. I don't know if it would have gotten there. I had a good putt on 8 that actually got to the hole. It seemed like every other putt on the back 9, my front 9, I was leaving short. They were 20, 25 footers. Still it's never nice to leave that many putts short.

Q. I believe you did get to 8, is that when you started having those separation thoughts?

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** Not really. I did get to 8 through my second hole today. I mean it was windy, and I had a couple of good chances on 12 and 13. But I 3-putted 13. I missed a couple of fairways on 14 and 15. I was just kind of fighting for par for the next few holes. I think it was just before I teed off I was thinking about separating myself because Phil was finishing on 9 when I was on the 10th tee.

Q. What happened on 15?

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** I hit hybrid off the tee just down in the left rough, drew kind of a hot lie. I was trying to play a high cut out of a juicy and I pulled it and it went long left deep into the hazard.

Q. Is this a kick yourself in the pants type night just mentally a little bit and say, hey, stop that?

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** A little bit. But, you know, I'm still only one back. The frustrating part is that I don't know how many guys finished at 5. I just saw the board and it looked like a lot of guys at 5, a few at 6 and Phil at 7. I might have had a chance today to separate it and make it a 2 or 3 person race. At the same time it's just Friday and there is plenty of time to do that tomorrow.

Q. Any good saves out there?

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** Yes. 10 I made a nice six-footer for par. 14, I made a five or six-footer. 6, I left my first putt six or seven feet short, made a good putt there. But nothing crazy. I still hit a lot of greens on the back 9. It was just a very easy day. I made a lot of pars. I never was really in trouble except for the 15th hole and more golf like that and some more putts to drop and I should be sitting pretty Sunday.

Q. Were conditions easier or tougher than yesterday?

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** It was about the same. I think the fairways were running a little faster. My first few holes I was running through the fairways on some doglegs with my driver where maybe I should have cut the corner harder a little harder or maybe take a 3-wood. The fairways were firmer. Greens were firmer downwind. Nothing drastic, the wind was about the same.

Q. Do you find you learn more about this course each time you played it; you played it relatively a few times?

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** Definitely. At the same time this course is very classic, and as good as it is, it's very straight forward and right in front of you. It's the kind of place you can play one time, get your lines off the tees, know

where to hit, what to hit and go from there.

The tough part about this track is actually playing it. And when you don't hit it in the fairway you have to kind of scramble from there. There is not much rough, but the rough that's there is kind of juicy hot rough. You know it's always going to come out hot and it's very hard to judge the distance.

Q. A couple guys talked about it's really tough to chip-in, can you explain why that is?

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** It's not long, you don't have to gouge it out. But you will get a couple of blades of grass sticking between the ball and the club face. It's just very hard to control the distance.

I don't think I hit a chip inside five or six feet all week. It's very difficult, and you can catch a lot of fluffy lies where you can jam the ball through, past the hole, or you can flub it and leave it way short. It's a very challenging rough. I feel like Bermuda is that way in general though.

Q. Brian Gay was in here earlier and he talked about winning earlier this year. Sometimes there is a tendency to take a deep breath as Bill said earlier. How come you haven't done that?

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** I have. I haven't really been in the picture my last 6 tournaments. I made 5 cuts, but I haven't been in contention. Now that I won I want to be in contention every week. I think that's what I was telling myself. I want to be in contention every time I make a birdie. I'm like all right I'm in contention as opposed to playing good golf. I'm playing good golf, and getting in contention to win tournaments should just take care of itself. I think I've been thinking about it and Brian is probably the same way.

You go out there with a different attitude when you actually won. You have to focus so hard on every shot to actually win a golf tournament. If your mind wanders at all you start thinking about, oh, I'm going to win. I'm going to be in the last group. That's when trouble starts happening.

CHRIS REIMER: Do you think there is more pressure, or more pressure taken off?

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** Much more pressure taken off. The weekend in Houston seemed like it lasted about 72 hours. It did not feel like two days. It felt like a week. I feel like I'm going to sleep a lot better, eat a lot better and at the same time I'm sure I will be anxious and nervous. That's only natural.

Q. A long those lines in Houston, do you think you would have welcomed or wanted a pairing with a Phil Mickelson type thing?

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** I played with Chad Campbell on Sunday, not that he is in the same realm as Phil, but he has won a bunch of tournaments. My first win, it probably would have been tough to have been paired with a Tiger or Phil, or somebody like that. I would love to play with those guys. That's why I am out here playing, to play with the best players of the world. Any chance I can get, whether it be a practice round, Thursday or Friday, or the last group on Sunday.

Q. You did have Brad and Ogilvy and a couple of others trying to chase you down?

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** No doubt about it, but I didn't have to watch it.

Q. I read something about you earlier in your career you saw yourself on the Golf Channel or something like that, you were kind of nervous being in contention, is that accurate?

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** My first year on the Nationwide Tour I got in the last group toward the end of the year. Those cameras get out there. You know they are coming for you, and they are right behind you on every shot, and you can see them. But it takes getting used to. Four years out there I'm comfortable with it. Now that I'm out here after winning I kind of miss when they are not around. I like having the cameras out there. You know you are doing something right when they are out there.

CHRIS REIMER: Speaking of the Nationwide Tour what would you say helped you most with? Some people say they learn to play golf in college and growing up, but they learn how to finish and win on the Nationwide Tour, is that an accurate assessment.

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** I definitely learned how to win winning twice my last year, but it took me four years out there.

I think if I had gotten straight out here through Q-School, which I don't think I would have been capable of. But I think playing in the Nationwide Tour for four years allowed me to believe in myself that I can play week in and week out and compete against all of these great players. And the Nationwide Tour had so many great players like Steve Pate, and guys I grew up watching, were out there when I was playing maybe kind of fallen back, and I think that helped me with the awe factor of playing with these guys that I grew up watching. That's the biggest thing it did for me.

CHRIS REIMER: Anything else?

**JOHNSON WAGNER:** Thank you.

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