

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

May 26, 2009

Pre-round Interviews

AN INTERVIEW WITH PAUL CASEY

MARK WILLIAMS: Paul Casey, thanks for coming in and spending time with us at the interview room at the Crowne Plaza Invitational at Colonial. A great victory last week, third of the year, just tell us how you are feeling after traveling back and what you're looking forward to this week.

PAUL CASEY: I feel slightly confused as to what time it is, but feel very good. I got some good sleep last night. Admittedly we had a drink or two on Sunday night. It was great. I wasn't sure if I was going to play Wentworth actually the beginning of the year. I'm very glad I did now. That was Europe's flagship event, and I felt it was important to go over there for lots of reasons; probably the biggest one to support BMW as well. They're big supporters of not only Europe but the U.S. as well, try to help them out. As I say, I'm very glad I did. Huge World Ranking points, I had no idea where I would jump to at the beginning of the week if I did win, and I must admit I'm surprised to be sitting here as No. 3.

MARK WILLIAMS: You lost one spot I think in the FedExCup rankings by playing here but, anyway, it's nice to have you back here at this tournament?

PAUL CASEY: I will take that.

MARK WILLIAMS: Let's open it up for questions.

Q. How does it feel to be No. 3? I mean that's a pretty big achievement regardless of what you think of the World Rankings?

PAUL CASEY: I'm not sure it's sunk in it. They told me in the pressroom on Sunday there are only four other guys since the World Rankings started, 4 other British players that managed to get to 3 or higher. Faldo, Lyle, Wossie and Monty, and that's pretty nice company.

But I don't feel like I've overachieved even a fraction of what those guys have achieved in the world of golf. So to be honest, it's been a very rapid ascent to the World Rankings this year. It's been very good golf. And I am ecstatic with it. I'm not quite sure I realized I'm No. 3 yet.

Q. What in particular has lit the fuse for you this year? Any part of your game that you really have stepped up this year or focused on in the off season?

PAUL CASEY: I think the fitness is very, very good right now. It's probably the biggest area. A guy I work with in Arizona, Damon Shelton, S H E L T O N, a good guy, I've worked with him for I think three years, two or three years. I found him through Peter Kostis and Peter works with him as well. And I think that's allowed the work that I've been working on with Kostis more productive because of the work that I've done with the fitness. So that's certainly helped.

I think the way my career has sort of gone, sort of played very, very well, and then sort of dipped down and gone sort of up and down.

I always seem to review it when it has sort of dipped, and it did dip. 2006 was a great season. It was certainly not that great in '07 and '08.

I reviewed it pretty hard and was hard on myself.

I think probably the final thing would be the attitude, sort of a little bit of belief in my own game that I could, you know, win more frequently, certainly win on the PGA TOUR. And the win in Abu Dhabi help fuel all of that. Without the win in Abu Dhabi, I doubt I would have finished second at the Match Play. And the second at the Match Play really helped with the win at Houston. And the win at Houston sort of helped for last week, so it sort of snowballed.

Q. It looked like with some of the highlights that you were hitting your irons unbelievably well. Can you say there is any particular aspect of the game that has gotten to a very, very high level?

PAUL CASEY: I think I've always been a good ball striker but I would agree that the tee to green has been very, very good this year. That goes back to, I'm swinging it better than I have done before. When the swing breaks down it doesn't break down to a point where I'm unable to battle on the golf course. I'm still at a point where I can control the golf ball pretty well.

Having said that, the putting I think has been key this year. That has been a weakness in the past, and the first part of this year my putting stats, I think in Houston, it was pretty good. That's always been my Achille's heel, if I could get the ball in the hole on the green, then I usually do quite well and I still believe that. That's still the one area of my game that needs to be better, is the short game and the putting.

Q. Can you talk about playing here for the first time, what you know about this course and how tough is it to win overseas and then come over here and play?

PAUL CASEY: First I actually know very little about this golf course. I didn't lay play it this morning. I figured my bed was more inviting this morning which I think is more important to get the rest and be prepared for Thursday. And I will see it tomorrow, so I'll be fine with that. I'm excited to be here changing up the schedule a lit bit this year. I threw in Houston, for example. I took out Bay Hill and put in Houston. I don't know why I took out Bay Hill, maybe I hadn't played too well in the past although I think it's a great tournament and loved being down there. I thought it would mix it up a little bit this year and put in some stuff I haven't played before.

The same with this one, I think in the past, I think it clashed with Wentworth. Is that right? I bumped into a lot of guys, even the players said this is obviously a great golf course. Nike is based here down the road with their test facility. So there were lots of reasons for coming here. I'm actually excited to see more of

the golf course. I've seen a little bit, but I haven't played any holes yet. There was a second part of your question.

Q. You kind of answered it. How tough it is to win an event over there and over here?

PAUL CASEY: I think the biggest battle is the energy. It's easier coming this way. I struggled with the jet lag last week, but I think it's much easier coming this way to recover. And the fitness plays a roll in that, so I talked to Kostis, he gave me some things to work on already. He said, well done, but this is what you need to do.

So I hit some balls this morning.

I think it's two things: One is the fitness and the other is the frame of mind. But I'm excited to be here. If I wasn't excited to be here then I would be worried going into this week, but I'm not.

Q. Paul, you guys, you and Peter worked a lot on bunker play and putting, right, as much as anything, is that right? Shoring up the short game?

PAUL CASEY: Where did you hear that?

Q. I don't know, just a hunch.

PAUL CASEY: I'm not sure that's true.

Q. Well talk to me about the putting, where it's been and how you got it better and what you're doing?

PAUL CASEY: A couple of things, the putter I've had in since August I'm really enjoying. For the last probably three of four years I've used a Nike putter, but this one is slightly different. It's got some grooves in the face, which I think with the combination of grooves and an insert, I am able to, I believe, roll the ball better than I have in the past with that technology.

And the second part would be just lots of practice with Peter on the greens. Part of that is using training aids that he will come up, either a putting board, his board, or he comes up with weird stuff. He looks like he bends coat hangers and attaches them to me in various areas, the mad scientist in him. A combination of those training aids and just getting out there and holing putts and playing golf.

And I have tried to focus as much on that or balance my practice so that everything is getting covered. Maybe I wasn't that good at structuring that time in the past. I was a little complacent, maybe too much time hitting golf balls and not enough time on the chipping green and putting green.

Q. Paul, now that you are No. 3, you are the highest ranked golfer in this field. A, how does that feel? B, has it happened to you previous where you were in that situation? I'm sure it's something that you probably would be glad to deal with on a long term basis but can you talk to some of that?

PAUL CASEY: It's kind of fun. I think it's a little bit of responsibility that goes with that and pressure. I have had that before but not in the U.S.. I've had that in Europe quite a bit. I think it assists me in some respects because I do take that very seriously. I feel like I need to perform.

One of great things about our sport, people quickly forget what happened last week. We move on very, very quickly. So I can't sit here and, although I'm ecstatic about the way the season has panned out so far, I can't sit back and relax and dwell on it or reflect. I have to continue to work incredibly hard

because there is 119 other guys who want to try to win this tournament this week. I will be quickly overtaken if I take my focus off the ball.

Q. I'm doing a lot of twittering this week for the tournament, one of my followers wants to know what win was more important to you, your first U.S. win in Houston or your Player Championship at Wentworth?

PAUL CASEY: I'm going to go with the U.S. win. Although Wentworth was huge, big points, the money for the race of Dubai, a flagship event. I think the U.S. win was probably more important for Paul Casey. Yes, I think there was a certain amount of pressure that I put on myself trying to win in the states and wanted that win. I think it was just very important for myself. So very, very satisfying. Again, a good field, I think we had 8 in the Top-10 in the world there in Houston.

Q. Paul, appreciate you coming in. All the best for this week. Thanks for coming in

PAUL CASEY: Thanks very much.

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