

**PODS Championship  
Innisbrook Golf Resort  
Copperhead Course  
Tampa Bay, Fl**

**March 6, 2007**

**Pre-tournament quotes**

### **AN INTERVIEW WITH PAUL GOYDOS**

Interview by tape.)

**JOAN vT ALEXANDER:** Thank you, Paul, for joining us for a few minutes in the media center.

Paul, a good place to come back to, you had a lot of success here last year that got you started and you won the first event of the year.

**PAUL GOYDOS:** I actually improved on that position.

**JOAN vT ALEXANDER:** And with that win you are No. 8 on the FedExCup point standings.

**PAUL GOYDOS:** Beautiful, that's really the one that matters right now.

**JOAN vT ALEXANDER:** Just talk about being back.

**PAUL GOYDOS:** Yes, I've only played four events between last year's event and this year's event. That doesn't happen. But, yes, obviously, coming into this tournament last year I was a different person, struggling, thinking about where my future was in the game, what I was going to do. And obviously, you know, two tournaments later I'm thinking about playing in the World Match Play. I'm eligible for the World Golf Championship in Doral. I got a reasonable chance of getting in The Masters.

So, yes, obviously this was a start of a big a turn around, about as big a turn around you can get in golf just about, from having no status to losing my card to be a tournament winner in two events and playing in the elite events which obviously this is an event that started that.

**JOAN vT ALEXANDER:** Questions, please.

Q. What do you think sparked that turn around for you?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** Well, there is two answers to that question. There is the honest answer and then there is the media answer.

I go with golf is cyclical like a lot of things. You can do a lot of work and things don't go right. I thought I kept working, and I kept grinding and I kept doing the things that I thought I needed to do to get better. And this wasn't necessarily showing up in result. Obviously it showed up all in one week.

To me golf practice is like, I practice, practice, practice, practice, practice, then a couple

of months later it kind of kicks in.

When you are really working hard on your game, maybe you get a little too technical, a little too this and a little too that. Once it becomes more rote, I guess, is that the right word, that's when you start playing a little better.

So for me it takes a little time for that work to turn into results. Luckily for me it turned into results in the very last week.

It's just kind of the way the timing was how everything worked out, I don't know.

This golf course last year the way it was playing for what I like to do, it was very firm.

Driving distance, one of my weaker points, is not a big deal because the golf ball was really rolling, and I have had a lot of success on Bermuda grass also. There is a lot of good things that this place presents itself than maybe other places don't.

Q. Was that the honest or media answer?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** I would say that's probably the honest answer. The media answer I was getting a lot of bad breaks, and I was playing well the whole year and blah, blah, blah. The reality is I wasn't playing well. It wasn't through a lack of effort. Golf is like that. We are all not at our A plus game every week.

Q. How noticeable is this tournament in March, post October?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** I think it's a complete flip. They were running a business here at Innisbrook the last time I checked. They over seed it. The golf course is in tremendous condition. It's just a different golf course. It's softer. It's lush, I guess is a word you'd use. It's a different golf course per say.

But one of the things that success comes from is sight lines. You see things, you see what you want to see, and this golf course has good sight lines for me.

I like the way the course flows, and I like the way some of the things are going on. It's just going to play a little longer than it did last year. I don't think that necessarily means it's going to play harder. I don't think it's going to be play harder. It's just going to play longer and different.

Q. This whole new Florida swing for the players, how difficult is that to adjust to, completely different landscaping if you will at this time of year?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** I don't know. I didn't play last week. It is the first time we've done this per say. So I don't know yet. I don't think it's going to matter a whole lot.

Doral is not going to be that much different though it will be a different field. Bay Hill is the same day. Honda, they play a new course every other year there any ways. So that's really not that different. I think last week's tournament from everyone that I talked to unbelievable reviews. I think everybody was ecstatic the way it worked out, and the way the golf course was. I think this golf course is one of the more respected golf courses on TOUR, too. So I think it will probably be a better swing than anything else.

Q. What's your thoughts on the logistics of them putting this tournament back on?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** It seems like you have to ask Gerald. It takes a year to run an event not four. It takes a year to a year run an event not 17 weeks. What they've done, finding a sponsor, they got to get all of their volunteers back in place. The golf course has got to give up revenue time, seven or eight days of revenue. I think it's a tremendous -- it's got to be tremendously difficult.

The U.S. Open, they get the whole year for a reason. Bethpage they were working on that golf course for two or three or four years to get it ready for the U.S. Open. Here they only had 17 weeks. That to me is unbelievable. Again, I would ask Gerald. I would think that was very difficult. Especially finding a new sponsor.

Q. Have you ever paid attention to the World Rankings until --

**PAUL GOYDOS:** Not until I skyrocketed up there. Not too much. I think it has a lot to do with my divisor, and the fact that I don't play very much. I think that's helped me a little bit.

But obviously now the World Rankings have become important getting into certain events; you get into the Majors of the World Ranking. The World Golf Championships. When you are 287th, you are not thinking well if I play well this week I will move into the Top-60. So I don't really need to pay much attention to them really until you get down to below 100 to where Kevin, if he wins this week, he will have to figure out what he is going to do. I think he has had a second place finish this year. So he obviously moved up a little bit. I was 295th going into Tampa, I think.

Q. How do you know that?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** Because I looked at it. To be honest with you I got done playing at Hawaii, I knew I moved up. I looked at them. And I knew I had moved up when I finished second here. Then when I won Hawaii I started thinking, well, there is a chance I can move into the 70's or 80's. And I had some success at AT&T. There is a chance if I play well at AT&T maybe I could play myself into the Match Play. I looked it up and I almost fell off my chair. And I said, well that's pretty amazing. So now I look at them every day now.

Q. What is your number now, what is it?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** I think I was 45th.

Q. Obviously you say you look at them every day. I mean Doral that's got you in. But The Masters, end of Doral week, is that part of your thinking now?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** Yes, playing The Masters didn't ever cross my mind. I'm really a part-time golfer in a sense. And a full-time parent or father or what have you. The way it is getting into The Masters, winning doesn't necessarily get you into The Masters. You have to have basically a pretty good full year. Just winning, and having a bunch of mediocre finishes is not going to do it anymore. I never really put much thought into playing in that event again.

My one time there I was lucky to break 80 one of the days. But, yes, it would be nice to go back. I played there in '96. And it would be nice to go back and challenge myself.

The golf course looks very difficult. But it does challenge where you play. I would love to have the opportunity. We will see how it works out.

I'm more concerned with this week and having a good solid tournament. In you play well those things take care of themselves. I'm a big proponent of where you are on those things that are taken care of by good play and not by worrying about where you are.

Q. You played there one time in '96, does it mean more coming around this time than it did maybe the first time?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** You might have to ask that question if I get in, and I get to that point. I definitely think winning meant more mentally than it did 10 or 11 years ago. Maybe I was just naive at that time. But going through, you know, I was pretty good late 90's, and struggling. I don't know what you call these the 2000's. I don't know what they call these. I struggled. It is nice to do some work and have some success. I think that probably winning Hawaii probably meant more to me more than anything else that I've done in golf.

Q. Golf has sort of changed, become more boisterous and loud, Daly stopping in mid swing, have you ever, just for the fun of it, thought what it would be like to play as guys would stand over a foul shot? Have you ever allowed yourself to think how it would be playing screaming that way nothing is interrupted?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** I think people that are new to golf say it seems kind of silly that a guy is over a 3-footer on a perfect green, as flat as can be. And if somebody shakes their cup 30 yards away they step back and glare at them. Every other sport -- you got Roger Clemens throwing at your head. You got people going crazy in basketball games. No, I think it would be like anything else. We look at it from a golfer standpoint, and you watch these guys shoot free throws, how do they hit the rim with all of that going on. They do it every day. If we had people yelling -- I think Tiger has to play with that kind of stuff every event he plays in. I'm sure he has become more a depth with playing with noise and what have you.

I imagine Daly has those, his galleries are pretty big too. But a guy who doesn't get that every day is probably going to be a little more disturbed than anything else.

And secondly, and more importantly, if those things are bothering you, you are probably not in your best mental state that you can be and you need to be in a pretty high level to be competitive out here any way. So a guy who is struggling with that -- we always talk about your focus, that's a focus issue. When your focus is close to 100 percent those things don't bother you that much.

But when your focus dips down, and I think dipping down it, I think, 95 percent. It's not a big dip. But that's when those things tend to be a little more bothersome.

But it's not going to happen in our sport. People are not going to be yelling and screaming. That's just not going to happen.

Q. I'm sure you saw that Mark Wilson won yesterday despite earlier in the week he had called a penalty on himself. That sort of thing happens a lot. Players calling penalties on themselves, or maybe nobody would have known.

What do you think it is about golfers, or about the sport that leads to that? There is a lot of examples through the years of guys calling a penalty that might not have meant anything, nobody might have seen it or heard it?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** Yes, it's a function. One, when I won at Bay Hill Jeff Sluman was in second or third place after two rounds and disqualified himself for taking a bad drop, one.

2, if you look at the rules of the game, and people that aren't going to go in that direction, who don't believe in those type of things stop playing when they are 15 or 20, this is silly.

They have that respect level for the game and they don't take it that seriously. They will not take it to the level that Mark Wilson is at right now. If you look at the rules, and if you look at the rule book, one defines the game. Rule 2 defines how you play the game. Rule 2 doesn't talk about how you take relief from casual water, whatever. Rule 2 is etiquette, when you leave the golf course in better shape. I personally never read that part of it. It's funny how the rule book is laid out. What's important? Obviously the definition of the game is the most important thing. How you act is the second most important thing according to the rules of golf.

If you can't deal with that idea you are probably not going to be very successful with the game any ways. Does that make sense?

Q. With that said, how great a story is it that a guy who did assess the strokes on himself ends up in the end pulling it out?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** I think the line that Jeff Sluman gave. I don't know if he stole it from somebody else. He said that's like congratulating somebody for not robbing a bank.

He broke the rules. There is not a guy on the TOUR that I know of in that situation, the way I understand the situation, would have done the same thing. That's just the way the game is. I think it's a tremendous story.

I was flying that day. I was flipping through the Golf Channel. They interviewed him about it. He didn't want to talk about it, which I thought was pretty good too. That's not the story. The story is about the tournament that's going on and the four-man playoff. The great play everyone has had here. Let's not dwell on all of the wrong things, let's dwell on the right things. I've played well. That's over with and done. I thought he handled the situation tremendously. My respect level for him -- not just because he did that, but because the way he handled it. He didn't make himself a martyr anything. He handled it like a professional also.

Q. What about the fact that the rule that he broke by his caddy telling another player what club he hit is not helping him at all? You can almost see where he would be penalized for something that would help you.

**PAUL GOYDOS:** That's probably a better question for Mark Russell or the debate. To me it's like signing the scorecard rule. It's the way the rule is written. If that's a bad rule, fine, it is written down. We are not supposed to give advice to our fellow competitors. Why that's the case, I don't know. But part of that issue is you and I are playing. I got a 5-shot lead and you are in second place and you're tied with Kevin. And I give advice that's helping you against him. That's the reason those types of rules are in place because you are protecting the field as a whole. That's like hurting yourself, but you are also hurting every other player in the field in a sense by helping that one player.

Q. Quickly on next week, any thoughts on a par 70 than 72, is that more of a mind game than anything?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** We'll see. I will get there and see how it plays out. I think that's just a relation to par issue with who wins. I don't care, it's not necessarily going to affect who wins the golf tournament. Especially there, the Tiger Woods Invitational. He just wins there. That's the way it is. I don't think it's going to affect too much of that again. I think that's more if you make a hole 550 yards, and call it a par-3 it's not going to affect really, in the long run, who wins the tournament. We can call them all par 1's and 226 over par would win, but it would still be the same idea. I don't think it's going to be a big deal.

Q. Did you play in the Double O Open at Pebble?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** Yes.

Q. No. 2 was a four that year?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** Yes.

Q. Would you have felt worse on yourself having made 5 on the easiest par-5 out there, or having made bogey 5 thinking that everyone is probably going to drop a shot?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** It did play shorter. It played tremendously shorter. I can remember in the tournament, the two rounds that I played it hitting a 3-wood and maybe a 5-iron to the green. And like AT&T I can't get it over the ditch in two. I haven't lately. They moved that tee back. They have actually stretched it out as a par-5. Back then it really wasn't. It was much shorter in 2000 even as a par-5. I remember the golf course was firmer. It would have been a pretty weak par-5 per say. It would have been probably a driver and a long iron to the green without much trouble even for me. Understand I'm at 190th in distance on TOUR also. I would imagine the longer hitters were probably

hitting 7-irons into the green. That hole is probably a legitimate par-5 from where they played it. Par-4. Just like where the tee is now from AT&T I think it's a legitimate par-5.

Q. Last week, Paul, we had a couple of cases there was some timbers missed? People will look at that, barroom talk, if they call it a choke, what's the difference between that and simply missing a putt? In other words, when is a missed putt or a missed shot which happens quite a bit here, become a gag?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** Wow, maybe Rob Rotella could answer that question. I think that I didn't get a chance to see Boo's putt. I saw highlights. To me, most choking comes from lack of preparation going too quick. You go in and you don't get prepared and that causes problems. Generally, choking is a concept of getting too quick and getting ahead of yourself and things like that as opposed to a nervous reaction over a shot, as much as the nervous reaction is in your preparation. Again I don't know if that's what happened. He might have just hit a bad putt.

Q. What is your definition of choke?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** You get food lodged in your throat. I think every shot you are choking, it's a matter of how much. I don't know that I have a definition. I don't know if I have an answer. I feel like I'm choking over everyone.

Q. The last one was actually good?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** I just think that, I think -- again, I think you are choking on every shot. I am. It's just a matter -- to me, again it's a lack of preparation. I guarantee you that that's when sports psychologists talk about so much about sticking to your routine, sticking to what you do best and having that routine.

When you get out of that routine, that's the definition of choking is when you don't stick to what you do. I really don't have an answer to that question, I will be honest with you.

Q. As a former Bay Hill champion, you have a lot of experience with Arnold. What your favorite Arnold Palmer story?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** Favorite Arnold Palmer story. I can't say them. I can't really tell them to the media. The best one was when obviously when I won his event, I'm on the 18th green. I won't say what he said first.

The second thing, he basically said was -- he obviously is a big Master's guy. The Masters, I would go out on a limb and say it's the most important tournament to him. I may be wrong. That's the impression I got. Maybe the U.S. Open, when it was at Oakmont or a specific event. Event as a whole. He made the point, hey, you are in your first Masters, which is great. Do you want to play a practice round on Tuesday with me? I said okay, let me check my schedule. That was a pretty good deal. It was me and Fred Funk and Woody Austin went out to play and he took us into the champion's locker room which I didn't think I was allowed to go in, to be honest with you. He opens up his locker and there is four green jackets in there. Sam Snead is in there heckling him, which I thought people can heckle Arnold Palmer? It certainly isn't me. Snead was heckling, hey Arnold, when are you going to take my spot there in that honorary first shot?

I thought wow, that's pretty good. But that was a pretty cool day to play a practice round with Arnold at Augusta on your first Masters and then going into the champion's dinner, having a beer, hanging out, that was pretty cool.

Q. Let's get back to the question Doug asked. Is there a psychological logical difference between a short par-4 and a long par-5, say the U.S. Open changes it, how do you feel

getting a 5 on an easy par-5 versus a 5 on a par-4?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** I think that has a lot to do with the organization, the people running it, met with the USGA, or whoever runs Bay Hill looking for a specific score. 12-under won, we want 6-under to win, so let's call that hole par-4. USGA does that all the time. I don't think it has a lot to do with the flow of the golf course or traffic or what have you. Though at Bay Hill, I will say on four might be a little ease for traffic to get people around the 6th tee and the fourth tee that are waiting a lot. Maybe that will be we better, I don't know. And 16 you won't have to walk back as far. A lot of times when you are on the 16th tee as a par-5, you got the people on the 18th fairway. You are looking and maybe having that tee, maybe the traffic will flow better. That's an advantage there, too. But basically that's function of getting those scores to par, higher or lower, depending on how you look at it. USGA, they would say it's not. To me there is no question, they want the score to be around even par.

Q. It doesn't really affect how the players look at it?

**PAUL GOYDOS:** I think it can for some people. For the most part, no, it doesn't matter. The U.S. Open, if you are driving the rough, they are all par-5s. They are all par-5s if you are driving the rough. I don't care you how long the hole may be. Par 3's if you hit it the hole, they're Par-5s. In this event we will see how it plays out. Arnold has messed around with that golf course. No. 1 used to be a par-5. Number 4 used to be a par-4. 16 used to be a par-4, and they made it into par-5. He messed around it. It's his course, he likes to tinker with things. I think that's part of the things he enjoys to do. I think he is going to continue doing those things.

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