

Chrysler Championship  
The Westin Innisbrook Golf Resort  
Copperhead Course  
Tampa Bay, Fl

October 24, 2006

Pre-round tournament quotes

### AN INTERVIEW WITH PAUL AZINGER

JOAN vT ALEXANDER: Thank you, Paul, for joining us at the Chrysler Championship, coming down the stretch here with one last tournament. 122nd on the Money List. Is that something that you think about, or you don't really worry about it too much?

**PAUL AZINGER:** I'm thinking about it. I haven't really studied though. Is it that close? Are you kidding me? Any of these guys make the cut I'm in trouble.

Q. Dickerson is third alternate.

**PAUL AZINGER:** Yes. You know, it's been here for a while. My start of the year, I wanted to just, you know keep my card and take my Top-50 all time money, so it's important to me. It's real important to me.

JOAN vT ALEXANDER: Questions, please.

Q. Have you looked at the list that much?

**PAUL AZINGER:** I looked at it enough that nobody went by me last week which was really a surprise. I know I looked at it enough to know if I would have had made one more putt in Las Vegas, if I wouldn't have hit it in a sandy divot on 16, and dumped it in the water out of there, I know I'm one shot at Las Vegas away from not being in this position.

I had a 10-footer on the last hole for birdie there, and I felt like if I made it, I would be locked up. Actually, when it didn't go in I thought I was locked up. I still may be okay. I don't know. That's the big unknown.

Q. There hasn't been a ton of movement behind you in the last month?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Well, except at the world event, 125th earns \$64,000 after the Ryder Cup at the Am-Ex at one tournament. Other than that, it's pretty out of kilter when you got four or five of these Am-Ex events where there is no cut and last place is gigantic. If it moves up 64,000 in one week, then what did it do to the overall Money List?

Q. (Inaudible)?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Yes, they are probably pretty happy. Where would they be without the guarantee money that's official? I have no way of knowing. I haven't kept track.

Q. It always seems like 126 to 150 was a pretty good safety net, not getting your card, is that a great unknown with the Fed Ex cup?

**PAUL AZINGER:** I don't know what it means.

Q. Are you completely ruled out of getting it?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Nobody knows, that's the problem. Nobody really understands. I guess it's written down somewhere. But who studies that, you know, that's actually -- that's to the TOUR's benefit, that a majority of players don't care and don't study it. It's a negative voice, I think.

Q. Any inspiration for you to go study it?

**PAUL AZINGER:** No, I'm not going to go study it. There is nothing any player can say or do to make any difference of what goes on in Jacksonville. I don't think. I've been at this for 25 years. So the players have less of a voice now than they've ever had when it comes to stuff like that.

We had no input on whether Cialis would be a sponsor or the TV contract or anything. We're informed of what's going on. In any of the pac board, which you will say is our voice, but it puts out fires. I mean, the bottom line is, it's just like it's been for some time. Every player is wrapped up in their own little world trying to take care of what they got to get done. That's where I am right now, I got to get good and just stay and finish in the Top-125.

Q. How much did do you want to play next year and have you come to the acceptance it has to come to a very condensed stretch?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Well, if I'm Top-125 on the Money List, what does that mean? Am I exempt? I don't have any idea what it means. I haven't looked. I don't know what it means. Does it mean I get to play all of the tournaments? I don't know. Do you know?

Q. (Inaudible)?

**PAUL AZINGER:** So I'm grinding my ass off for one tournament.

Q. (Inaudible)?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Anyway, if I'm 126 -- I don't hate anybody up there running the TOUR. I wish the players had a little more say so of what's going on. We just don't. It's just the way it is.

Q. (Inaudible)?

**PAUL AZINGER:** No, but it seems like there is a lot more human guess decisions being made. When you make a decision to change it all up and do this, I think player input would be nice.

Tim (phonetic) just got a massive contract extension. Four guys on the policy board had no idea. They are standing in the meeting, what, what? You got a raise? What do you mean? They didn't know. It's okay though. That's the way they do it. That's just the way it is.

Q. Have you talked to anybody at PGA of America recently?

**PAUL AZINGER:** What?

Q. Have you talked with anybody from PGA of America, got any phone calls?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Yes, I have been talking to them. I don't know what I -- I heard I'm out. I heard I'm in. I don't know.

Q. It's a job you really want, the way it's going?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Well, it's like everything to gain, nothing to lose now. Yes, I would like to do it.

Q. From your perspective, what went wrong last month, or is that an insult to Europe to say what went wrong?

**PAUL AZINGER:** I would say it's an insult to Europe what went wrong. I think, obviously, they had a bunch of really good players. To me it's the first time I looked at the list and thought their team is probably better than ours. They were certainly hotter than our team. See, the Ryder Cup Captain is just a captain. He is not a coach. How do you get in someone's face? You can't get in someone's face as a coach because they have been with you for years and years. You're a captain, you're supposed to organize and delegate and make decisions and try to motivate a little bit.

But I think really the key to success in the Ryder Cup, in the future for the American team is to get the hottest players in there. Whether that's an extension of how early you cutoff the selection process. If you extend it, I don't know. I don't know. But I think that somehow you have to come up with a formula that's more current and gets hotter players on. I don't know of any scenario that would change this last outcome.

Q. Didn't we have that this time though by putting so much emphasis on the months going into it?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Well, I mean if you looked at the way it played out no, not at all, because the last five guys on our team were not secure the last month and a half of the year.

If they would have had some high finish, they would have secured their spot and nobody did. The two guys that were picked had opportunities to make the team. They didn't get hot and didn't make the team. The reality is, Phil, his confidence might have waned a little bit after the U.S. Open. And David Toms and Chad Campbell won in January. It didn't put our hottest players on the team, not at all. I mean if you looked at the list honestly, and said, wow, maybe the way they did it. I shouldn't say anything. I shouldn't. I'm saying our team wasn't red hot coming in, and their team was red hot coming in.

Q. In any of your discussions with PGA of America, is it that more tweaking of the system was about to come later?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Probably, I would say probably. But I don't know. You know, it's not up to me, I don't think, at this point.

Q. Would you have interviewed, do they do that? Is it an interview process?

**PAUL AZINGER:** You kind of make your phone calls, hang out for a little while, we'll get back to you. You know.

Q. Do you get any lessons?

**PAUL AZINGER:** No lessons, no sweater folding, no working the cash register. You don't have to figure out -- you don't have to know how to run a tournament. You don't have to know how to run a tournament.

Q. You are just spanning the globe with all of this stuff?

**PAUL AZINGER:** I will get killed here.

Q. What does Europe do right that the U.S. doesn't?

**PAUL AZINGER:** I think they get their hottest players in there.

Q. So just look at their system, would that be a solution?

**PAUL AZINGER:** You know, if you can compare apples to apples. I mean that's how you do it. But the difference is, I think, if you -- I think their system is Money List and World Rankings.

Q. Ranking points?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Whatever it is.

Q. Only for one year?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Is that what it is? I don't know, because they play the tours primarily. If our guys -- if we had exactly the same system, our guys are primarily playing one TOUR if it would be the same people. And then all of a sudden you do the same exam thing and you only got four guys. You know what I mean? It would just overlap. The same guy high up on the Money List is the same guy high up on the World Rankings. And it all just overlaps. I think there is two different scenarios. You got Money List over there which is inevitably different than the World Rankings. What do you think? Have you figured it out?

Q. Well, I still have issues.

**PAUL AZINGER:** Have you studied it?

Q. Yes, I have issues.

**PAUL AZINGER:** Can I have some input?

Q. I have zero input.

**PAUL AZINGER:** I will call you if I am the man.

Q. I would think there would have been an issue with whoever finishes second. For example, at The PLAYERS Championship, you get the exact same point at the B.C. Open. I think that's the problem.

**PAUL AZINGER:** Yes.

Q. There has got to be a way to measure performance, strength of field, without getting into the problem of saying this field is better than this one?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Well, I like the Money List for that reason. I mean my whole career there is only two things I ever choked for, prestige and cash. I never choked to finish. Make Ryder Cup points.

So I think if a guy has the guts to finish second at The PLAYERS Championship, then that's more money than finishing second at the B.C. Open. So to me that is a real barometer.

Q. You know what the answer is, it's probably the way the President's Cup does it, Money List, double points the year, do you think the PGA of America would ever do anything the TOUR ever came up with?

**PAUL AZINGER:** I don't know. I don't know them well enough. I don't know. I

don't want to speak for them. I think they are tired of not winning, I know that.

Q. When you look at that time job of captain, how much credit/blame the captain gets, I remember seeing you, I think, the morning after the Belfast, someone turns up?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Yes, it could happen, but probably not. I think, you know, I think Hal Sutton should get a reprieve with this last outcome. I think Curtis Strange probably deserves a reprieve. I thought Curtis was one of the best captains ever. But, you know, the bottom line, players have to perform and you have to have players that are playing well enough to get it done. There is only so much moxy and spit and vinegar. If you have a team that's running cold against a team that's running blazing hot, then you have to look at the system to determine how can you change the system to get the best players, the hottest players on your team at that event

Q. I know you weren't there, do you think the Americans lost any of their edge by the criticism that came down on them after the Country Club? You better be on your best behavior

**PAUL AZINGER:** I haven't even thought about it honestly. I played on the 2002 team and there was no mention of it.

Q. I know there was no mention of it.

**PAUL AZINGER:** I doubt it.

Q. I wonder if there was any conscious effort to tone it down?

**PAUL AZINGER:** I doubt it.

Q. You ugly Americans?

**PAUL AZINGER:** I doubt it.

Q. There has been a lot of piling on of Americans under 30 compared to the Europeans, and Australians under 30 in the top rankings, the highest ranking American under 30, 36, is that a legitimate criticism or is it just --

**PAUL AZINGER:** I don't know if it's a criticism as much as it's an observation, an observation that's very real.

Q. Are we doing something wrong?

**PAUL AZINGER:** I think it's a cycle, all sports. We are getting it handed to us in basketball. You know, even American baseball is getting wild by people overseas. So I think all sports and all nations, now it just seems like the level of competition is just really gotten higher around the world. It's like we're the big target. I think with golf and the Ryder Cup competition, they get up to play America. It's America, you know.

Are we getting up to play Ireland? Are we getting up to play England; probably not. Are we getting up to play Sweden; probably not. We need to get up to play Europe. We need to get up to play them.

All of those countries are getting up to play America.

As far as individual Americans, we got all of those foreigners coming over here going to college. It's a different world. A different world. I think we've got 85 foreign players exempt on our TOUR, I think. I thought I heard that. That's staggering number.

**PAUL AZINGER:** It might not be healthy for our TOUR, but it is a reality.

Q. Did you play Faldo at a match at La Costa this year?

**PAUL AZINGER:** We went out.

Q. For a quick 9?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Yes, we played two or three days in a row.

Q. And?

**PAUL AZINGER:** I whipped his ass. We weren't keeping score. We were just messing around. We were hitting two or three balls off of every tee. You know how he is. He has brand new six drivers and two sets of irons and a bunch of wedges and putters. It was fun practicing with him.

Q. Nine holes in five hours?

**PAUL AZINGER:** It's the most I ever heard him talk on the golf course. We actually talked. We talked about stuff. Can you believe Ian Baker Finch actually said this earlier today?. We were just out messing around. He is an amazing player. He is so thorough. He will be a real thorough captain.

But as far as his golf game, he studied everything. He was ahead of his time. Remember, if you remember, I think it was he and Raymond Floyd and Nick Price were the first ones to use solid balls. And now here we are seven or eight years later. 10 years later it's the only ball.

But they jumped the gun on everybody. They knew that it spun better, that it went farther. They did everything they could. The Nike ball produces zero exons. Those old liquid center balls, half of them were lopsided, very inconsistent.

So he was ahead in that regard. He was ahead in the biomechanics, how the body worked and functioned. He was just way ahead. It was kind of cool hanging with him in more of a sharing kind of capacity. We actually just learned a little bit from him. I probably taught him some things or two.

Q. Did you get to see him in a whole new light, the whole TV thing away from his arena kind of?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Yes. We went out to dinner a few times, sat at the bar. Me and him and Nel Ford (phonetic), ate dinner at the bar. Nick Faldo, you never see him go out like that. He would sit in the corner booth somewhere. Hide.

JOAN vT ALEXANDER: Everybody all set?

Q. He was not exactly warm and Fuzzy with his peers, he probably had to be that way to achieve; how does that translate for him or anyone as far as captaincy? (Inaudible)? Now you are the leader of 12. Does that matter, do you think?

**PAUL AZINGER:** It could. It could matter. I don't know if he is going to relate or be able to relate. I don't know what their formula is for success other than it seems like their players just seem to get some up. Maybe they have a chip on their shoulder or something.

Q. (Inaudible)?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Maybe. The idea they are more passionate probably isn't really accurate. The team that wins the first session and second session is going to be more passionate than the team that gets it handed to them, or sees more of a display of passion than you saw in 1999 by our team. So I don't know what it is. I don't know if the captain is making that big of a difference over there. Langer is completely different than Ian Woosnam.

Q. (Inaudible)?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Yes. So they just get some really good players on their team every year. A lot of them are unheralded as far as we're concerned. You look at them and watch their swings, wow, this guy hits it good.

Q. How is your game right now?

**PAUL AZINGER:** I will let you know.

Q. What you do you feel like?

**PAUL AZINGER:** I feel like it's okay. I really do. I got one week to play good. It's in my hands

Q. It looked pretty good to me?

**PAUL AZINGER:** I had the shanks in Las Vegas. I shot 14-under. I thought I must be decent if I could shoot 14-under thinking I could shank it. I must still be decent. I literally changed the second shot of the tournament -- actually the third shot of the tournament, the second hole, I made a double bogey on a par-3. I finished 11 in Canada and I had 2 shanks there.

Q. Close?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Close to the hosel. I know why I am doing it. I made a minor change since Disney. I missed the cut in Disney, I could hit balls all day. 36 holes Sunday. I practiced a bunch. I'm taking today off.

Q. When you talked about choking for money and prestige, how did that stack up to say that '93 PGA or Memorial, what you faced last year or the year before when you were right on the bubble and missed the cut?

**PAUL AZINGER:** Well, that's the way it works because I play myself into position to have a chance to win the PGA, and I was confident. You know, it's just like I could prove it to everybody, and myself that I can do this because that's really the burden, isn't it? It was Phil Mickelson's burden. He knew he could do it, but he had to prove it. I knew I could do it, but I had to prove it.

When you are struggling, and you have the changes periodically -- I played on the TOUR for 25 years. I hit maybe five shanks in my whole career. Four of them have been in the last seven weeks. So, you know, you tell me what's harder.

It was a lot harder to know that. You know you're not as good and you're not playing as good and you are trying to desperately hang on and get in there. It makes it tough.

When you are playing your butt off, and at any moment can you hole a 9 iron, you know, that's a different feeling all together.

There is still tons of pressure because the value of winning the PGA is so huge versus if you keep your card, you know on the bubble, who even notices, you get to go out and struggle again the next year, what's the value in that?

Q. You get a leg up in the FedExCup?

**PAUL AZINGER:** I know, preFed Ex up favorite. But you, you know, like I say I haven't studied. This is the most I have looked at it right here. I'm not liking what I'm seeing at all.

Q. (Inaudible)?

**PAUL AZINGER:** It's tight. If I play good it's over. If I don't, what are you going to

do? I'm actually in pretty good shape really.

Q. Keep studying.

**PAUL AZINGER:** It's not bad

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Q. Does Bobby Bowden deserve a hall pass, or is it time to do something there?

**PAUL AZINGER:** I've already said too much. I've already said too much.

**PAUL AZINGER:** I'm finished. I'm not going there. You know, it's tough to watch. When you lose 15 years, you lose 18 games, 20 games.

Q. You studied that?

**PAUL AZINGER:** I know that much.

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