

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

March 7, 2007

Pre-tournament quotes

AN INTERVIEW WITH RICH BEEM

JOE CHEMYCZ: We welcome Rich Beem to the interview room. Rich, thanks you for taking a little bit of time. It's been a pretty good year for you so far, off to a good start. Have you had a chance to play the golf course the week, and maybe you can talk about that if you would.

RICH BEEM: Okay. Yes, it's been a pretty good year. The golf course this week is fantastic. I think it's playing quicker than it did last fall. I also think it's playing a little bit easier too, because you are not so afraid of the ball running into the rough and then missing greens and short siding yourself.

Because I think that Bermuda rough we had in October, it's the hardest stuff I've ever played out of.

And so seeing all of the ryegrass around there, I'm actually looking forward to it, if you could imagine that. But 3 inch high ryegrass is not the easiest stuff.

But certainly around the greens I think it's playing a lot easier and certainly the bunkers are extremely easier than last week. So I don't have any fears of that one either.

JOE CHEMYCZ: Questions?

Q. Would you have expected that it would play a little bit easier because of over seeding, are the greens any easier?

RICH BEEM: You know, yesterday when we putted, when we played out there, they were running extremely fast. I think they actually slowed them up a little bit today for whatever reason.

I would imagine they are going to be awfully quick for the rest of the week. I really didn't know what to expect.

I didn't know how they would -- if they would over seed everything or just the fairways, and leave the Bermuda rough in tact, even though it would be dormant. It's still awfully tough to play out of, but they over seed everything.

When we looked around yesterday, like I said, I thought it played a little simpler because you didn't have some of the really knarley spots like the front right of No. 3 green, there is a little swale there, you hit it in there, and you are just dead.

I looked over there yesterday and threw a ball in there, and it wasn't really a big deal.

It's still going to be tough around the greens because the greens are so fast, and they're tricky to putt any way, so it's still tough to get the ball close. But I think you got a little easier time finding your range than you do out of the Bermuda rough.

Q. Would you welcome a steady diet on TOUR of courses of this quality and this difficulty week in and week out?

RICH BEEM: I don't know about a steady diet. But, yes, I think it's a lot more fun to play a golf course where you got to be a good ball striker. Last week, kind of the same thing with the wind and the conditions, you had to drive the ball well which I was fortunate enough to do. But you really got to be a good ball striker to compete on this golf course and last week as well.

This golf course, especially, because there is some length to it, and, you know, the fairways are narrow up there about 280, 290, so unless you're a really big big hitter, like I think Bubba is in the field this week, I think he will have somewhat of an advantage on some of the longer par-5s. On all of the par-5s because he can carry those fairways bunkers and really bomb it past everything.

I like these type of golf courses because it shows who is hitting the ball the best and playing the best.

I think if you notice K.J. Choi has been a winner here. I think one of the reasons is, he is an excellent ball striker. If you look at the last five or six past champions they are all great ball strikers and they really do a great job of controlling the golf ball, off the tee, around the greens, putting, the whole 9 yards.

So you are not going to get anybody out there who is missing a lot of fairways and struggling that way.

Q. Rich, some of the young guys under age 30 are starting to rear their there clean shaven heads and make some noise out here, Charles and Baddley and Immelman, and guys like that, what in your mind is the balance, if any, between talent and experience?

RICH BEEM: Well, those guys you mentioned right there though have all been on TOUR for 5 plus years.

Q. Or Justin Rose?

RICH BEEM: They have already been around the block. Justin Rose turned pro right after the British Open. So I think that you are talking about guys that have been around the block. I think especially in Charles' case, there is a lot of pressure put on him, coming out of college early and having all of this immense talent, and just really not winning more often and yet he throws up a great final round at Nissan, and obviously played well before then.

So I think it's just experience more than anything else in Charles' case, and with most of the guys.

You look at even last week's winner, Mark Wilson he played in 110 events before he finally got his win. Vijay, I guess is going to be around for a long time. But I think just in the cases that you mentioned, I think just se they've on TOUR for a long time, and they have been around the block, and they d not only our TOUR, but around the world. So they teed it up enough times to know how in.

Q. Can you learn from failure?

RICH BEEM: Oh gosh, yes, I hope so. If you don't learn from failure then I don't know how you learn from anything else. I think now that Charles has won a second time, after being in some playoffs, and being near the top of the leaderboard, and not getting it done, finally broke through, and I think that kind of lifted probably a little

weight off his shoulders. Now, he is able to -- I don't want to say breathe easier, because I have a hard breathing anyways. But I think he'll probably have a good year this year and probably contend for some Majors.

Q. Do you think golf galleries over the years have gotten a little bit more boisterous and there was an incident last week with the camera that Daly strained his shoulder? And just for the fun of it, have you ever thought about what it would be like if you guys played out there like you were shooting a foul shot?

RICH BEEM: I don't know. I mean some environments it is. I mean, you get around No. 16 in Phoenix, you're not going to shut those people up. There is no chance. There is a lot of holes out there where there is a constant murmur, a constant buzz, things like that. You just got to throw it to the wayside and just not be distracted. The funny thing is, it's actually easier year to play with some like Tiger Woods or Phil Mickelson where you do have large crowds because you know there is going to be some movement here and there, and there is not going to be anything sudden that kind of comes out of no where.

I think that's what happened in John's case last week. It's not like there five or six cameras going off and people were walking around talking. There was one single camera that went off.

So I think it's not -- it's not a lot of people that bother you, it's actually very few people, and then something they do kind of gets to you. Like I said, in the case with John. But, you know, as far as the crowds being as boisterous, or shooting a foul shot, I hope not, this is still a very respectful game. You know, when I watch other sports, and I watch other athletes make errors, I'm like, well, he just made an error but he's still going to get paid 25 million this year, I don't really feel too bad for him. But if I go out and I miss a 3-footer, it could be the difference like boo last week winning, and finishing second place.

So we are earning our keep out here. I hope the crowds out here give us that due respect because we are earning our keep out here and we are paying our own way to do it.

Q. Do you still think all incidents aside, do you still think the relationship between golf and its fans is different than any other sport?

RICH BEEM: I think so. I think most of the fans that come out to the golf tournament understand what we are going through out there. We call our own penalties on each other. Mark Wilson did that on himself last week. It could have cost him the tournament but it didn't. I think for the most part the true fan knows, and most of the people we get out here these days.

There is some people out there that have never been to a tournament with all of the corporations and sky boxes. Grant it, you are going to have some people out there that don't know what's going on and don't know the etiquette. At the same time I think they have an idea.

Just like the idea when you go to a football game, you drink beer, yell at people and have a good time.

Golf is the opposite a little bit. So I don't think that the fans would get to overboard. At least I hope note. If we do, then we got plenty of security to help out.

Q. What was the most tournaments you ever played in a row? What were the circumstances? Did you regret it? Was there a breaking point?

RICH BEEM: Yes, yes and more yesses. I played, I think it was 2001, I played 11 in a row. And I have, to this day, I have no idea how or why I did it. I know why I did it because I wasn't exempted and I felt I was playing pretty good in the summertime, and

there was a lot of tournaments coming up, courses that I really liked, and this and that. Actually, I didn't finish in the Top-70 of the prior Money List. So I wasn't in Colonial. I wasn't in Memorial. But I played my ways into those events. So I ended up going to those.

But I just kept adding tournaments and adding tournaments.

My caddy, who I think he had one child, and his wife was pregnant with the second child. If you want to go play, I'm in. Let's go. I wasn't married, I could have cared less. I'm going to sit at home for a week, or I'll go out and try to make some money for a week. So I decided to go make some money.

I look at it now. This is my second week on the road, I can't wait to go home. I've got a stretch 8 out of 9 and five in a row this summer. It kills me to have to do that. There are five tournaments that I really love to play. I got to go do it. 11 in a row, no thanks.

We talked about this yesterday, Woody Austin played 19 out of 20. I'm sorry, that guy is angry after one event. I can't imagine how he was after that 20th event.

Q. Did you come close from withdrawing from any of those?

RICH BEEM: I actually withdrew from two of them. I know I withdrew from one of them for sure, that was the FedEx in Memphis. I actually played -- I qualified for the U.S. Open on that Monday, played 36 holes. And I had to go play Tuesday, and Wednesday I think I took off. And then on Thursday, I went out and played, my legs were just shot, I had nothing in me. So instead of trying to scrape it around for the next few days and have to go to the U.S. Open I just bagged out, got some rest, and went to the U.S. Open more fresh than I would have been.

My caddy remembers us withdrawing from two of those events, but I think I only withdrew from one. But that was just sheer stupidity.

Q. You just referred to the penalty last week, Mark, that he called on himself. Do you ever recall that happening out here, that penalty you know, for advice? Obviously everybody knows that you can't give advice or take advice, but it seems pretty rare that that ever happens. I wonder if you ever recall.

RICH BEEM: I don't know what the circumstances were. If I had to take my best guess, I think from what I understand, his caddy verbally said what he was hitting. I think he verbally said that to somebody else. One of the caddies or players in the group who hadn't hit yet.

It is so commonplace out here for caddies and players to show numbers in the fairway. You don't sit there and tell them, but you got ways of flashing a sign or whatever. It's commonplace. I don't think that it's anything that's -- I think it's kind of one of those unwritten rules. Hopefully, I'm not opening a Pandora's box here. Everybody is like, ooh, penalize you for that.

I think it's a common courtesy, the guys do it. I know what he is hitting for the most part, I'm just verifying it instead of walking over there and standing by his bag, you know. You know what the other person is hitting. But whether or not it helps you or not, I don't know. It probably helps to a point. I don't ever recall anything like that. But I mean if you really wanted to be strict on those rules, yes, you could hammer everybody out here.

Q. It's odd though, isn't it, the rules allow you to look in somebody's bag?

RICH BEEM: Look in somebody's bag, and you can sit there and stare, absolutely. I'm sure that the other players knew exactly what he was hitting. It's just the fact that his caddy came out and said it out loud.

I've said it a few times, nice 4-iron, or something like that. I wasn't directing it to

anybody. Could I've been called for that penalty? I don't know.

But I mean as far as, you know, information being given out there, there is a lot of times where caddies and players are flashing hand signals what the other person is hitting or not. I don't find anything wrong with that. You are not hitting the shot for them. I'm not gaining anything by it except for the fact I know what he is hitting.

Q. Rich, it seems like 20 years ago, well before you were out here, guys used to drape towels over their irons in the tee boxes, it was a little bit of cloak and dagger. Now you see players that stand right by the other guy's bag and they look down and nobody says anything, it's right out in the open. You are just vulturing a number from the other guy to make sure you got the right one in your hand assuming the game is comparable. It's changed a little bit, it's an evolution.

RICH BEEM: Yes, I could imagine doing that. As I said. It's actually kind of hard to see back in the day. If guys were really draping them over their bags. I guess I can understand why they do that, given your competitive information that might help them. But I mean like I said, just because -- I've been out here long enough, and everybody else has been out here long enough. If you can't figure out what to hit from 143 yards, then you got some problems. I know what I was going to hit anyways. Whether or not this other person's club affected me or not, 95 percent of the time probably not, you know. And grant it, would I hit somebody if it affects them? Probably not.

You can look at it a couple of ways. I tend to look at it, we all know what we are hitting out here to the most part. I can sit there and look across the fairway and watch what David Toms is hitting, okay, that looks like a 7-iron. Sure enough it was a 7-iron

Q. So this would tell you (demonstrating) that's a 7? They do it with the TV guys?

RICH BEEM: We do it with the TV guys. Yes, 7-iron exactly. I don't want to say it's common practice. It doesn't happen with every player that I play with out here. It's one of knows things. I'm sure my caddy flashes numbers when I am over the ball and this and that. I don't have a problem with it. If he wants to do that, that's fine. Whether or not you would really be hammered on for penalties like this, we are kind of an information age where, you know, you got TV cameras all over, you got XM radio out there, you got everybody out there who is looking for something.

Q. ShotLink?

RICH BEEM: ShoLink. So there is a question posed. ShotLink puts on, you know, you can follow somebody's round shot-by-shot. Say I go out in the afternoon tomorrow, and I want to watch -- say somebody's got a comparable game. Say Mark Wilson's got a comparable game to me. He goes out in the morning and I watch on ShotLink exactly where he hits it, what club he hit from that yardage, and blah, blah, blah, is that cheating? That's knowledge too. I'm gaining knowledge through the computer. He hit it on the right side of the fairway. He hit a 7-iron from there. Is that considered cheating? I don't know.

Q. What about watching it on TV?

RICH BEEM: Same thing. Are you gaining anymore information? Well, absolutely you are. So what's the difference between me flashing a number right then and there, or watching it on TV and going out and playing that same hole an hour later, hitting the same shot from the same spot.

Q. If you are the last group off of the PGA you can watch three 3 hours of TV in the morning and see what all of the greens are doing and where all of the pins are buried.

RICH BEEM: Exactly. Hell, I think you can walk inside the ropes for the most part and go walk around the greens and check those out yourself. If you really wanted to, you can walk down and check everything out. Are you gaining knowledge? The knowledge is already out there. We are living in such an information age you can gain knowledge from anywhere out there. Caddies get done playing, a guy plays in the morning the first thing, another guy's buddy goes out later in the afternoon and say, I hit this shot, this shot, this shot and this shot on the par-3s. What's the difference between that and what Mark Wilson did? It's a pretty funny one.

Q. Have you done that or been inclined to do that as far as watching shotLink or TV?

RICH BEEM: I watch TV, yes. If I've got a TV and there is certainly time to watch it, heck, yes, I will, just to see what the conditions look like out there because I'm not going to know what the greens are doing, or anything like that, until I get out there. But if I watch a few shots being hit, that green is soft, these things are holding today, that might change the way I approach different shots.

Or if I'm walking around, and I've got access to a couple of holes I might watch a few shots into the green and see how they are reacting. Are they firm, soft, what are they doing. You kind of know when you go to the first hole what to expect.

Q. It's a little different from Hogan playing with no yardage book, just eyeballing everything going, 6-iron?

RICH BEEM: He was one of best though. It would be interesting to find out, if he would have played any better knowing if he had a yardage book or things like that these days.

Q. I was wondering, if you are in the first group off, in the final round of a big tournament, what's your mindset? Are you trying to have a good round to carry over to the next week? You don't have a chance to win some what are you thinking?

RICH BEEM: You know, most of the time it's play well. I mean I would like to finish up on a hard golf course, that obviously I played well enough to make the cut. I would certainly like to have a good round to finish it up so you can take some confidence the next week.

But if things don't go your way the first four or five holes, then it's pretty much, let's see how fast we can get out of here and catch that earlier flight. Kind of whatever transpires. Certainly you always want to play good. You always want to put forth your best effort. You know, sometimes -- sometimes I know Tiger Woods always said he never quit on any single shot. I've certainly given up on a lot of shots. I didn't care.

Q. Get me out of here?

RICH BEEM: I'm out of here.

Q. Did it matter who you are playing that day, maybe John Daly or something and you guys are, let's get out of here?

RICH BEEM: If I'm playing with J.D. we're sprinting. I played the final round of The PLAYER'S CHAMPIONSHIP in '02, I went out first thing in the morning, I was first out because I had a horrible Saturday, and I played in like two hours and 15 minutes around Sawgrass, and I ended up shooting a 66. I moved up a few spots in that. It didn't take very long for me to shoot 66.

Q. You are 1-putting every green?

RICH BEEM: I was.

Q. Sometimes you don't even line up putts maybe?

RICH BEEM: There has been times I've been the first group on Sunday and I haven't lined up a putt, absolutely, I'm not the first guy to do it nor the last.

Q. Next week Arnold Palmer's name goes on this tournament, I want to get your favorite Arnold Palmer story.

RICH BEEM: You know, wish I had some. I really don't know much about Mr. Palmer. I've played in his tournament twice and I haven't been back. I've got no plans to go back this year either. It's just one of those golf courses I don't feel very comfortable on, or haven't in the past. Unfortunately, I don't have any great Arnold Palmer stories for you. I wish I did. He sounds like he would have been fun to have a vodka with back in the day, even today, I haven't had a chance to spend much time with him at all.

Q. I'm working on a U.S. Open story early, what do you suppose would have happened, Mickelson, on what happened to him the on the 72-hole, if that happened to your average Joe, that crushing defeat, would that be potentially ruiness to your average guy. Phil just seems to shake it off.

RICH BEEM: It happened to Mike Donald, I guess. If you want to put it in those terms when he lost at Medinah. Yes, I think if the guy hadn't won before, and was in that position, and those same circumstances happened, one of two things, I think. I think it's just going to deflate him, or he can certainly bounce back and become a better player than he was before. But I think unfortunately I've seen the former happen where it just deflates somebody and they don't quite bounce back from it, and they don't ever really recover. Phil is too good of a player. He has proven himself time and time again. We were actually talking about that yesterday, I was talking with Doug Ferguson, he is writing a different article. I think Phil made mostly good decisions on that hole, I think he just got a couple of bad breaks. He hit the right club off the tee box, there is no doubt about that. He was struggling any ways. I don't know if he was out of gas. He was struggling. He definitely had the right club in his hand. I would have put driver in his hand on the tee box eight days a week. Just because if he hits one good one, it's really ball game over then. And he just kind of came out of it, and he was put behind the 8-ball. If I was his caddy I might have talked to him more about laying up because he is probably one of the Top-5 wedge players in the game. At least give himself an 8-footer to win. If not, come back tomorrow instead of forcing it.

But, you know, Bones and Phil they've got such a great relationship. They got one gear and that's pretty much go ahead on. There is not a problem with that. I think that's why he can probably accept it better than somebody else could. The next guy, how many times are you going to get that opportunity, probably not very many. I think Phil has got more in him. I think that's one of the main reasons Phil will be able to bounce back. He knows he will have more opportunities like that. They let that one slip through his fingers. He will get another chance.

JOE CHEMYCZ: Thank you.
