

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

May 28, 2009

First-round Interviews

## AN INTERVIEW WITH WOODY AUSTIN

JOHN BUSH: We would like to welcome Woody Austin into the interview room here at the Crowne Plaza Invitational at Colonial. After a bogey free 7-under par 63. Woody, great playing out there. If we can get some comments on your best round actually since the 62 win last year.

**WOODY AUSTIN:** It was very solid. It was a very solid day. It was stress free until 16. I was never in any trouble until I knocked it over the green on 16 and then 18. So I just had a boat load of chances and missed a couple of short ones early and made three in a row from long distance on 5, 6 and 7 to kind of keep my spirits up and just kept on playing good and kept giving myself a ton of chances and finally made a couple on the back. It was really pretty simple. I played about as solid of 18 holes as I've played in quite a while.

JOHN BUSH: You played 4 in a row up through THE PLAYERS Championship, you took last week off, just talk about how you are refreshed coming in.

**WOODY AUSTIN:** Well, this is part of the year where I finally started to play good. I had a horrible winter at home. I haven't been able to prepare at all this year, it's been a very slow start. Those four tournaments there leading up to THE PLAYERS Championship, gave me a chance four weeks in a row to work on some things and get into a rhythm. I got close at THE PLAYERS Championship. I played halfway decent. The last five holes was kind of ugly. I at least started to see something, and for the first time all year after that when I went home I could actually work on it when I was at home.

The problem before that, every time I went home I couldn't work on anything. If you are out for two weeks, and you go home, you lose it. So it's been a tough start for the year as far as preparation. The last couple of weeks plus THE PLAYERS I was able to practice. I'm finally starting to see my game round into, I guess, normal summer form, I guess.

JOHN BUSH: Questions?

Q. Kenny Perry talked about a lot of red numbers today, what do you attribute that to, just playing the course and a lot of the changes you saw?

**WOODY AUSTIN:** Just the rain. It's because of the rain that we had. The golf course is in perfect shape. It's not running. So the ball is going to stay in the fairway if you hit a good shot. Balls are definitely landing on the green soft. You can hit it to any pin placement. That is lot of pin placements towards the back fringes today, that was kind of noticeable. I was kind of shocked. You can fly it back there, and the ball wasn't taking off. You didn't have to worry about the first bounce. Which here, a lot of times, you have to worry about that first bounce. Today you didn't have to worry about that. You are not going to find an easier day to play. It's just a matter of the condition to play is perfect for a low score.

Q. Woody, talk about the changes to Colonial course and how it played with your game today?

**WOODY AUSTIN:** Well, it definitely makes it a little tougher for the average hitter, myself. They've made the bunkering to where I can't get it over the corners that I used to be able to. So now I have to actually position myself back, so it's actually made it tougher for me. Because of the fact, say the second hole, even though it's a short hole, even I can hit I over the right bunker before and hit it up there by the green. Now I can't.

So if I want to play smart, I'm going to play short of the bunkers. If I want to play aggressive I can try to fit it between the two bunkers.

The third hole is very different. I could hit it over the middle bunker and back before. Now I can't unless it's dead downwind. Now I have to hit it out to the right. So that makes that fairway even tougher to hit because you are aiming to words the dogleg. That makes that a tougher hole. The long hitters just kind of box at all of the bunkers.

5, is the only change that was kind of I felt unnecessary. It's not a bad change. I like the fact that you had to shape it around the corner. I mean that's what that hole looked like. It just didn't look right from a standpoint where the tee box is. It's a tougher tee shot, I will grant that, because you just can't see the shape, so it's easier to hit it through the fairway on the left. But from an aesthetic standpoint I like the old tee on that one.

Just 10 yards, 12 yards on like 6. The bunker on seven is no big deal. That one is okay. Adding a little bit of length on 9, adding a little bit of length on 12. All of that stuff is nice. I would have like had to seen the golf course stay. The golf course has held up through all of time, it didn't need any changes as far as length. If they wanted to sharpen the bunkers, and do whatever, but lengthwise the golf course was fine. Nobody was tearing this place up. Nobody ever tore this place up. It would be nice to see the tradition stay in the game. This is one of the golf courses that always held up. It didn't need any length. It really didn't. The rest of it is fine. You can shape the bunkers and do all of that.

The 11th hole, I couldn't get there in two anyway. Now 640 yards.

Q. You've had some really good finishes. You were fourth your first time here, and 2 other Top-20's and some missed cuts. It seems like a good course for you. Would you agree with that and why haven't you played it every year.

WOODY AUSTIN: Well, the only year that I've ever missed it that I could play was last year. Last year with being in all of the Majors and the way they had changed the schedule. This year they changed it in the schedule to where it worked out to play. Last year it didn't because I had played 4 in a row leading up to this event, so I had to take something off.

But the other years I didn't get in, I didn't get in on my number. I had always said after that first year, I love this place. I said it's a beautiful golf course for me. Because it's a traditional golf course, and I am an a traditionalist. I love shot making. I love shaping shots. That's a lost art in the game of golf today. Today is about power and length and not about precision and control. This is a golf course that's about precision and control.

Q. Obviously you can't spin the balls, the new ball as much, you can't shape it as much, you still shape it. If you had to say a percentage, how much different is it now? How much less are you able to curve the ball?

**WOODY AUSTIN:** It's very hard to curve the ball. It's a piece of cake to cut a golf ball for me. I'm very old fashioned. I'm very neutral. My grip is very neutral so it's easy to cut a ball.

The modern day ball for me is very hard to draw because I don't have a strong grip. So that's the hardest shot for me because that golf ball doesn't want to turnover. When you look at the young guys, they all got strong grips and power and hit that high draw. I'm still back at neutral. So that's the tough shot for me to hit a draw because the golf ball doesn't want to turnover.

Q. But this golf course does seem to favor a cut?

**WOODY AUSTIN:** Well, there is a lot of holes that are cut, yes. But Kenny Perry does pretty good with that high sweeping draw though.

JOHN BUSH: Let's go through the card.

**WOODY AUSTIN:** I hit it in the left bunker off the tee. I laid up perfect and hit a wedge in there about 15 feet right below the hole.

5, I hit it about a yard in the left rough. I was still in the first cut. I had to draw it around the corner. I didn't hit a big enough draw so I hit it on the front of the green. I had it on the green, 35, 40 feet. When that one went in, I felt like that was a makeup because I had missed 2 putts under 8 feet on 2 and 3, so I figured that was kind of my makeup.

I got up on 6, and I hit another one through the fairway on the left. This one went up against the collar of the thick rough. I ended up pulling it pin-high. I don't know 25, 30 feet and made that one.

I hit it to about 15 feet on 7 and made that one.

10, perfect hole, middle of the fairway, cut shot, 8-iron right over the top of the flag to 8 feet directly behind the hole.

14, another good hole, I hit it right in the perfect spot, right in the center of the fairway, another 8-iron just barely left of the hole about 8, ten feet passed the hole.

17, was probably another one right in the middle of the fairway. I hit a 9-iron short of the flag about 18 feet I think.

JOHN BUSH: Anything else?

Q. You and Kenny have played a lot over the years, I'm wondering if you see any similarities between both of you and the fact that you guys have both been able to extend your careers and play well.

**WOODY AUSTIN:** I would like to think there is a similarity. The only similarity that I would like to have is his finishes. We play an entirely different game of golf. He plays the ball up in the air and right-to-left. That's all he does. That's his game. He sticks with it.

Me, I tinker with every shot, left-to-right, up and down, right-to-left. He's got one gear, one shot. I like to mess with the ball.

Again, the technology makes it tougher for me to maneuver the golf ball around or whatever. That's just the way I play the game. So from that standpoint we are very different. We are old school though in that we don't tinker with what works, so to speak. Like I said, there ain't nothing wrong with his game the last five years. I would love to have his finishes and stuff.

JOHN BUSH: Woody, thanks for coming by.

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