
**Nissan Open
Riviera Country Club
Pacific Palisades, California
February 22, 2004**

Final round leader quotes

AN INTERVIEW WITH TIGER WOODS

Q. When the pressure is off, you play a great round of golf?

TIGER WOODS: Yes, isn't that amazing? You today I hit it closer and made a few putts. More importantly, I hit my irons better finally. I hit them like I did last week.

Q. Did you find something, or did it just happen?

TIGER WOODS: It's just one of those things where I was going up on the range, I tried to shape a few more shots and basically exaggerate it a little more. Hit some big old slices on the range, hit some big hooks, and instead of being so finite, then try to work it in from there, and I did that.

Q. Are you excited for Match Play now?

TIGER WOODS: Yes, the goal setting today was to get in the Top-10, but if, at least, build on some positive momentum going into next week considering we might not be able to play hardly any practice rounds, so at least get this one in and play really solid so we could get some positive vibes.

Q. When happened yesterday?

TIGER WOODS: I didn't hit my irons well at all. I've been driving it well this week. I just hit my irons terrible. The last week, it's was the exact opposite, you know. Welcome to golf, you know.

Q. Was this your low round here, did you see it coming?

TIGER WOODS: If I could have hit my irons like I did last week, this week, I felt like I could have taken it pretty low, but I just never did.

I finally drove it in the fairway, drove it on the correct sides of the fairway, and had nice shape to my shots. And then to hit my irons, I couldn't hit a green with a wedge in my hand. So, today, I just wanted to do something positive, and once I got it going there on the front nine, I just kept it going. I kind of build on it. It was actually fun playing with J. today, because we were basically feeding off of one another. He would make a birdie, I would make a birdie, and we were basically pulling each other around.

Q. Best round?

TIGER WOODS: I don't know.

Q. Low round since Western (Inaudible)?

TIGER WOODS: Well, there you go.

Q. (Inaudible)?

TIGER WOODS: No, I went home and worked out.

Q. (Inaudible)?

TIGER WOODS: I learned my lesson in golf (inaudible).

Q. (Inaudible)?

TIGER WOODS: Match Play is just a totally different element. I mean you could hit the ball, like an absolute chop, but if you make putts and put pressure on your opponent, you can wear him down that way. If you go out there and play perfectly good solid golf, and put a lot of pressure on your opponent that way. I would much rather today do it that way, then the latter.

It's just one of those things where Match Play you just want to put the ball in play and make sure you are in each and every hole. You don't want to give yourself any bogeys. But more importantly, you don't want to give your opponent any holes. That is the absolute the worse feeling making bogeys and giving your opponent a hole. If you're going to win a hole make them earn it, make them make birdies to get a hole.

Q. (Inaudible) 108 holes without a bogey, you were obviously really playing well, can you find that again with only three tournaments this year?

TIGER WOODS: Well, that was the best I played all year really ball striking wise. I putted better in other tournaments like The Western. But ball striking wise, I hit the best that week. And if I can do that next week, and considering that I still play long even with all of the rain, you are going to have to drive the ball in the fairway, because that rough will be up, because they can't cut it, it will be to wet, so you have to get the ball in play and put a lot of pressure on your opponent, in the hopes I can do that next week just like I did last year.

Q. You are keeping your drives in the fairway, something you didn't do last year?

TIGER WOODS: Uh-huh.

Q. That gives you a much better chance to get to the green, get to the pin?

TIGER WOODS: Without a doubt. I mean it's a lot easier to make 3's from the fairway. I figure I'm actually halfway decent from the fairway excluding the first 3 rounds here.

Q. (Inaudible)?

TIGER WOODS: Well, the greens are soft. Any time you give players out here soft greens, they are going to tear it a part. There is no rough. You can go out there and

hit drivers hard as you want, put it in the rough, so be it. You can plop it up there on the greens, it's going to hold. 5 and 6 irons are backing up. That's never been the case here. A lot of times today we're taking one club more than trying to take the spin off. Playing this golf course when it's hard and firm is totally different. These pins are such that they're brutal when it's hard. But today whether they're soft like this, you can go right at them, it doesn't really matter.

Q. (Inaudible)?

TIGER WOODS: I think if you look at the way he's playing, he's putting great. I mean, I don't care what golf course you're playing, if you're putting well, you can do it all well. It's not only his putts are going in, they're going in the middle. And they're not just lipping in, and taking a victory lap, they're going right in the middle.

Q. (Inaudible)?

TIGER WOODS: No, it's different. I mean each and every day you make an adjustment. Each and every shot you make an adjustment, a finite adjustment. It's the nature of the game.

Q. Did it feel strange to start off tenth today?

TIGER WOODS: I didn't like it. I didn't like it. I think the last time I did that was at Pebble. I haven't done that too often. But, you know, I did it at Augusta on Saturday, I made a pretty good run. So I said I'll see if I can play it the same way, put myself up there, at least make a run at it. As I said earlier, it was easy playing with J. because he was feeding off of me, and I was feeding off of him and we just kept making birdies back and forth.

Q. Does it nag at all that you haven't been able to win here at Riviera?

TIGER WOODS: It's not really nag. It's frustrating, yes, but it's also one of those things where you have to play good for all four days, and I haven't done that. The year I played and lost to Ernie down the stretch I played good again for only three days. This week, I played well for two days. Last week -- when I was here last year, I played well for three days. In order to win at this track you have to put together four solid rounds of golf, and I haven't done that yet.

Q. Is there something about this course that you haven't been able to do that (Inaudible)?

TIGER WOODS: It's the nature of the beast. It's golf. If I could put four solid rounds together more often I like my chances.

Q. (Inaudible)?

TIGER WOODS: Well 17 was -- actually the only thing I was afraid of was shanking that thing.

Q. (Inaudible)?

TIGER WOODS: Exactly. I had practice, I had the same shot over there on 15. My tee shot just cleared the bunker and stayed up on that slope, so I had kind of like a

baseball swing. It's basically you are trying to hold it off and hit it to right field so it doesn't hook. I fought the pitch off and hit it right down the middle of the fairway.

The one on 18 I did try to hit a low slice up there, and the hard part was being down where I couldn't curve it as much, and it stayed a little straighter than I wanted to. I had a great lie on the third shot. If I didn't have a good lie, that shot would have been really tough.

Q. (Inaudible)?

TIGER WOODS: I have done that before, too. I love this golf course, how can you not? It's a great golf course. I think it's a lot more fun when it's hard and fast though. But this year the weather didn't cooperate. Last year it was hard and fast, and you saw what the scores were. Single digits won. Obviously, it's totally different this year, you can take dead aim and let it fly and you know the ball is just going to plunk.

Q. (Inaudible)?

TIGER WOODS: Well, it's one of those things where my game was in there because I drove it terrible last week but I hit my irons great.

Q. (Inaudible)?

TIGER WOODS: Yes, I hit my irons great last week the entire week. This week, I've driven it just incredible and I hit my irons terrible until today. So it was fun to actually put both pieces together.

Q. (Inaudible)?

TIGER WOODS: I may have played with John once. I know he hits it very long, a good left-to-right player. 18 holes anything could happen. So it's important to get off to a quick start there.