



87TH PGA CHAMPIONSHIP

BALTUSROL GOLF CLUB

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

SATURDAY, AUGUST 13, 2005

BEN CURTIS

1st Round: 67
2nd Round: 73
3rd Round: 67
Total: 207 (-3)

JULIUS MASON: **Ben Curtis**, ladies and gentlemen, at 3-under after the third round. **Ben**, let's do it again. Let's go through your card, birdies, bogeys, and then we'll go to Q & A, please.

BEN CURTIS: Okay. I made a nice like ten-footer on No. 2 for a birdie.

11, was about ten feet, as well.

Then I made a couple long putts on 12 and 14. The one on 12 was probably close to 40 feet and the other one 30, 35 feet.

15, made bogey, hit it over the green in two and obviously everybody knows the rough is pretty difficult around here, so I didn't have a real good lie and hit it out to 20 feet or so and just missed that.

17 was quite an adventure. We estimated we hit it 20 to 25 yards off the tee, so it could be a record for the week (laughter). You know, I hit a good recovery shot and then hit the 3-wood a little bit right of the green. It's pretty tight up there. Everybody knows that. I just leaked it out to the right a little bit and hit it under a tree and punched out off the green, got it up-and-down for bogey, and that was quite relieving.

18, I had a real good chance for an eagle and just misread that one. I thought it would leak out to the right a little bit and it just stayed straight, so two-putt for birdie there.

Q. Just to clarify, you must have hit your tee shot on 17 and caught one of those trees down in the canyon there?

BEN CURTIS: Yeah, I hit the first one on the left, it was quite a big pull, and it just went underneath the second tree, so I didn't get past all the tee markers (laughing). It's one of those, I'd been hitting a little cut all day. I thought I'd try and

get as close to the trees as possible because the ball seemed to leak right a little bit, so I was trying to hit it down the left center and pulled it a little bit.

Q. I don't know if you've looked at the leaderboard or had time to digest it, but there's a good bit of the same chowder heads that you fought when you won the *British* up there, *Bjorn* and *Love* and *Tiger*.

BEN CURTIS: Exactly. Major championships bring out the best in the good players, and you expect those guys to be up there every week, especially in the majors. The course is in great shape, it's very firm and fast, and the greens are still receptive enough to get the ball close. It'll be fun to see how those guys finish up this afternoon. I expect they're going to make a few birdies coming in.

I wouldn't be surprised if someone got to 8, 9, 10-under par. I hope not for my case, but the way *Phil* has been playing this week, I'm sure he'll get it back and get it under par.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about the difficulty of the course today versus yesterday?

BEN CURTIS: Well, I played in the afternoon yesterday, but the last nine holes was playing very similar to today. It's just not playing real long because the ball is -- you're getting roll out of the fairway, plus the humidity, the ball is going a long ways anyway.

But it's playing very fair. I like the way they set it up. They're giving you opportunities to make birdie, but if you don't drive the ball in the fairway, then it just becomes a tough contest. It's whoever can keep their mental game sharp and not let that affect them will do well this week.

Q. What did you hit in there, to 18?

BEN CURTIS: What did I hit in there? 5-iron. I had like 212 to the pin. I hit 5-iron about ten feet left of the hole.

Q. When things were going really well there on the back nine, were you trying to keep calm? Were you excited?

BEN CURTIS: Well, I was pretty calm because I know there's still a lot of golf to be played. I'm just worried about what I'm trying to do, not what everybody else is trying to do. I just got lucky with a few long putts going in. I had good pace on them and I had a good read, and it was just -- in order for me to win them, I have to make a few of those again tomorrow. I like the way I'm lagging the ball close to the hole. I'm trying to hit it in the middle of the green as close to pin high as possible and try to give myself a decent look at it.

Q. Is this the best you've putted in a while?

BEN CURTIS: Well, probably *Chicago* was the same. I putted really well there. Even at the *British* I felt like I putted the ball well, I just didn't make anything.

You know, obviously I made a few -- I didn't really putt it that good the first few days. I hit it really well, and today I got the putter going and made some good putts.

Q. I have two questions. The first one you may not want to answer. Did you reach the ladies' tee on 17?

BEN CURTIS: I have no idea (laughing). I'd be embarrassed to look.

Q. The second one: How about the change in uniform today, from Giants to Jets?

BEN CURTIS: Well, you know, I wear the local teams when I'm in town, so I wore the Jets on Tuesday and Wednesday, so I figured I had a couple of days of the *Giants*, I figure I'll give the *Jets* a shot. It's a fun deal. You hear a lot of mixed comments out there, especially in this town when you've got more than just one team.

Q. Do you prefer tournaments where par is a good score or the ones like *Disney* or something where you've got to be 28-under to be in contention? I ask because obviously this is the second time you've been in the hunt at a major heading into the last day.

BEN CURTIS: Yeah, I think it suits my game well. You know, I'm not like *Vijay* and *Tiger* and those guys. They can get ten birdies in a round. I've been known to do it, but out here it's a little bit more difficult than it is when you're playing at home.

Yeah, I would prefer it that way, but last year at *Disney*, I think I shot 15 or 16 under.

You know, it just depends. It all depends on how you're playing. If you're playing good, it doesn't matter how the course is set up. If you're

kind of struggling a little bit and you want to get some confidence, it's not a bad thing to play in a tournament like this because then next week for me it could just -- you know me, where I could go out and shoot really low because it seems really easy compared to here. To me it doesn't really matter -- I think personally mentally I'd like to have it that way but if you're playing good it doesn't matter.

Q. I'm sorry if you answered this already, but is this a day where you game plan for heat and do special things to combat the conditions?

BEN CURTIS: Well, it's just the same as every other day, just go out there and -- you know you've got to hit a lot of fairways, especially for me because if I don't hit those fairways, you're stuck well beyond 200 yards into the green. You know, there's no set game plan, just go out there and take the driver out and hit it and try to hit it in the fairway.

Q. I'm sorry, I meant for the heat.

BEN CURTIS: Drink a lot of water and try to keep plenty of fluids in and have a little bit of food while you're out there.

You know, this whole summer has been really hot basically wherever we've been, especially back home in Ohio, so you kind of get used to it.

JULIUS MASON: Are there more *Jets* fans or more *Giants* fans out there today?

BEN CURTIS: Well, I think the *Jets* fans were a little louder today than the *Giants* fans. I think tomorrow wearing *Giants* there will be more *Giants* fans out there.

JULIUS MASON: Good answer.

Q. Just to clarify that, you were going to wear *Giants* tomorrow, you're going to wear *Giants* tomorrow?

BEN CURTIS: Yeah.

JULIUS MASON: Thanks for coming down.

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