



87TH PGA CHAMPIONSHIP

BALTUSROL GOLF CLUB

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

SATURDAY, AUGUST 13, 2005

PAT PEREZ

1st Round: 68
2nd Round: 71
3rd Round: 67
Total: 206 (-4)

JULIUS MASON: **Pat Perez**, ladies and gentlemen, joining us at the conclusion of his third round at 4-under. If you wouldn't mind, let's go through your card, talk about your bogey, birdies, and we'll go to Q & A, please.

PAT PEREZ: First hole, I hit a little 8-iron just left of the hole and chipped it up to about three feet and missed it.

Plodded along, missed a couple birdies here and there.

Then I chipped in on 12.

JULIUS MASON: How far?

PAT PEREZ: It was probably 20 yards.

14, I hit it to about a foot and a half, made that.

16, hit 6-iron to about 40 feet, made that.

18, was about 12 feet, made that.

Q. When Phil went out yesterday and shot that great score and kind of distanced himself, not that people kind of gave him the tournament, but are you surprised that it's come back to everybody so quickly, that all of a sudden it seems like anyone's ballgame now?

PAT PEREZ: No, I'm not surprised. I'm a little surprised because it's **Phil** and he's had so much major experience. But that's the way this course is. The course is so hard it doesn't matter who you are. You saw how **Tiger** was playing. He was 7 over. You can turn it around any time but it can go the other way just as fast.

I thought the beginning of the week around 5-under would win, so we'll see what happens.

Q. Can you tell us about how you've managed this golf course so well this week? What is it about this week and about how

you're playing that's made this big of a difference for you?

PAT PEREZ: You know, I really don't know. I'm just trying to hit it away from the trouble. I'm not short-siding myself. I'm driving it pretty well. I'm getting it in the fairway, and when I'm in the rough I'm kind of taking my medicine and chipping out. I've gotten lucky and had a decent lie or been able to get it somewhere around the green and get it up-and-down. Basically I'm kind of keeping it away from the trouble, and that's kind of how I'm doing it.

Q. When you came here -- you've played in other majors. Did this look like a golf course that was going to set up better for you than some of the other ones?

PAT PEREZ: Probably because I like a hard course. I like it when it's real tough. I don't know, just I get -- I don't like it when it's a birdie-fest. Not that majors are, but to me this course just looked like it was going to be harder and you had to drive it well and the greens were going to be firmer and you had to putt it well. It just had a look to me that I like for a major, and that's a big thing for me.

Q. Can you expand on that a little bit? Why do you like harder courses? What is there about you that a hard course appeals to?

PAT PEREZ: You know, I don't know. I guess I'm partial to **USGA** and partially not. I don't like the way they set up the course. But I believe that part of a major should be a good score. I don't think it should be ridiculous as far as par wins, but this course has got a lot of holes that are long, and then a par on 4 and you've made a good score. It's the look of the course -- I don't know what it is, it's got a look for me.

Q. To follow up on that, I guess a lot of people have been saying that a big factor here is patience. How are you in terms of your patience in your career right now?

PAT PEREZ: My career? I don't know. I'm doing all right.

Q. After a couple of years of hovering around just trying to get to the end of the season and get to that 125, you've obviously played really well this year and had some top finishes. Talk about what's been the difference this year, what you've worked on, what's been the major difference this year in consistency?

PAT PEREZ: I'm just working harder at it. I'm not playing when I'm at home, but I'm working twice and three times as hard when I'm out here. I'll put in eight to ten-hour days. I'll get here at 8:00, leave here at 6:00. I'm putting in all the time in the world out here and learning to take my breaks when I'm home and not out here. When I get out here it's work, and that's what it is.

I guess I've been out here four years now and I guess I'm just getting tired of being that guy. I think it's time to try and move up to the next level, not just be a guy that's on Tour.

Q. Have you felt closer this year to that point of getting to a game that's going to win out here?

PAT PEREZ: Yeah, I work real hard in the off season. I said when I got to Hawaii that I was going to try and make it a point this year and not only take care of the card but try to be Top 40 and try to get to the *TOUR Championship*. These are things that really aren't -- somebody has got to be in the Top 40 so you might as well try and get there. It's not a guarantee who's going to be there every time. I just got fed up. I got fed up with the questions and what are you doing and what are you doing and what are you doing? I'm just trying to prove to myself and everybody else that I belong in that Top 40, year in and year out.

Q. Was that it? There wasn't anything that anybody else told you about what you need to do? It was more you getting fed up?

PAT PEREZ: No, I get to a point, and it's not only in golf, it's in anything, I just get fed up and it's time to change.

Q. When you're saying "I got tired of being that guy," can you expand on that? What do you mean by "that guy"?

PAT PEREZ: I'm tired to being that guy that's got to play 15 and 16 down the stretch to try and keep his card, try to make 300 grand. I think I've got a lot more game than that, and I don't want to be "that guy."

Q. Talk about your approach to the 17th and 18th holes down the stretch this week. How do you like that back-to-back par 5 finish?

PAT PEREZ: It's actually nice. It's actually real nice. The first seven holes are no gimme at all and you're kind of grinding and grinding and grinding, and 17 is -- if you don't hit that fairway, you've got a hard 5. That's a hard shot starting in that rough right there, especially if you can't get it across the bunkers. Your third shot is 240 yards away. That's not an easy par 3 from there.

But I like the fact that 18 is not your typical 470 tough par 4 that could be lost -- you could lose the tournament right there. I like the fact that you could make eagle and pass somebody. I just think it's a great course and I'm just excited to be there.

Q. You said that now you really look at it as your job out here and you don't take your breaks when you're out here working eight hours or so? What was your routine before? How would you sort of --

PAT PEREZ: Let's just say it was different.

Q. Can you expand on that?

PAT PEREZ: Not much, but it was different. I'll give you a little bit. There wasn't as much practice. There was a little more laziness and kind of taking it for granted, being out here.

You look at a guy like *Vijay* that puts in eight, ten hours no matter where he is, and it's a hell of a guy to try and follow, and when he's working three times as hard as you are and you're -- you feel like you're comfortable when you really shouldn't be. He's kind of given me a little bit of motivation to work harder and try to be like these guys are.

Q. Was there any sort of breaking point, some definitive time right after last season ended where you made this decision to really commit yourself?

PAT PEREZ: The day after I got home. It was the next day. It wasn't like I was waking up in December and hopefully -- no, I had a plan. I knew what I was going to do when I got home about a month before I got home, and I didn't do anything, I just kept playing along, playing along, seeing what happens, and then when I got home is when I hit the point, and I said, I'm not going to be that 125 guy next year, and that was it.

Q. You've closed down the range a couple nights this week; is that right?

PAT PEREZ: And I'll do it again tonight, too.

Q. That's a different deal for you, right?

PAT PEREZ: It's not like I'm -- I'm not saying that to be the best you've got to close down the range. I'm just saying that I've done it because I haven't been happy the way I've hit it until it's been time to leave, until it's been dark. It's like I'm not going out there saying, "man, I closed down the range last night." It's just how long it's taken.

I'll go over there again until it's dark and hopefully it'll be before dark that I figure it out.

Q. When you're out there like today just grinding, grinding, grinding to get in and shoot a good score and then all of a sudden you come in here, you're third or fourth or whatever it is now, what's the excitement level at this point when you get in here and you've got a great round and now we're going into the last round of a major?

PAT PEREZ: I mean, the excitement is there but there's still 18 holes left. You can't be that excited. You've got 18 hard holes of golf left, and I'm sure the course will be the hardest it's going to be all week tomorrow. I've got to go out and play smart and take advantage when I can and see what happens. I'll be excited if I have a trophy in my hand tomorrow night, and that's about it.

JULIUS MASON: Thanks for coming down, Pat.

PAT PEREZ: Thanks.

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