



87TH PGA CHAMPIONSHIP

BALTUSROL GOLF CLUB

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

MONDAY, AUGUST 15, 2005

68-70-68-71: 277 (3-under)

An Interview With:

STEVE ELKINGTON

JULIUS MASON: Steve Elkington, ladies and gentlemen. Steve, how about we go through some of your opening thoughts on what it was like this morning and we'll go to Q&A.

STEVE ELKINGTON: Well, the conditions were fine. It was a great morning to play obviously. You know, the only -- looking at the end of the tournament here, I think Phil was in the best position playing last. Would have been nice to be able to make 4 on 18 to put pressure on him, rather than having a free shot at a birdie. You know, he led the tournament all week. It's a hard course to hold the lead on, and you know, I knew if I could keep the pressure on him, he would have to keep hitting good shots.

So, you know, it was the same could be said for **Thomas Björn** as well, I suppose. Either one of us could be at four.

Q. What's it like sitting in that trailer and watching Phil finish his round? Are you guys talking to each other?

STEVE ELKINGTON: There's not much you can say, really. You're just waiting to see if he can make a birdie, and you're also thinking about the possibility of a playoff and what that would take from yourself to get ready for that, as well.

Q. As a follow-up, golf has such a history of being a gentle manly game, are you rooting for Phil to bogey?

STEVE ELKINGTON: Well, you just sit and watch it. You don't pull either way. You just sit there and watch what happens, see what unfolds.

Q. You've rededicated yourself, worked hard on your game and I think with fitness, too,

can you run through that? Is that beginning of this year?

STEVE ELKINGTON: Well, I've just, you know, got myself in condition, that's true. Mainly that was -- I had the surgery on my shoulder two years ago, and last year, it just took me all year to get over it. And whilst doing that, I was able to get in condition, and, you know, get my mind right about playing the Tour again. Because once you're out for a while, it's so hard to get your mind in the right position to play top golf. I mean, these guys are playing every week. They are on their way to Akron tonight. That's what I've been doing for most of my career, looking to play against the best players every week.

So, you know, I'm pretty happy about being able to get myself back up to this point. I've done it about two or three times, so I'm getting pretty good at it.

Q. Can you take us through 18 shot-by-shot from the tee shot right through?

STEVE ELKINGTON: On 18 the wind was into on the left, and the last place I wanted to hit it was in the right bunkers. So I was trying to guard from that, and I overguarded and hit the tree and it came out. I got a great break, and then I hit a nice shot up into a divot. And I was thinking to myself, "You know, this could be like when I won **THE PLAYERS Championship** in '91." I was in a divot, made a nice shot in there. I didn't quite get exactly the right read I wanted to on that last putt. It sat on the crest, but I was very happy with the way I hit the putt. It was on the inside left. I'd like to see it on tape and see what it did, but looked good from my angle.

Q. What was the yardage on the wedge?

STEVE ELKINGTON: 96.

Q. Is this sort of in a way a moral victory because of what you've been through to get to this point? Even though you did not win, you got to win one shot of winning a major, is there some sort of moral victory?

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STEVE ELKINGTON: Well, I've done that three times. I've been second in majors three times. I was beat in a playoff in 2002 in the British, and I was second in this tournament -- well, third. I missed out by a shot in '96.

There's no moral victory for coming in second in this major. If anyone who can tell me who was runner-up in any major, I'll give you a hundred dollars. Nobody remembers you but family and friends. (Laughter).

Q. Obviously a great week for you, if you could have one back, if you could get one back, where do you think you'd like it? And secondly, look forward and obviously you're a shot for the *Presidents Cup*, you've got to be in contention there, and your career from here, is this sort of a spring board in a way?

STEVE ELKINGTON: Well, you know, I really -- I don't know. I thought about it all night last night. I laid in bed from about 9:30; I was looking at the clock at midnight; still looking at the clock at 2:00 in the morning thinking, what could I have done to keep my lead or what could I have done different; you know, what are all the possibilities and things that happened. But, you know, the golf course is difficult and you just do what you can do.

What was the second part of that? Oh, the rest of my life?

Q. Well, a bit shorter than that.

STEVE ELKINGTON: I'm looking forward to it. I've got a nice schedule set up to play the rest of the year. I'm excited about playing. This is obviously a boost. **Gary Player** will probably have to look at me seriously for the *Presidents Cup* team, which I've done well in before, so I'd like to be involved in that if that was possible. That would be a highlight.

Q. Yesterday you talked about how tournaments like these, guys want to win so bad that there's a lot of pressure and it's hard to keep hitting shots. I wonder, does the vibe change anymore than when it spills into Monday, did it magnify things?

STEVE ELKINGTON: Yeah, it's like being in an exam. You get prepared for an exam and you're ready to go and someone says, "Stop, we'll come back and finish the test in the morning." It's a bit of a strain on the nerves I suppose. I don't feel too many nervous once I'm on the course. It's getting on the course and waiting for those 2:40 tee times and watching stupid programs on TV and just getting ready.

JULIUS MASON: Thanks for coming down, Steve.

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