



August 19, 2006



Medinah Country Club

Hole #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Out	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Out	Total
Yardage	434	191	414	463	537	474	587	204	435	3,739	579	438	471	244	605	392	453	197	443	3,822	7,561
Par	4	3	4	4	5	4	5	3	4	36	5	4	4	3	5	4	4	3	4	36	72

AN INTERVIEW WITH:

MIKE WEIR

KELLY ELBIN: *Mike Weir*, ladies and gentlemen, in with a round of 7-under par 65, which ties the course record on the current *Medinah* No. 3 layout. Mike is at 12-under par 204 after three rounds of the 88th **PGA Championship**.

Mike, it looked like a special day out there today.

MIKE WEIR: Oh, man, I tied the course record.

Yeah, it was a special day, a lot of fun. It was one of those days even when I was aiming away from the flag a little bit, I seemed to either push it right at the flag or pull it stiff. It was kind of one of those days it was really going for me. I played much better today than the first couple of days as well. I got a lot out of the round yesterday and today. I hit my irons much better and putted pretty well, as well.

KELLY ELBIN: Nine birdies, two bogeys, would you go through your card, please.

MIKE WEIR: Got off to a nice start, hit a driver and wedge to ten feet on the first hole and made a nice putt there.

Rolled in a long putt on the second hole from maybe 35 feet I would guess.

I bogeyed the fourth hole. I missed the green to the right. Had mud on my ball and the thing came out to the right. Chipped it about four or five feet and missed that one.

Then hit the green in two on 5 and 2-putted that.

And No. 9, I hit a driver and a 9-iron to a foot.

No. 10, I hit drive and a 3-wood and a pitch to about seven feet probably. Made that one.

No. 11, I hit a 3-wood and a 7-iron to a foot.

No. 12, I hit a drive and a 6-iron to maybe 15, 18 feet and made that one.

14, the par 5 was right down in front in two and pitched to about seven, eight feet maybe, made that one.

Then 15, hit a terrible tee shot in the bunker and that was one of the ones I was aiming for the center of the green and happened to push it and I guess it almost went in, hit it to about a foot.

18, missed it a little bit right in the rough and caught a terrible lie. Wedged out. Hit it up, you know, 15 feet or something and missed that one.

KELLY ELBIN: Thanks. This is Mike's lowest 18-hole score in a major championship. Let's open up to questions, please.

Q. Good playing there, Mike.

MIKE WEIR: Thanks, Mike.

Q. What comes first, do you get out there and start feeling it with your full swing, or is it seeing the ball tumble in the hole off your putter which kind of gets you in the mood, so to speak?

MIKE WEIR: Hmm. I think, you know, getting off to that start like I did. Even seeing that first drive go down the middle and hit a pretty good wedge into the first hole. Making putt kind of -- so I guess all of the above, Mike, to answer your

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question. Hitting a nice tee shot kind of calms your nerves down with your swing and making a nice putt on the first.

The second hole is a bonus. You're 40 feet or whatever, and I hit that putt a little hard actually and happened to slam in there.

So just kind of things going right for you.

Then I started really getting a good feel with my putter all over the place. They were rolling just the right speed, and if not going in, they are burning the edge.

So I think getting off to that nice start and getting that good feel was a big key.

Q. On a day like this when there's so many birdies, is there even more urgency that you feel like you have to make every putt you look at? Is it even more urgency than in a typical major when there are a lot of bogeys and conditions are tougher?

MIKE WEIR: No question. Majors, normally, you take your birdies when you get them, which is usually not that often and you're just trying to make pars and kind of just be real consistent and stay away from big numbers. But out here with the rain and the humidity, the greens have been very soft. Even mid-irons are holding the greens.

The longer guys are out there having short irons in there. They are going to be taking dead aim at some of these pins. I knew when I started feeling it with my iron game a little bit that I wanted to keep being aggressive. You know, I said I shoot 65, and I still don't even -- I started the day three behind, I still might be three behind when it's all said and done.

Q. How aggressive can you be, shooting for the pins, or putting, as opposed to a typical major?

MIKE WEIR: I'd say more, you can be more aggressive with your iron play than you can your putting.

The greens, even though they are soft, they are very fast. A few are above the hole, they are very tricky. I said for myself today, I was trying to keep it under the hole and I did a good job of that today. Hopefully I can do that again tomorrow. It's easier said than done sometimes, but you do definitely want to stay underneath the hole on these greens because they are very slick.

Q. This isn't intended on a reflection on an obviously great round, but we have six players in double figures under par now, we have 47 players in the field under par. Without a greater premium on scoring in this circumstance, what separates *Medinah* from *John Deere* or a dozen other tour stops in these conditions?

MIKE WEIR: Well, I think a lot. This golf course is still very demanding. Some of those tournaments, you miss the fairway, you can still get on the green. I mean, I hit it in the rough on 18 and I was hitting a sand wedge out. So there's still a premium on hitting the ball in the fairway. Given the conditions and the rain, I think the course was on its way to starting to get firmer before yesterday's rain. So the weekend would have shaped up quite a bit different than what we have right now.

You know, the *PGA of America* can't control Mother Nature. What can you do? It is what it is. You've got to make some birdies out there.

Q. Two things, first off, 15, is that 6-iron that you caught out of that bunker?

MIKE WEIR: 7-iron.

Q. What was the number?

MIKE WEIR: 160 yards.

Q. And the other thing is, you know, we talked all the time at majors, and you've said you've thought this round -- that there was a 65 out there in a major a couple of times and it hasn't happened. Did you see this one coming?

MIKE WEIR: I really didn't, to tell you the truth. It's kind of funny. I felt like at *The Masters*, *U.S. Open*, I really struck the ball nicely. I struck the ball fantastic there. In the *British Open* I felt like I was really striking it well.

Coming in here, I wasn't hitting the ball very well, and 72 the first round was a little bit iffy, could have been 75 easy. Yesterday's 67 could have been even par pretty easily, but I got a lot out of it.

Today I got a lot out of the round as well. I played much better today. But to say starting the round that I felt super, super confident with my golf swing, I would say no, but my short game did feel much better. My putting's felt much better and

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maybe that's been the missing link a little bit. Even my wedge game, everything, pimping around the greens, has been a lot better. So I guess those have been the scoring clubs.

KELLY ELBIN: Mike finished tied for 10th in the 1999 *PGA Championship* here in *Medinah*.

Q. That's a perfect lead-in, Mike, just going back to the final round in '99, how painful was that round and what did you learn from it?

MIKE WEIR: No question, it was painful. It wasn't a fun day. You know, I kind of felt -- I remember feeling after about nine holes, just kind of spacy, just kind of spun out. I couldn't believe what was going on. I was very surprised, because actually I remember striking the ball, I was hitting pretty good, but I had no feel on the greens and I remember getting pretty frustrated with, you know -- with a lot of the commotion going on.

I think that was just in experience. It was my second year on the Tour. I've just been back from Q-School. I just wasn't ready for it.

A couple weeks later when I was in contention in Canada, I think my focus was sharper, I was determined not to let anything distract me. I think that's what I learned from that.

Q. There seems to be a consensus that somebody has got to go low tomorrow to win. Will that ability to do that given these conditions be affected at all by nerves that everybody feels on Sunday in a major, or is it just the scoring so good that it won't matter?

MIKE WEIR: No, I think, you know, that's always a factor in the majors.

I'm looking at -- I'm not looking at that list right now, but looking at the board, Tiger is up there, but outside of that, of the guys that are in double digits, I don't know if there's anybody besides myself and Tiger that have won one. The other guys are trying to win one. That's going to be -- they are going to have probably a little more nerves than maybe the two of us.

I mean, I'm going to have more nerves probably than Tiger. He seems to do very well with it. But the scoring is there for the taking, no question.

So it might not be as much of a factor as maybe normal.

Q. All things considered, what's your level of comfort with maybe not playing in the

final group tomorrow versus, you know, being right there again in the same spot on the same golf course?

MIKE WEIR: I'm not sure. I don't know if it will matter, really. You know, when I won *The Masters*, I was in the final group. So I don't know if it's going to matter.

Sometimes when you're in the final group, you get a little bit more of -- that really helped me at the Masters that Len was out in front and I really knew what I needed to do because he was finished. And sometimes that can help you because it's in front of you and you have everything in your control; where if you're a couple groups back and you get in, somebody can do something to maybe pass you.

I still think my game plan is going to be pretty much the same. I've got to -- you're going to have to attack a little bit tomorrow. I'm going to be probably at least -- I don't know what the scores are now, but I was one behind when I finished awhile ago. It could be a couple more behind. And if it's Tiger in front, you know you're going to have to shoot 6-under again, 5-, 6-, 7-under again.

Q. You've been playing pretty well but you haven't been getting rewarded with any victories, won since *The Masters*, how antsy are you or how would you describe it?

MIKE WEIR: Yeah, I'd say I'm about due.

It's been a little frustrating the last year, especially with battling some injuries. But this year, I've felt great, so that's been even a little bit more frustrating that I haven't been able to get in the winner's circle. So give it my best tomorrow.

Q. If it is, indeed, Tiger in front, we all know his record in front, in a way does that kind of make it easier that it just let's you go and free-wheel, do what you've got to do?

MIKE WEIR: I think it does. I know everybody's expectations are that he's going to go out and go win the championship, because he's done it so many times from front. But there's always a time to stop the streak, so hopefully I can do it.

Q. You seem to be enjoying yourself out there, obviously playing well helps but Woody seemed to be talking your ear off at some points. Does that help in some way having somebody fill in the time and making

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the round go a little quicker?

MIKE WEIR: Usually I'm pretty quiet when I play, I'm into my own game. I have been having fun out there, I have. I think I've enjoyed my game much more this year on a whole than maybe other years. I don't know if it's just I'm at an age that I'm enjoying competing and trying to beat these guys that hit it 50 yards past me and try to figure out a way how to do it. I kind of relish the challenge, so I'm just enjoying it right now, and today, it was fun. I was having a great time out there.

Q. Was it just maturity, is it more comfort with your game or is it a combination of a number of things that brings you to this point where you're having a good time and you're just feeling your game right now?

MIKE WEIR: I think -- yeah, like you said, I think it's maturity. I remember sitting up here in '99 before the final round and I was uptight. You know, I just wasn't calm about it and, you know, maybe I just wanted it too bad.

Now I know that I remember before the final round of *The Masters* just talking to myself like, you know, I'm going to go out there and give it my best but it's not the end of the world if I don't win. I'm going to battle as hard as I can and I can look in the mirror and say I gave it everything I could; those are the kind of self-talks I give to myself.

If I can look at a round and say I didn't give away any shots and stuck to what I needed to do, there's not much else you can do in this game. It's a funny game that way compared to some other sports. It's a little bit boring to tell you guys that, I know, but it's the truth.

Q. We're starting to hear a little harping about the course as easy as it's playing. Would you be surprised tomorrow if the PGA would put the pins in a more difficult position, do nothing to the course tonight, and who would it benefit, the earlier starters or the later starters?

MIKE WEIR: Well, I think the *PGA* has done a great job with the pin placements. They have been very difficult, I think. Like I said today, for as many close shots as I hit, it's one of those days that I just happened to hit the ball close to the hole.

But there was good pins out there, tough pins. It's just the greens are soft. That's the

difference. I mean, if the greens -- if we didn't get that rain and they were starting to get a little bit firmer, some of these pins today, to try to get close to 17, to try to get to some of these pins would be impossible. There's nothing they can do about that. But, you know, you can't get -- you can't start putting the pins on side slopes and things like that.

You know, I think obviously the earlier guys that go out in the morning, they get better greens. There's a chance that somebody can get out and shoot a real low number and get out in front with not a lot of expectations on them. We've seen that happen before.

So, yeah, that could happen.

Q. You were certainly dialed in with your short irons today. You were comfortable on the greens. How is short game today compared with when you won the *Masters*?

MIKE WEIR: I'd say it's pretty close. Today was obviously a great day, but I think on the whole, it's getting closer to that. But I wouldn't say it's a hundred percent there, but it's getting a lot closer than what it has been. I think that's been part of the game that's been holding me back a little bit. I usually dial in my wedges pretty good. I've been kind of okay with that this year but not as consistent as I'd like. My putting has been pretty good this year but not as sharp as what I wanted it to, but this week's been much better.

KELLY ELBIN: 2003 *Masters* winner, *Mike Weir*. Thank you very much.

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