



August 8, 2007



Southern Hills 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	464	488	451	372	653	200	384	245	374	3,631	366	173	458	537	223	413	507	358	465	3,500	7,131
Par	4	4	4	4	5	3	4	3	4	35	4	3	4	5	3	4	4	4	4	35	70
Score																					

An Interview With:

JIM FURYK

KELLY ELBIN: 2003 U.S. Open Champion Jim Furyk, joining us, ladies and gentlemen, at the 89th PGA Championship at Southern Hills Country Club. This is Jim's 13th PGA Championship. His best finish was a tie for 6th at the 1997 PGA Championship at Winged Foot Golf Club.

Jim, welcome back to Southern Hills. Some impressions on what you've seen so far and what you're looking for over the next four days.

JIM FURYK: Well, it's obviously a very good traditional, golf course. I think the players have a lot of positive remarks. The fairways are tight, rolling very quickly. The rough doesn't look that penal, from the outside looking in, but the ball always sinks to the bottom as the players have been saying. Extremely tight over there.

The fairways are cut cleaner than I've seen them in the past the fairway bunkers are sticking out more than before. And there's a lot of dogleg-lefts where everything kicks right and vice versa. You have to be able to really work the ball, maneuver it both ways and hit a lot of golf shots around this hole. And I think being relatively conservative off the tee and putting the ball in play is going to be key, because you're not going to score from the rough here.

So putting the ball in play first and then trying to maybe possibly be aggressive with some

iron shots because the greens are a little on the softer side. And I expect that, one, so we can finish; and two, because of the heat. If they got any firmer, I think they would probably be possibly be losing them. But they look good. They roll well. They're relatively quick.

They're holding some moisture right now, so we're able to be aggressive with iron shots. But the other side of that is it's really difficult, I think, to get the ball on the fairway.

KELLY ELBIN: Open it up to questions.

Q. Update us on your physical condition, and how do you think your game will suit itself on this course at Southern Hills.

JIM FURYK: Physically, actually, I'm in pretty good state right now. I had a really tough go of it last week. I was in a lot of pain and quite stiff.

Over the weekend I started trying to hit some balls lightly, mostly short irons and mid-irons on Sunday. When I got here, the travel hurt. Trying to do a little bit more at work as far as hitting longer clubs, trying to play nine holes took its toll, and I was reverting back and I was pretty iffy about my chances.

Last night I went into the trailer and received some treatment. And I had a joint, I guess, in my upper back in my thoracic spine that was really stiff and not really mobile, and it actually was able to be adjusted, where the same gentleman who had been working on me for quite a long time, and I guess everything was just so tight, muscularly locked up in there, wasn't able to.

And I went from being pretty miserable and not really being able to make the movement in the swing that I wanted to, to actually finding a lot of relief. I was one happy person last night when I went to bed because I felt so much better, and woke up this morning less stiff in the morning than I really was at my best yesterday.

So my movement is pretty good. I'm happy that -- I'm still not 100%, but I'm healthy enough to make the swings that I want to. I have the ability. But I've had about a week off, and I'm swinging at it terrible right now (laughing).

So I'm hoping to -- this golf course really I think would suit my game. And when I was playing well, I pride myself on being able to maneuver the golf ball. Power is not going to come into play. It's really limiting off the tee in spots the way it's set up. So guys are going to have to play from the same spot in the fairway on a lot of holes.

And being aggressive is not going to be a smart play on most holes off the tee. In most instances that would kind of even me up on the field off the tee and possibly give me an advantage. But I really don't feel that well about my game. I feel rusty. I tried to work it out a little bit today. But I also get tired hitting balls afterwards.

I warmed up today, played nine and I hit a bucket of balls after. And it really -- after about a half a bucket I started to decline and just started to get tired, not in any pain, but I wasn't able to -- my back was definitely getting tired.

So, I'm trying. If I felt like I did yesterday, I probably would have just went home and rested because I couldn't move enough to make the swings I wanted to, and today was really a different story. So I was happy about that. And I'll have to think about how I want to attack the golf course and how I can make some better swings for tomorrow.

Q. So how many holes have you played this week?

JIM FURYK: Played the front nine on Monday, the back nine on Tuesday and the front nine today. I know it perfectly. (Chuckling).

Q. Paul Azinger was in here earlier. He and Nick Faldo have agreed to have four assistant captains, and Paul named three of them. I don't know if you knew about it or not.

JIM FURYK: No.

Q. Raymond Floyd, Dave Stockton and Olin Browne. Can you comment -- he's going to name a fourth one later, but can you comment on that decision, how you think those three guys might help next year's Ryder Cup team?

JIM FURYK: Well, it seems to be the new trend here of recent that we used to have one assistant and it moved to two, and now we're at four, so -- it was kind of that way at the last Ryder Cup. I think we had two official and we had a couple of other guys that maybe were unofficial, but they were there. And we had Loren and Cory and Duffy, and I beg someone's pardon that I'm forgetting them, but we had a bunch of guys.

I think it helps. It helps to -- Olin will be a familiar face for everyone. He's played out here for a long time. He's a likable person. He's real honest and to the point, and I think has some great ideas about our tour. And obviously Raymond Floyd and Dave Stockton are guys we look up to. They're past captains.

I think it's a wise decision. I mean Paul's obviously the guy calling the shots. But he's going to have two guys that have previously gone through it and have that experience to help out. And I think it's a wonderful idea to get them involved.

Who is the fourth by the way, or is that to be determined?

Q. He'll do it later. One to be named later.

JIM FURYK: Suspense, gotta love it.

Q. We talked at the British sometime in Toronto how jammed the schedule was, seven out of eight weeks it could have been. When you get the back problem so early in that kind of a run, does it just give you pause, or was this maybe a one-off deal came out of nowhere?

JIM FURYK: I had similar effects maybe last year when I dropped out of Westchester before the U.S. Open. I was able to kind of recover from that very quickly and get ready and play very well at the U.S. Open. And it's something that I work hard on fitness-wise, to make sure that nothing reoccurs.

And I keep in touch with the guys in the trailer, both the therapists and the strength trainer,

to kind of try to make sure that I'm in good health and things like that won't happen.

But I think a lot of it was the travel, to be honest with you; getting over to the British, being on those flights, being stagnant for so long. And trying to work it out with the therapy guys over there on the European Tour and really working hard in Canada to loosen up, I felt like I did. Obviously I played very well. I didn't feel any effects physically or feel limited. But playing all those events in a row and adding the long travel back and forth definitely put some stress on me, and possibly that's what took its toll.

But I'm confident right now, after the way I felt today and the work that I've put in and having a week off next week, that I'll be rearing to go and the events leading up, the New York to Boston, Chicago, Atlanta. There's not any flights to Japan in there, so I think that I'll be ready and it won't take any effect and I'll be fine.

I just need to keep a good eye on it right now, do my exercises and the physical therapy that's been given to me. When I'm 100% I need to stay on the exercises. We all get lazy. Once you're feeling good, you forget about them. I've done that a little myself. I need to keep on them more.

Q. How do you feel about your year? A good one that could have been better so far or still to be determined?

JIM FURYK: They all could have been better, I know that. As good as last year was in '07, it could have been better. That was my best year-to-date. There's still a lot of golf. There's still this event and then four pretty big tournaments in our new Playoff series, and the Presidents Cup.

Yes, it's still to be determined. But it's been a good year to this point. I think it eased my mind a little bit knowing that I had a pretty good year. I had won in Canada, and it made it a little bit easier for me to, knowing I had to step down last week and I wasn't able to play.

If I wasn't possibly able to play this week at the PGA it was comforting knowing I played well. I had a good year. I won at Canada and relax a little bit and make sure you're 100%, not try to come back too soon.

Q. Hunter Mahan comes in this weekend with local ties, carrying a lot of momentum. He's also now become in the mix

for Ryder Cup. As a young American golfer what's your thoughts on them?

JIM FURYK: Presidents Cup or Ryder?

Q. Presidents.

JIM FURYK: I haven't had too much of an opportunity to play with him. But from the guys I've talked to and from what I've seen, he's got a lot of game. Seems like he's good in all aspects. He's a real young player. Maybe second, third year on tour? Second year?

Q. Third.

JIM FURYK: So obviously at that point you're still learning, getting comfortable and figuring out the golf courses and where you want to play, where you don't want to play. But he's obviously done very, very well. He's got an opportunity to make the Presidents Cup team. Is he right there about 10th or 11th?

Q. 7th.

JIM FURYK: Then he's probably on the Presidents Cup team. I think he'll be a great addition. We have a lot of veterans who are going to be on that team, and I think right now in the top 10, there's only possibly two guys that haven't played on a Presidents Cup or Ryder Cup team. And he'll be a great addition if everything -- if nothing crazy happens. And obviously he could play well and cement that this week.

But I like his game. Seems like a good guy. And the guys here are going to Okie State. Did he grow up in Oklahoma?

Q. He's from California.

JIM FURYK: You're still claiming him. Don't blame you.

Q. With the exception of the 20 club pros in the field, the rest of the guys, the touring pros, not many of them have been in a pro shop working any more, it's kind of like a different era. But for guys like you and Davis Love and David Duval when he was out here with fathers --

JIM FURYK: I've got news for you: The three of us never worked in a pro shop either.

Q. What connection do you feel to this event, and how important would it be to win

this with your -- with the fact that you grew up in a pro shop?

JIM FURYK: It's special. My dad was a golf professional the day I was born, and he stayed doing that until I was about eight years old. It was about ten years and got into sales and sold off equipment. So his relationship was with the golf professionals and he still considered himself one.

Yeah I grew up in it. I grew up talking to all the golf professionals in the southeast Pennsylvania area. I played my golf in the Philly section growing up. And, yeah, I think there is a sense of pride. This organization represents all the club professionals, all the golf professionals, 28,000 people. So my dad grew up in that, was part of that, was a member, and it definitely adds a little special touch to it.

And I think for me, even more so, a lot of the guys on Tour don't really get to meet the members of the PGA or the officials of the PGA, the president, the vice, even the CEO. Being in five Ryder Cups now I've had a lot of tier of a lot of people and having M.G. (Oreder) at home so involved in this organization, I feel a lot closer to it, because of that event. And going back and I've known the officers for the last 10 or 11 years. So it's probably 10 to 12 individuals, had dinner with them, spent weeks with them at those events. So it definitely makes me closer to this organization, where as a young player I never -- I didn't have that personal touch or that feeling.

Q. Jim, when you look at trying to determine if you're able to play, when you made that decision, is it a question about that, about whether you will flinch at the ball or whether you may further injure what you have injured, or what all goes through your decision-making?

JIM FURYK: Most of the time it's pretty easy, cut and dry. There is some gray area where you have to make a decision. But if you're flinching you obviously can't play. If you're afraid, you obviously can't play. And for me it was a matter of having enough motion.

If I couldn't make -- and I had my dad behind me who was my teacher, if I couldn't make my normal swing, or if I looked like I was rounding a club improperly or differently because of an injury, then it's not worth playing. There's no reason going out there and not playing with your normal swing.

Seventy percent in this game, I don't care who it is, when they're playing at 70 percent, they're not winning. You can't play against anyone. We always get compared to other sports, and whether it's in talk shows or the newspapers, and you read about -- I was talking to Gary about this a couple of days ago. He's got a little wrist injury. As a golfer, you don't really get treated like a tough guy for playing with an injury; it's just golf.

I read a lot about how, oh, he's got a little bit of a wrist injury; what about Emmitt Smith that goes out there with a separated shoulder? It's such a totally ignorant comment would be the best way I could say it.

The difference is an individual in a team sport, Emmitt Smith is going to play when he's injured if he feels like he can help his team. If he feels like he's hurting his team, he needs to step down and let the second-string guy take the play. That's kind of how I'm looking at it in golf.

If I'm going out there and I have an opportunity to play well, and I can swing like I want to -- like right now I'm healthy enough to play like I want to. Doesn't mean I'm going to play well tomorrow. I'm struggling with my game a little bit. But I'm healthy enough, if I can get it going, I'll be okay. If I felt like I wasn't healthy enough to swing like I wanted to, I wouldn't be doing myself any good, or anyone any good going out into the tournament trying to play. You go out and tough it out and shoot 78; it's not doing anyone any good.

My whole determination was whether or not I had enough motion and the ability to make the swing I wanted to. I have that ability. I'm not swinging like I want to, but I have the ability to. It's there physically. Does that make any sense?

So as a golfer, I'm not that tough, but I'm tired of that damn comment. (Laughter).

Q. How about 102 degrees, is it good for the back?

JIM FURYK: Perfect. I've always loved hot weather. I've won a lot of tournaments in blazing hot, hot weather, and it just seems like any nicks or bangs, going back to what we say, there's a lot of guys in this field that are probably tired of hearing about how I feel.

There's a lot of guys that play injured every week and play with little dings and bangs, and it's a long season on Tour. Guys play with injuries. There's 30 guys on this field that have something bothering them, hurting, and they're in the trailer

working on wrist and hands and it's part of our life and part of golf.

So the heat, one of the reasons I like the heat is it always makes it nice when you can go out there and make ten swings feel like you can go to the first tee; rather than, you know, going to the British and it's raining sideways and it's 48 while we're warming out. You don't feel all that loose. Take a little car ride to the first tee, you're already stiff again. I've always liked it hot and the hotter the better.

KELLY ELBIN: Jim Furyk, thank you very much.

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