



INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT: BRAD FAXON
Saturday, August 18, 2012

MODERATOR: We welcome Brad Faxon into the interview room. Brad, local knowledge I know helps. You had eight birdies today. Is it all coming back from your past glory days on the PGA TOUR here? 66, eight birdies, and you're one off the lead going into the final round. Just talk about the day.

BRAD FAXON: Well, you know, it was a long day. I finished yesterday 11 holes, I was on the 12th green to start this morning, and I played pretty well so far but nothing spectacular. Then I started my round today with a four-footer for birdie on 12 and I missed it. A lot of times the first putt of the day, if you miss it, it kind of throws you off a little bit with your putting. I don't know what happened, but on the 14th hole I made about a 65-, 70-foot putt for a birdie. That was in this morning's round.

Then everything went crazy. I mean, three birdies out of the last five holes this morning to finish off a good round of 67 and then kept it going. I think I had four birdies in a row once and three birdies in a row another time, so I had a great feel for the greens today.

If we did the strokes game where you add up the number of feet you make or something like that, it would be high, that would be a good one. So I was actually apologizing to my playing partners because it got to be so funny how many putts were going in.

But like you said, Phil, the memories from successes here in the past definitely help, whether it's a tee shot, a certain shape you've got to hit a tee ball off. I was so happy to see so many people here, today's round, last night at the concert, the pro-am, it's just been amazing to see how Dick's has picked up what we had as the B.C. Open for so many years. There's no tournament like this left.

MODERATOR: Can you just run through the birdies in the round? You had 24 putts and I count you have 12 one-putts in the second round. Can you just run through them?

BRAD FAXON: You're talking about the second round?

MODERATOR: Yeah.

BRAD FAXON: Okay. Where are we? So I made -- I hit a good drive and hybrid up there just left pin-high on the green, made a nice 10-foot putt for birdie on No. 3. On 4, I hit an 8-iron to about 40 feet and made that down the hill, one of those that took forever to go in. No. 5, I hit a beautiful drive and a 3-wood short left of the green, had a pretty easy pitch, which I promptly knocked 20 feet by and made that. On No. 6, very good drive, 9-iron to about 15 feet, made that one. No. 10, I drove it in the right -- under that tree on the right and really had no shot unless I just went sideways. I tried to hit it over the back of the green on purpose just so I would not have that difficult of a third shot and I drew a terrible lie and I tried to hit a heroic sort of flop shot and I hit it too hard into the water, so I made double there. And then just made a beautiful drive and 7-iron to No. 11, made a 30-ish footer there, I would say 30 feet exactly. No. 12 hit a good drive and hybrid on the green and made a good run at eagle maybe from 25 feet and two-putted. And then 13, hit a drive and a wedge from 130 yards in, made about a 30-footer there.

So made a bunch of long putts, made a beautiful save on No. 14 for par, made about a 30-footer for par there. And then 17, I hit a 7-iron just on the front of the green about 18 feet and almost made one on 18. So it will be fun to go through the round and add up how many feet of putts that was today.

MODERATOR: Just wait for the mic for questions, please.

Q. After a round like this where you made so many long putts, do you kind of tell yourself, all right, if I hit the ball better today, you can go even lower, or do you feel like you have to hit it better tomorrow?

BRAD FAXON: No, I don't feel like I have to hit it better tomorrow. I hit it nicely this afternoon. And it's funny, this game's just so weird. I've had some rounds this year where I've really hit the ball well and just haven't made any putts. I'm never going to feel sorry for myself, but I was getting to the point where like this just is not going in. I feel like I'm doing a lot of good stuff and it's hard to stay patient through those little ruts, and everybody does it.

And then I've played a lot of good golf throughout my career hitting the ball sideways. I don't expect to cure that overnight and hit every shot perfectly tomorrow, but sometimes that's just the way you play and it's definitely the way I play.

Q. Can you sum up your season to date coming in here?

BRAD FAXON: Yeah, I can. I've had a very funny year. It's been frustrating because I haven't played very good golf. I started off playing okay and I just -- I haven't done anything very well and I haven't done anything particularly poorly. It's one of those things where every time I go home after the round and think what do I have to do to fix this and I just go, I don't know. My practice has been good, I think my attitude's pretty good, but maybe it's just coming to Endicott and playing the Dick's Sporting Goods Open to have the cure.

Q. Have you played competitive golf under the lights anywhere but here?

BRAD FAXON: Under the lights, that was funny. Probably not to win a tournament. I've done that at a few tournaments where we've had, you know, a chance to play that last hole so you can get it in where I've seen cars backed up shooting their headlights down. I want to think a Buick Open somewhere, I can't remember. I have, but not with a trophy on the line or a title on the line. I certainly haven't slept -- when Alex Alexander, that Sunday we had to play the next morning, right, and he asked my fiance and I at the time to stay at his house on Sunday night, and he made us sleep in his bedroom. He said, You sleep -- this is kind of weird, but we did.

Q. When you mention that, do you ever feel the situation here in this particular situation, he's kind of looking out for you, too?

BRAD FAXON: I know he would be smiling if he were here and I know I would be smiling. I just can't say enough great things about Alex, the tenacity that he had to keep this thing going. Last night I was walking over to the Dick's tent to see the concert and I saw a picture of Alex up on the board. I hadn't seen a picture of him in a while. It just made me feel good.

Q. Tell us about your finish on 18, very close to making birdie.

BRAD FAXON: Yeah, you know, that's a tough tee shot with water on the left and the trees on the right. Today the wind's blowing left to right, so you kind of had to challenge yourself, you had to decide, are you going to hit it -- a draw against the wind or are you going to hit it towards the water and let the wind take it away.

I'm better at drawing the ball than I am at fading the ball and I was trying to hit it just inside the tree and I pushed it. I hit it hard, but I had no idea when I hit it that when it hit the tree, it kicked to the left because that's a jungle over there. It's hard to get it on the green, especially when the flagstick's to the right.

Fortunately, I got a nice bounce into the fairway, hit a good 7-iron and I hit a putt that looked like it was kind of creeping to go in and just missed.

Q. Brad, is this a family affair for you? I saw you with your daughter on the 7th or 8th after hitting your tee shot.

BRAD FAXON: Right. Well, this is -- my wife had big knee surgery about three months ago and hadn't been able to travel at all, and this is a fairly close-to-home tournament for us, it's a five-hour drive. This is the first tournament she's been to, I think, since Hawaii. She hasn't watched me play much golf this year, so it's been great to have her and my daughter here. We have a couple close friends with their daughters.

And my caddie situation is probably worth writing about. My regular caddie here, who I've had for the last couple years ago is Mark Zyons and he caddied for Billy Andrade for 14 years and caddied for me the last couple years. He's a Rhode Island guy, but he caddied for me when I won in 2000.

Two weeks ago, Bill Haas asked him to caddie for him at the PGA, which was a week off for us, and I thought nothing of, yeah, I would caddie for Bill Haas at the PGA if you asked me. Then he called me and he felt terrible and he said, Bill asked me to caddie Greensboro, which is this week, and I'm like, oh. So I said, If Bill's going to give you a job, he won the FedExCup championship, that's a lot more money than you're going to make out here on this Tour. I said, I would do that.

So I didn't have a caddie coming here on Monday. I called a friend of mine that's a former baseball player and he works for the Red Sox now. He runs all the minor leagues and he actually used to live here in Binghamton. He coached the Mets team here.

MODERATOR: His name is?

BRAD FAXON: David Howard is his name, and he played for the Cardinals and the Royals and we've been great friends for a long time. So this is his third time caddying for me and he's having a blast.

MODERATOR: And Mark, how do you spell his last name?

BRAD FAXON: Zyons, Z-Y-O-N-S. I don't know, Bill played good yesterday, I don't know what he shot today.

MODERATOR: He's hanging in there.

BRAD FAXON: But he texted me this morning, he said, hey, good playing.

Q. You were making a nice move early in the round and you make the double on 10. What was kind of going through your mind there on 11? Obviously you responded and played well.

BRAD FAXON: You know, it's funny, I just said to the TV press outside, I said, I think what I'm proudest of today was I made that double bogey and I absolutely didn't let it bother me. I felt like I walked off the green like I had just made a par or birdie, and that doesn't always happen. How I reacted is a pretty good lesson because I birdied the next three holes. If I was steamed and lost my mind a little bit, I probably don't make three birdies in a row. I've worked with Bob Rotella a lot of times and one of the things that he had in his book is he thinks the best players accept shots and accept what happens better than the guys that aren't playing well, and acceptance is something we talk about a lot of times. It doesn't really mean much to the average player and I think that is a huge part of playing good golf.

Q. Did you allow yourself to look at the leaderboard as you were coming up?

BRAD FAXON: I actually did. I wasn't trying to look at it, but I saw on 16 that I was in -- tied for second place. Then I birdied 17 and I was getting -- I was waiting to putt and Jay Haas and John Cook were on 9. Jay and I are great friends, our rooms are next door to each other this week, and he let me putt. You know, it was pretty funny. So I was paying attention and I know going into the last hole that I was one back. I know it's 12 and 11. I don't know if somebody's 10. I'm sure somebody's going to shoot low today, it's beautiful out there.

MODERATOR: Thanks Brad.

Q. 25 holes, how difficult was it to --

BRAD FAXON: 25 holes?

Q. 25 holes.

BRAD FAXON: Not too bad. It was a very comfortable temperature out there, it wasn't too humid, and I expect it's the same tonight. It's supposed to be cooler. I was worried this morning we were going to be fogged in when we first started playing, but there wasn't really any wind this morning. The greens were soft and they're so pure, they're so true, it was nice. If you wanted me to go play nine more, I probably wouldn't. Some guys have to play 30 holes, right?

MODERATOR: Yeah, 30. Thanks Brad, good luck tomorrow.