

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW: OLIN BROWNE
Thursday, November 5, 2015



MICHAEL BALIKER: I'd like to welcome Olin Browne into the media center here at the Charles Schwab Cup Championship. Owen, a good start, 4-under 66 and a really strong finish there with two birdies on the last two holes. Just kind of talk about the day and get us started.

OLIN BROWNE: Obviously it's a big treat to be here at Desert Mountain and playing the Schwab Cup, the culmination of a respectable year if you get here and then you've got a chance to really do some damage out here at this tournament. It's a great venue and I played a practice round Monday and it hadn't opened until that day because they were overseeding and it's just in immaculate shape. It's probably the best conditioned course we've seen all year, so kudos to the agronomy department and the super up here. And that weather yesterday in the pro-am, I don't think there was a single player that wanted to be out there and I'm pretty sure half the amateurs didn't either. So the course is pretty receptive as a result. The greens are soft, backing up shots a lot. In fact, I made a bogey on 15 today because I spun a wedge about 25 feet down the hill and didn't get it up and down, so a little bit frustrating there. But had a nice strong finish birdieing 17 and 18, like you said. I had six birdies and two bogeys. Didn't feel great this morning starting out but managed to get a couple of birdies under my belt. Very satisfied with 4 under today to start.

Q. What did you do particularly well today, anything that you can point to?

OLIN BROWNE: Yeah, I made a bogey on the third hole right out of the box. I hit a terrible tee shot but then I chipped in for birdie on No. 4, which was ridiculous. It was playing really hard, it was into the wind and uphill, so it got me right back in it. Then made a couple of birdies to finish the front nine. I think it's really important that you understand what these greens do out here if you're going to make putts. It doesn't matter if you hit good shots if you don't make putts. You need to make putts out here to shoot a good score. And it's a little tricky out here with the valley effect and we're tucked into the hillside here and sometimes you can't quite see the break, you've got to kind of feel it or sense it. So I was pleased to make six birdies, and I think the key is going to be for the rest of the week is the course does look like it could firm up a whole lot. I don't know how long it will take before the course releases a little bit and the greens get a little bit firmer. Going to have to continue to hit quality iron shots and gauge the distances pretty well. We're at a little bit of elevation here. When it's 55 degrees out when you tee off, it's hard to guess how far the ball's flying so you take a couple of holes to get into the round and get a feel for what's happening.

Q. On the subject of putting, I was in Toledo at Inverness when I remember you making a whole bunch of putts that week. Langer had 11 putts through eight holes on the front. Your thoughts on somebody getting hot like that, because you've been hot like that, I know.

OLIN BROWNE: We kind of needle him a little bit about how well prepared he is. He's the best prepared guy out here. He'll take his time in practice rounds and he knows what the breaks are doing before he plays the shot into the green. So he's playing chess out there, and when he gets in control of his iron play and he can put the ball where he wants it so that he's got the putt that he wants, he's going to be very effective.

Q. You said you didn't feel that great starting out this morning. Can you say a little bit about that?

OLIN BROWNE: Well, it's the end of the year, we've been traveling coast to coast the last few weeks, we're at a little bit of elevation here and I practiced hard on Monday, hit a lot of balls, hit a lot of bunker shots. I was here the entire day, got in late Sunday night, so maybe just a little bit of fatigue. And then playing in that weather yesterday takes a lot out of you too, that was crummy.

Q. Especially six hours?

OLIN BROWNE: Yeah, the back nine took a little longer than it needed to but that's just the way that works.

Q. So it's more about your fatigue than it was about your swing?

OLIN BROWNE: Yeah, you know, I love my coffee in the morning but my coffee doesn't love me on the golf course, so tournament days I try not to drink it. So maybe I'm just a little sluggish because of that and just takes me a little while to get going.

Q. So how do you deal with it?

OLIN BROWNE: Well, it's just part of the deal, you know? Do the best that you can and try and be patient. The thing about golf is that what gets you in trouble, most of the guys have an understanding of what their swing does and what they do with the rest of their games. Usually when we get into trouble it's because we lose our patience. Of course there are days when you can't figure out what you're doing right or wrong. There are days when you come out, man, I played so great today, I'm never going to play badly again, right? And then the next day you show up and go, what was I doing yesterday, I don't know. So some days you just take longer to get going than others.

Q. For guys like you, you don't spend a lot of time trying to fix your swing in the middle of a round; bad shots are an aberration?

OLIN BROWNE: Well, the thing about golf is it's cause and effect. If you hit a certain kind of a flight or a certain kind of an impact, you know what it is that needs to be done. Sometimes you're able to fix that on the fly and sometimes you've got to wait until the end of the round. I would say most guys are able to -- look, we're managing our games the best we can. Doesn't anybody ever feel the best that he can feel that the strike is perfect every time

he plays. I think it was Ben Hogan who said if you hit three shots exactly the way he wanted to, then he had played a really great round of golf?

Q. I think Norman said that, too.

OLIN BROWNE: And it's true to some extent because what you're trying to do -- look, everybody hits great shots out here; it's the guy who doesn't hit the horrendous one is the guy who ends up being in better shape than everyone else. It's management of your game and it's also pulling the right club at the right time or executing the right shot at the right time. Just because you can doesn't mean you should, you know what I mean?

Q. So when you start to lose your patience, how do you get it back?

OLIN BROWNE: That's an interesting question. I'm getting better at it as I get older, I guess, because you recognize it doesn't matter, that one shot isn't going to ruin your day. And if you let it ruin your day, it could really compound and become a miserable event. So takes you 35 years to grow up, I guess. I don't know.

Q. So when you find yourself trying to regain your patience and you can't --

OLIN BROWNE: Then you just try and get through the day so you can get to the range so that you don't have to suffer that indignity the next day.

Q. Obviously the weather is much nicer the next three days, warmer, more pleasant. In theory, based on what you said about putting on this golf course, how does a difference in weather affect that at all?

OLIN BROWNE: Well, I think the better the weather, the easier it is to control your distances and get your ball closer to where you want it on the greens. If you're playing in inclement weather, it's hard to control your ball, so as a general rule you'll have longer putts, you can't be quite as aggressive. I think the better the weather, certainly for older guys, I'm 56, if it's warmer, I'm going to feel more limber and I can control my distances better and control my shot shapes better and the net result of that -- listen, nobody makes 30-footers all day long except Jordan Spieth, so we've got to get it closer to the hole and if you can do that, you're going to have some good looks. But, for example, if you take the pin sheets and you go to the pin sheets 1 through 18 and you put somebody's ball 30 feet from the pin on every hole, he's going to be lucky to shoot one or two under, right? So you've got to get the ball close.

Q. I'm getting older, my memory doesn't serve me that well, but Inverness, I think you made several 30-footers that last round?

OLIN BROWNE: Actually, I made one birdie the last round on the 18th hole. I had one bogey and it was a three-putt. I made a bunch of putts that I had to make that mattered and my success at Inverness was entirely due to the fact that I played well but I also took

advantage of my good play. So yes, I putted well, but I hit a lot of quality shots that week and the momentum built as the week went, right? Look, anytime you're making putts, it takes all the pressure off the rest of your game because now you don't feel like you have to force a shot into a certain hole location, you can go ahead and be patient. And by the way, sometimes the pin's over on the left and you aim 25 feet to the right of the hole, you're going to hit a little draw, whatever, you pull it and you hit it two feet and you go, man, I'm glad I was aiming right of the pin. That's just golf. We're all just trying to hit the best shot we can hit under the circumstances. Sometimes you play conservatively, you take a conservative line and you hit it slightly on the button and you think, dang it, man, I wish I'd aimed at the pin, right? I think that was one of the Hogan quotes, too. They asked him if he had anything to do differently, what would it be. He thought about it for a second and he said, I might have aimed at a few more pins. When you control your ball that well, it's not a bad play.

MICHAEL BALIKER: If you could just take us through your birdies on the day, clubs hit and then the distance made for putts.

OLIN BROWNE: Starting on No. 4, chipped it in from pin high right. It was about, I don't know, 25 feet. I missed an easy birdie on 6, I hit it five feet, didn't make it and that kind of teed me off. So I took a tight line, to my point earlier about hitting it close on 7, it was playing hard today. It was into the wind when we played it and it was 216 or something like that and I hit a 3-hybrid in there about four feet pin high left and made the putt. No. 8 I was going for the green in two and hit a fat 3-wood. This goes to my point earlier about getting lucky every now and then. I laid up to a pretty good number, had 60 yards to the pin and hit it about eight or nine feet and made it. And then No. 9 I hit it in the left rough off the tee but I had a good angle. I was trying to take a tight line down the left side and I was able to cut a 6-iron in there about pin high about, I don't know, 20 feet or so and made it. Then I went cold for a while, right?

MICHAEL BALIKER: Yeah, until 17, 18.

OLIN BROWNE: Oh, yeah. 17 I hit a hybrid again that caromed in there about five feet and made it. Then 18 I was in between clubs, it was playing into the wind somehow. I was between 3- and 5-wood and I hit 5-wood and ended up in the rocks short and then hit it about four feet, so that was a good up-and-down to finish the day.

MICHAEL BALIKER: Thanks, Olin. Good luck the rest of the week.

OLIN BROWNE: Thank you very much. Hope we're talking all week.