



INTERVIEW WITH STUART APPLEBY

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

SUNDAY, 6 DECEMBER 2007

AT THE MEDIA CENTRE, NSW GOLF CLUB

FACILITATOR: Stuart, thank you for coming in. An unsatisfactory day but a satisfactory tournament?

STUART APPLEBY: Yes, probably the right way to put it. Ultimately you train to win a tournament. If you don't win it you are going to finish somewhere worse than that. Does that make any sense? I played well all week. If you look at all the week it could have been a dream scenario to play like I was the first two days. It was certainly some of the purest golf I have played. The last few days was probably a bit more like the cards evening out what the course will allow you.

I basically played pretty good. I really can't complain. I knew what the golf course was about. I knew that if you don't get on the right side of it, it is very penal. Adam chipped away brilliantly, making more birdies, making more birdies. I couldn't seem to get enough of those and make enough putts to keep pace, but an exciting golf course and

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exciting tournament for sure.

QUESTION: Were you a bit mentally drained by having to fight the worsening conditions after the first two days?

STUART APPLEBY: I was mentally drained even after the first two days, you know, having everything, just playing really well, and making putts that I might not have thought I would have made, but today with putts that I thought I would have made. I held a putt on a par 4 up the hill late in the piece, on the 14th. It was quite easily quite a bit of right to left and I had to hit it straight, which is so hard to do. I had to allow for wind. It is just the weather, the wind, is the toughest opponent here and it will always take its toll at some point. It is a matter of around here the guy usually who wins will be the guy who has got away with, you know, befriended the golf course or befriended the conditions the most. It's a savage beast. Even though the scores are pretty low, you can ask the players, there was nothing simple about getting 10 under par or more.

QUESTION: It must give you great satisfaction looking ahead to next year?

STUART APPLEBY: Yes, quite a lot yes, for sure. You talk about turning a corner. I have been in a straight line for too long, wondering when I can do a legal U turn. It seems that every time I went to there was a sign which said don't do it here. Finally it feels like now I can do that. I don't know when you would call me turning. I'd have to say the wheels have started moving. I have got it on lock a bit. I think 2010 will give me something nice.

If I had an end of year like I had last year, I would be feeling a bit winded but I don't feel that now. There is a lot of good things in my game that are real, not just on the range.

QUESTION: Not having been in contention for a while, were those skills a bit rusty when you came up here?

STUART APPLEBY: I think when you are playing well, which I feel like I am, you are back on the horse that way. I didn't feel like I was rusty, but I knew that I would feel like there is improvement absolutely. Even Adam will be thinking about what do I need to do better because I felt like I wasn't. If you think you are winning you keep doing that, yes, but you've got to keep improving. This week being comfortable in the wind was the hardest thing. As I mentioned to you guys earlier in the week it doesn't want to let you, it doesn't want you to be comfortable. Ultimately Adam was the most comfortable player out there

and myself the second most.

I have a lot to look forward to after this week for sure. A decent finish at the Masters. I couldn't crack even hardly a crack this time last year so much more like Stuart Appleby can play and swing it.

QUESTION: Did you feel you were close enough at 14 and 16 or did 9, 10 and 12 show you?

STUART APPLEBY: Did I feel like I was close enough, I need one more big thing. I need to come home with some birdies, some mistakes, so was I feeling like there was a chance, a glimmer but nothing sustainable. I hit a great putt on the 16th and I thought great. I hit a great putt on 17 and I have no idea how it missed. You just never know. That was the whole week. Every player will give you putts and shots and chips that they thought were good and it wasn't good, so I just wasn't close enough late in the piece.

QUESTION: Did they go in on Thursday and Friday?

STUART APPLEBY: Yes, absolutely. That was exactly right. When I looked up all I could say was go in, all I could think was go in and the wind would blow it. That was pure golf. That was really, you know, raw golf at its best for me, the way I felt for sure.

QUESTION: Stuart, Adam has obviously been through a tough period as well. Do you feel good for him?

STUART APPLEBY: Yes. He has had a shocker as well. There is no doubt that this will spur him on. This will give him a huge dose of what he used to feel like. There is no doubt his confidence has been massively eroded. I've seen it. I've played with him. At the start of this year we played. I have a rough idea. Obviously it is the earlier part of his career but I do know how he feels and I'm sure this form has not happened overnight. He has certainly brought this into the tournament. He is a very, very talented player, no doubt, and like myself he is back in the saddle.

QUESTION: How does it feel to have shot 66, 66 when it was almost impossible? You sort of couldn't keep it up?

STUART APPLEBY: I don't really have a feeling about that. I'm glad I did it because it means I was really tuned in to what was going on. It just happened. I can't tell you what I feel about it. Did I expect to shoot another six under for two more days each? No. I knew that it was going to be hard. It's a fine line. You have only to look at my highlights. Take away the chip in, take away that

one and take away that putt and all of a sudden I've shot two or three under and I am just there with the rest of the guys.

It was a nice jump to have but it really wasn't enough in these conditions. I don't know what to tell you, but I'm playing good golf so I can't be critical when I do it. I've also got to do it on a Pro-Am and shoot 62 and miss the cut.

QUESTION: Stuart, I just wanted to get your thoughts about what you were feeling when you were standing on the 15th tee. You walked on the 13th tee seven shots back. You walked on the 15th tee just three shots back. It's a totally different feeling. You've gone down the middle and were you just thinking maybe there isn't--

STUART APPLEBY: I just knew, you know, that I would have to play pure golf coming in and have a good drive. I wasn't totally disappointed with my next shot into the green but then I had a real tough putt and left it short. It was just hard to be aggressive because the wind is shaking you around, the hole is barely still when you are trying to look up to it. It is just hard to grab the course by the throat.

The other day I wasn't grabbing it by the throat. I just sort of snuck around the back and got it in the hole. To think okay, birdie all coming in, yes, but right now I'm standing over a ball and I'm moving. Why don't I just focus on what that is. Had I flagged it into 10 feet I might have got aggressive and tried but I needed to probably birdie that and having miss a 3 to 4 metre putt, obviously that was all she wrote.

QUESTION: It actually looked like it was over after the 10th when you hit that tussock?

STUART APPLEBY: It didn't help up there those two holes, 9 and 10.

QUESTION: Did you feel like it was over at that point or did you still hope?

STUART APPLEBY: Really I was trying to do what I had to do and thought if I can just make 4 or 5 birdies coming in on the back 9 so be it. I just can't think about what he's going to do. The golf course is way bigger than even the deficit between us.

QUESTION: How do you rate of stocks of Australian golf coming through knew?

STUART APPLEBY: It's pretty good. Obviously Adam is a few year younger than me. We have got some good talent and it is going to come through. I feel like it is going to be there. I think Australian golf really need to focus on at State level getting juniors in the game. There is no point in bringing 10 and 12 year olds into the sport. It is nice to bring them in and introduce them. Of course most of you people play golf here and obviously aren't very good and that's why you have ended up journalists. You are not bad, are you? You missed it the cut this week. I'm sorry.

Having someone like Greg has certainly been a great inspiration to so many players, obviously a lot older now and the younger generation is Tiger and Adam and there will be those guys who will have to take the mantle a little bit. Unfortunately people will never see Greg Norman play gold. It has moved on but we need to make sure Australia stays a force per capita worldwide.

QUESTION: Friday morning aside, how would you rate this as a venue?

STUART APPLEBY: As a venue I wish we could get a little bit more scrub cleared but I have a feeling New South Wales Parks might be all over that one. Logistically, it is a tough place. You guys know that. As a golf course, as you stand on the first tee, it's world class.

QUESTION: That's what I meant, as a golf course?

STUART APPLEBY: Absolutely world class, no two ways about it. If you played this course, anyone in the world, if you went ho hum I would be slapping you in the face.

FACILITATOR: Last questions please. Any more questions?
Thank you

END OF TRANSWCRIPT