

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW: JAY HAAS (5-UNDER)
May 5, 2017

THE MODERATOR: Jay, 5-under 67 today. Maybe just a quick rundown on your day and then we will get some questions.

JAY HAAS: I played very well, putted very well, made some nice putts in the middle of the round, got me over the hump a little bit, made a nice birdie off the fringe of the green at 9, probably 35, 40 feet up and over a hill. 10 probably made it 35 feet for birdie. That kind of -- you know, 9 was in a position where bogey wasn't out of the question and ended up with a birdie and then make the long putt at 10.

All of the sudden I was 3-under par and hit some really nice shots on the back nine, hit all the greens but one on 17 and nice up and down there. The course is in great shape. You hear that a lot week-to-week, but probably as much grass on the greens and in the fairways that we've had in the past here. It was a nice day to play. A little wind, but overall a pretty nice day to score.

Q. Tom Lehman was just in here talking about he had a bad experience going through Q school and didn't come to play here when the Shell was here, but now he's back and loves the golf course. What's your history with the Woodlands?

JAY HAAS: It's funny, we played across the street for my first four or five years, I guess, and I really played well there, probably had three or four top-10s, and was looking forward to coming back there, then all of the sudden we hear we're coming to this place, and my first year I think I shot about 150 and missed the cut. My next year I came and was playing awful and I withdrew actually after 27 holes.

Not one of my finer moments. I didn't come back the next year, and I think the reason I came back was Dick Harmon, was a pro at River Oaks, has since passed away, and his brother Billy was caddying for me, and I said, you know, I'm just going to go to see Dick and practice, even if I don't play good, and I ended up finishing fourth that year won the following year, and I have been back ever since.

I don't know, for a while it just didn't suit my eye, but a little bit like Tom, I think -- we even talked in the Pro-Am, I was telling the guys about it, at times this was a December qualifying school here. I couldn't imagine playing this course in bad weather and trying to finish on 17th and 18th with your life on the line, and I'm sure Tom had that experience and was scarred by that experience, which a lot of us were.

Q. It's your 30th anniversary of your win. What's your best memory of that week?

JAY HAAS: You know, up to the last hole I don't remember a lot. I think I played very well, obviously, during the week to get into that position and then made a long putt at 18.

I remember reading an article, and something I said in the press room afterwards. I remember I was over the putt and kind of looking, and I heard a guy in the gallery sneeze right before I putted, but I was in my routine, in my rhythm, and I putted and hit it a little hard. I was just kinda making sure I got it there, and I was probably, you know, 55, 60 feet, something like that, maybe.

The thing went right in the hole. Buddy Gardner was two groups behind me, and that put me tied with him, and he made a couple of pars coming in, and he made a nice putt at 18 to tie me, probably 15 feet.

Then we went to 16, and both of us missed the green and both of us hit it out 2 1/2 to 3 feet, and he missed his putt, and I was inside of him. Now I had to make this putt. I was just telling the guys today that all of the sudden I got very, very nervous. I was already thinking about how I was going to have to hit my tee shot on 17, and I hated that hole, and now all of the sudden I had this 2 1/2-footer to win the tournament and I somehow shook it in.

That was my memory. That last 40 minutes of the day is kind of the only thing I really remember. Certain shots that I hit or anything, I don't have the recall. But, you know, obviously coming back and -- I've had some good tournaments since then. It's not a long hitter's dream course here, I don't think. A lot of little nicks on greens and putting from off the fringes and things like that, and I've managed to do that okay in past years.

Q. I'm sure you haven't played every year but on the PGA TOUR and this TOUR, but you've been about as regular as anybody?

JAY HAAS: I would think so. Yeah, I've probably played here, like I said, three, four, five years. When was the first year here they played the PGA TOUR?

Q. Was it '90?

JAY HAAS: No, I would -- I won in '87.

Q. I'm thinking it was probably '85.

JAY HAAS: Okay, that could have been right because -- maybe I withdrew in '85, came back in '86, and finished top-5 and won in '87. But prior to that I played I think every year over at the other place.

Q. And you pretty much kept coming back. When you win, you keep coming back.

JAY HAAS: When you win you come back, at least I do. I don't have that many wins to pick and choose where I wouldn't play. Then we went to Redstone, and I like that okay. I like Houston. I like the food here, just like the people and easy to get to. I think, you know, I have good vibes about the win in '87, so I still cling to that a little bit. I was glad we came back here.

I did win at Augusta Pines in 2006, something like that, 2005, 2006?

Q. '06.

JAY HAAS: Then me moved it over here. And I was like, man, I was just getting comfortable with Augusta Pines, and I think I finished pretty good the first year there and then won the next year?

Q. You had five straight top-10 finishes your first five times playing in this event.

JAY HAAS: Right.

Q. And you've had three more since then, so you've had eight.

JAY HAAS: So --

Q. Eight out of eleven.

JAY HAAS: So that's as good as a percentage as I have anywhere. I didn't realize that.

Q. Freddy was in yesterday, and he's kind of going for a hat trick here, which you are as well. He's actually won on three different courses, but you would actually be winning here for the second time, and then Augusta Pines. Thanks for coming.

JAY HAAS: Thank you.

Q. Great for people to show up and play good golf on this course. It's good entertainment.

JAY HAAS: It is good entertainment.