

Oak Hill Country Club ~ Rochester, NY

Hole #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Out	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Out	Total		Yardage
452	401	214	570	428	170	461	428	418	3,542	429	188
372	598	323	181	439	460	469	3,459	7,001		Par	4
4	3	5	4	3	4	4	4	35	4	3	4
5	4	3	4	4	4	35	70		Score		

AN INTERVIEW WITH:

TIM SIMPSON

TIM SIMPSON: Probably the toughest course I've played ever in my PGA TOUR career. I drove the ball beautifully today. I was kind of gloating walking to 9 that I had only missed one fairway and it was about five feet, so I promptly missed the ninth fairway and finished with a bogey.

But I played very solid today. Hit a lot of quality shots, a lot of good putts. Just, it's just, you have to be patient. And I think it plays into a veteran tour player's hands, the Majors, out here, because on a weekly basis on the Champions Tour it's kind of run and gun. And if you make a double or certainly if you make a triple, you shot yourself in the foot. You're out of it.

I guess it's not a good comparison, but I work with some young players that play the Hooter's Tour, and I mean it's, you get 15-under, you better be trying to get to 20-under. You're not trying to get to the house. You got to run and gun.

Then you get to Major Championship and you have to have the mentality of, it's patience, patience, patience, it's four days, you just got to walk them down. You can't get ahead of yourself. We're all going to make bogeys, we're all going to miss short putts. We're all going to hit the balls in the rough and there's places out here that Tiger and the young kids just there's no hope of getting it on the green.

So it's basically if I had had to predict a winner, I would say it's the guy that's going to strike the ball the solidest this week. In other words, he's going to drive it great, and he's got to position the ball well in the proper position on the greens, which tends to be below the hole.

KELLY ELBIN: If you would, just go through your birdies and bogeys.

TIM SIMPSON: And by the way I had two skins today. Sam Torrance got one there at the end on number 8, Joey Sindelar was shut out.

(Laughter.)

Birdies are few and far between out there as I'm sure you all have seen today.

No. 6, that was a great one there. We caught a wind gust there, it was howling when we were playing. And I caught a wind gust, it slapped my ball about 15 yards left. And I had, I had probably a 45 foot putt up over a hill and lo

and behold if it didn't go in the hole like a rabbit.

Missed a couple of short ones though. It wasn't like I made a bunch of bombs. That was the highlight.

Then 18, that was my only other birdie. And hit a beautiful drive and hit a 6-iron and about 15, 17, 18 feet above the hole and just one of those you get it started and hope you start it on line and it went right in the middle of.

Had a couple of bogeys. Obviously the last hole was, left a little bad taste in my mouth.

3 was playing difficult and I was the guinea pig, I was first up. I hit a 3-iron there and hit a poor shot and put it in the bunker. And I hit it in two bunkers today and I had really difficult shots in both of them, the ball way below my feet. And that was the case there. I hit a great shot out about 12 feet and hung it over the front lip going over the hill and it didn't go in.

9, I just like said, I drove it about five feet through the fairway and just couldn't quite get it to the green. I hit -- the pin was kind of up on a little terrace, but then about maybe eight feet behind the hole it went into the thick stuff. So I tried to play a couple feet left of the hole and it rolled up to the top and came down and I 2-putted for bogey.

15, that was the other par-3 where I hit a poor iron shot. The wind got it. And had a really nasty lie in the bunker and hit it 20 feet. That was as good as I could hit it.

KELLY ELBIN: Can you talk about the conditions out there this afternoon.

TIM SIMPSON: They're very easy.

(Laughter.)

Nothing to it.

(Laughter.)

I got my long underwear top in my locker and it will probably be going on about 7 o'clock in the morning when I get here.

It was just very difficult. The wind was swirling. I don't know how to compare it to this morning, obviously it was considerably colder this morning, although I got on a T-shirt, a turtle neck and a wool sweater and never came out of them today. It kind of never let up.

I think that they got the cold and certainly maybe some bad conditions and then we got the wind. It was quite gusty, quite nasty this afternoon.

If you put it above the pin, you just almost couldn't hit a solid putt. A good example was No. 1. That was my 10th hole. I hit an unbelievable drive down there, only had a pitching wedge in from 126. And I hit it about six feet behind the hole. And it was good thing the first putt hit the hole because then it only went four feet by hitting the hole.

You get downwind, downhill and you got problems.

Q. I'm just trying to get the mentality of what it was like. I'm not saying you were laughing at the guys who went out at 7 o'clock this morning, saying, ha ha, you guys got to put up with this stuff, but look what you guys had to put up with with the wind. And just if you could put -- did you feel maybe relieved at first not to have to deal with the chilly conditions

and then walking up to the first tee going, what did I just get myself into.

TIM SIMPSON: Yeah, it was actually I was in the locker room getting ready to play and one of the guys that had been on the range warming up a little bit came back in to put on long underwear. And he said, it is absolutely howling out there. And when I walked out it was like, wow, and it's kind of a damp cold. It just kind of cuts right through you.

I felt, yes, I felt like that I was getting a break playing this afternoon, especially I think the weatherman here is related to ours in Atlanta. Because he ain't got a clue either. He said it was supposed to win all day yesterday and today and here we have no rain.

But there's still a lot of moisture in the air. And it's kind of an uncomfortable, cold feeling. But you know, you just got to battle. You got to fight.

Q. It's well documented the things that you have battled through, the past few years.

TIM SIMPSON: Minor things. Just a few little minor surgeries.

Q. Exactly. Do you look at it like you feel fortunate just to be here or do you feel like you got to win? Like you need to win to make yourself --

TIM SIMPSON: I probably shouldn't say this, but I feel like -- I had a guy tell me today before I teed off, he said, you have already won. But the inner drive in me, I feel like I haven't come totally full circle until I do win.

Truth be known, I probably got a little bit ahead of myself two weeks ago at Austin on 17 when I took the lead.

I think that the good lord gives some people a little more than others in certain areas. Whether it's speed or muscles or whatever. And I think in my case he just gave me a heck of a heart.

And there's not a single player in this field or a single caddie that you'll ask that's ever seen me quit. And I'm just going to fight and fight and fight and fight. And that's why my record tend to show I play well in the Majors. That and I was a ball-striker.

But I do, I feel very blessed to be playing again. And I feel like that the one thing that's been missing is my confidence has been real slow to come back. I was telling Lauren this at the Ginn Championship on Saturday night. It's like you wish you could take like a B 12 shot of confidence. But it was like that Jack Nicholson movie, but he talked about taking baby steps and you just got to keep taking baby steps and feeding off the good round and the top-10s and Top 5s. And I've had two seconds in the last six weeks. And just keep being positive.

I mean, I know I have a neurological disease. I know I'm still have Lyme's Disease. You don't get rid of it. And that's another thing God gave me is a high tolerance for pain. Thank goodness for Celebrex, but I just live in pain, whether I'm playing golf or not.

And you make a choice. And I think that as I also told Lauren last month when she interviewed me, my first career, I think I was too selfish and self centered. And I think that the glass was half empty. If I finished second I was mad. I didn't win. If I won, I didn't win by enough. And I think now I think I have

been given a second chance and no matter what, I look at it as the glass is half full.

Yeah, I've been through a lot, but I feel like that it's made me a better man and a better person. And I think that also I've been able to help a lot of people. I don't know how people get my phone number, I don't know how people get my confidential e-mail with the PGA TOUR, but they get in touch with me and they say, I saw on TV, I went and had the same brain surgery and now I can go out of the house and lead a functional life.

So I think that, you know, if I don't ever win again, I don't think I'll be frowning when I die. Something I've been able to do some good stuff.

KELLY ELBIN: For the record, Tim finished fifth at the Senior PGA Championship last year. Questions?

Q. I'm trying to remember a time when you were on the Nationwide Tour.

TIM SIMPSON: That was kind of at the end of my PGA TOUR career. And the doctors, I was their guinea pig with neurological medicines, beta blockers, Clonopin, Endotrol, trying to control my tremor in my left hand. And I felt like that I tried to explain it to dad, because at the time, at one time I was still fully exempt on the Regular Tour and I said, dad, you're going to think I'm crazy, but I'm going to look at it as a Major Leaguer going back to AAA to rehab.

While all these doctors are using me as guinea pig, trying this medicine, well that's not working, let's try some more of this and let's add some of this to it. And to be quite honest, when you have a neurological condition that you have no control over, it's kind of like playing Russian roulette when you got to stand in front of 50,000 people and hit a slick downhill putt. It gets to the point people laugh and people say cruel things and this and that and you want to say, I'm doing the best I can. I can't control myself. And the hardest decision I ever made in my whole life was to retire from the game.

Q. If I remember correctly you actually might have roomed with somebody, kind of helped them through some things they had on the Nationwide Tour that actually they ended up coming out on the PGA TOUR. And I can't remember who for the life of me.

TIM SIMPSON: Roomed with somebody on what?

Q. On the Nationwide Tour.

TIM SIMPSON: I helped Tom Pernice and Frank Lickliter. They forgot though.

(Laughter.)

They forgot my number.

(Laughter.)

I love helping young people. I'm a better teacher than I ever was a player.

Q. Is this in the transition from being selfish to being, because you said you're the one that said that, was that just on the golf course or was

that in life?

TIM SIMPSON: Well I think that to be quite honest, I don't think I'm the red headed kid at the family reunion. I think a lot of top professional athletes, I think most of us are Type A personalities, and going to workout comes first. Going to practice comes first. Everything else is second.

And I think that it's -- I don't want to criticize the kids on tour, but I just learned a lot. And I feel like I'm given a second chance and I smile a lot more.

When I bogeyed the last hole, I wasn't beating my bag when I walked off the green. It's like, you know what, you fought like hell, you played a damn solid round. Even par is better than 1-over. But 1-over is better than 80. And so.

Q. Can you talk just a little bit about how many young players you work with on the Hooter's Tour, how long you've been doing that?

TIM SIMPSON: I felt like when I was out of the game I didn't know -- when I was in the middle of a bitter divorce and I didn't know what to do with my life, and I honestly didn't. And I felt like that I had been given the gift of being able to teach. I understand the swing and I understand how to communicate. And I've had the great blessing of working with the best of the best of the best over the last 30 years. From the Butch Harmons to Sam Snead and Byron Nelson helping me. They took an interest in me. Sam took a tremendous interest in me.

I just enjoy it. Can you make a lot of money doing it? No. But I felt like when I was out of the game that it was kind of my duty to put back into the game. To try to help a couple young players and help them achieve some of the dreams that I was fortunate enough to achieve. And I have a young player named DJ Fiese and our lives have kind of gone parallel. This kid is so incredible. All I have to do is get him through the Q-School. But he was set to go to Q-School three years ago and about six, eight weeks before Q-School, he was driving to a tournament and reached behind the seat to get a map, and went off the road and rolled like seven times. And every time his SUV rolled, his arm went out the window and it rolled on top of it. And it compound fractured this big bone in his upper arm.

They did three surgeries on him and they told him point blank, you'll never play again. And a year to the day from that day he won a Hooter's event. And to me, it's kind of, it's just, it's something that it's kind of a pact I made with God long ago when I was out of the game. That I'm going to help some young players.

And I worked with the University of Georgia girls team right now. They're at the NCAA right now. And I'm asked, how does somebody get to work with you? How do you choose who you work with, because I only work with a couple people. And it's something that I see in their eyes. It's something I see in their heart. It's like DJ, he just has a burning desire to do whatever it takes. And I'll stand out there with him all day in the rain and help him. Free of charge. That's just the way I am.

KELLY ELBIN: Tim Simpson in with 1-over par 71. Thank you, Tim.

TIM SIMPSON: Thank you y'all. Hope to see you again.

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