



KEEGAN BRADLEY WINS HP BYRON NELSON CHAMPIONSHIP: A LESSON IN EVALUATING OPTIONS ON AND OFF THE COURSE



KEEGAN BRADLEY WINS HP BYRON NELSON CHAMPIONSHIP: A LESSON IN EVALUATING OPTIONS ON AND OFF THE COURSE



TEAM DOW MEMBER KEEGAN BRADLEY

As PGA Tour rookie Keegan Bradley evaluated his options for what would be his second shot into the first playoff hole of the HP Byron Nelson Golf Championship he considered both the danger and the opportunity. Said Bradley, "I had a tree in front of me that I had to keep it under, I had a big tree further than that, and an even bigger tree further to the right, so I had to hit a low hook."

Obviously, this isn't the first time that a golf professional has had to balance the risk and reward of a high stakes golf shot, but it is the first time that this internal tug of war has been

depicted on the player's golf bag. Bradley is sponsored by The Dow Group, a risk management firm specializing in personnel decisions. The company's logo on Keegan's golf bag combines two Chinese characters - one representing "danger" and the other "opportunity". Together, says a company spokesman, the characters depict "risk".



"...and I was thinking worst case I hit it to the right, and do anything but hit it in the water, and I can get it up and down from there."

Keegan Bradley

Scott Dow, Founder of The Dow Group, says that Keegan's thought process when evaluating his options on this shot is very similar to that which the great talent evaluators use when evaluating candidates to hire, promote, draft or sign as free agents.

"There are two things that jumped out to me talking to Keegan about his thought process prior to the shot. First, he didn't see the trees in front of him as the 'danger', but he focused on the water back around the left hand side of the green. Great talent evaluators don't confuse 'obstacles' with 'danger'," said Dow. "Keegan knew he could hook the ball around the trees, but he saw one move ahead. He saw the potential danger that his choice might lead to."

Keegan identified his best option pretty quickly. Says Dow, "Like any executive making a high stakes personnel decision, Keegan's options were limited, time was short and the pressure was on."

Says Dow, "A great talent evaluator is both instinctive and 'consciously rational.' They may let their gut feel identify their first option, but then they consciously look for the danger and the opportunity that option brings into play. That's what Keegan was doing. Great talent evaluators are really great handicappers. They choose the option with the best value, and that's what Keegan did."

His gut called for a "low hook", but then his head considered the bet. Keegan saw opportunity to the right of the green where he could "get it up and down from there," and he saw danger to the left where he wanted to "do anything but hit it in the water."

Keegan committed to the shot and the rest is history: "...I really hit the shot of my life," said Keegan. "I hit a 50-yard hook around the trees onto the green, and if it goes two inches more to the left it's in the water." Two putts later Keegan Bradley was the 2011 HP Byron Nelson Champion.

Says Dow, "Great talent evaluators just the play the options they're presented with better than the rest. They don't confuse obstacles with danger, and they make a conscious effort to see both danger and opportunity. They make decisions with their eyes wide open and play the odds to their favor. That's what Keegan did."



Keegan plays the

shot of
my life



“Great talent evaluators just the play the options they’re presented with better than the rest. They don’t confuse obstacles with danger, and they make a conscious effort to see both danger and opportunity.”