

Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions

Saturday, February 1, 2025

Orlando, Florida, USA

Lake Nona Golf & Country Club

Jeff McNeil

Quick Quotes

^

Q. Excited to have defending champion Jeff McNeil of the Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions in the media center. Jeff, nice to see you back up close to the top of the leaderboard. Right now T4. Annika just snuck in right above you and she's just a couple points ahead now. Talk about your round, how today was different than the first two.

JEFF McNEIL: It was still a grind. The course, difficult course. It's hard to get things going, make some putts. But last few rounds had way too many doubles. I think three doubles yesterday. First day I don't think I made double; just way too many bogeys.

Just couldn't get anything going.

Then today still had two doubles on two par-3s. If I can limit that I think I would've shot a couple under.

But it's going to be a grind. I'm right there tomorrow. Wanted to give myself a chance. I think I did. Paveleski is playing great, so see what he comes in at. I'm right up there.

Q. You had mentioned behind the scenes today was like a perfect weather day for you in terms of playing golf. Can you just discuss that? Also compare it to a perfect weather day for you playing baseball.

JEFF McNEIL: Yeah. I think last year when I won this tournament of the weather wasn't so great. I think that's what I kind of thrive in. Feel like the best part of my game is ball striking. If we can hit some greens and make it a little bit tougher for everyone else, I like that grind. I don't like a perfect day out there. I feel like the scores get pretty low and I make a lot of pars, not too many birdies.

Today was good. Played a little bit difficult. Pins were a little bit easier today, so I think there were some birdies out



there and some low scores. Hoping for maybe a little bit of some wind tomorrow and make it a little bit challenging.

Q. Today is a good day on the golf course?

JEFF McNEIL: Yeah.

Q. What would you prefer...

JEFF McNEIL: A perfect baseball day is about 75 degrees, sunny, maybe the wind blowing a touch out so you can hit some homers. Yeah, hate the bad weather on the baseball field.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about your experience in the tournament? Obviously a lot of celebrities and LPGA players. Have you made any interesting friendships or connections over the past couple years playing in this tournament?

JEFF McNEIL: Yeah, just being here, second year, so I feel like a little bit more comfortable this year. Didn't really know anyone last year. Knew a lot of baseball guys. There are a lot in this tournament. It's great getting to know them a little bit better.

And then for the LPGA girls, played a few times with Alexa Pano and she's great. So making some good friendships. Fantastic celebrities out here. You know, hope to continue to get to this tournament and make some more friends and hopefully maybe win sometime. We'll see.

Q. Will you be able to attend the concert this evening?

JEFF McNEIL: I'll be at the concert tonight. Big country fan. Yeah, Luke Bryan should be a lot of fun.

Q. Just curious about the baseball swing and the golf swing, what you bring to this game from baseball?

JEFF McNEIL: Yeah, to me they're pretty similar. I feel like from the top of the golf swing, top of the baseball swing. First moves are very similar. Baseball you tend to stay on your back side a little bit more. Golf you shift your weight to the front side.



That's probably the only difference. Two different planes. I feel like my entire career, especially -- I play a lot of -- I play golf on off days during baseball season. I feel like if I'm struggling at the plate I can go play golf and I feel like it helps my swing. Locks me in a little bit. Clears my head as well.

It's my mental get away. I do love playing golf during the season. Every off day I'll be out there.

Q. Pitchers seem to dominate these celebrity competitions the last couple years. Is there a competition between you guys?

JEFF McNEIL: Yes and no maybe. You want to beat them. I think me and Aaron Hicks are the only two position players here. I think I'm the only current player here. Aaron is still trying to play.

But, yeah, you want to beat pitchers. They get a lot of time to go play a little bit more than us. They have a lot of off days a and they're not playing anymore so they get to practice a little bit more than I do. It's good fun.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports