

The Presidents Cup

Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Charlotte, North Carolina

Quail Hollow Club

Jordan Spieth

Press Conference



Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: I guess technically on this team, but we're giving that title to Kis just because of age.

Q. But experience, certainly you have a lot to offer?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I think if I'm going to play with Justin and he's played a couple Ryder Cups and a few Presidents Cups now, I would consider, once you've kind of played in a couple of them, you've seen a lot of stuff, and that level of experience is very similar. We've got a few guys on the team with that kind of level of experience.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think it's a really good golf course. This would be in my rotation every year if it weren't for the Dallas events right after, followed with the PGA and Memorial. It's just a tough part of the schedule.

Hopefully, I can work it in in the future. If you're playing well, you're going to play well. If you're not, it's going to show its teeth.

The rough being down a little bit will make the shots look a little easier, but Bermuda with lower rough sometimes plays hard or harder because you miss lies. You think it's not going to jump and it does, or vice versa.

I think it's going to be a great test. The course is in unbelievable condition, as we probably expected it to be. We'll probably get a couple different -- we'll see a golf course playing really short maybe Thursday, and then that weather will come in. We'll get it really cold and maybe playing a bit longer after the cold front comes in.

So two different winds, two different golf courses in a way.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: I remember I kind of even didn't want to watch it. I found myself watching a bit of it, but I didn't

want to because -- yeah, I was inspired at the time. I was really kind of in a tough spot with my game, and I didn't really see an opening.

So that's what made it even harder. I was just uncertain about if or when I get back to being able to be on these teams because that's a week that -- it is a goal every year, whichever team event it is, Presidents Cup or Ryder Cup.

I think the Ryder Cup last year really kind of -- that was where I remembered more of missing the one in '19. But this is my third Presidents Cup on home soil, which is pretty cool. There's really nothing quite like it when the roars are that big, even for like par putts to halve holes, where you normally get a few claps. You can get roars and gain momentum out of spots where you don't normally look for it.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: I feel like Freddie is Freddie, and everyone knows what that means, right? He's just so light. He has the accolades to back up if you have any kind of questions to him. He's really seen everything. He's been really close with Tiger for a long time, so you learn a lot from that relationship.

He's got a great relationship with a lot of these California guys. Patrick's close with him. Xander's close with him, Max.

Then, yeah, being in those team rooms, he's always shooting messages throughout the years. Would love to get him in a Ryder Cup team room, to be honest, but he's been a great captain, and he settles into this assistant role. You kind of look over, and you're like, oh, hey, Fred, and you just feel like really relaxed. He's a relaxing presence.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: I mean, he has a way with -- his own way with words, but I can't think of anything off the bat. He's always looking to make things easiest for us, like he's, no, no, no, don't go through that crowd there. Just come with me. We're going to go this way.



Kind of just, especially pre-tournament, make it as stress-free as possible, get us point A to point B, stuff we wouldn't be thinking of.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: I found that I try to be really passive, and everybody -- it's just hard for me, right? And then if the situation comes up where I feel like any experiences that I've had would be useful and can put it in a very -- in a way where there's credibility, where I can use an example from the past, then that -- that's only happened a couple times where maybe I step in and do something.

We've talked about this for, what, the last -- since 2019, where these teams are just a bunch of young guys that have all played together for a long time. We're open and willing to play with whoever we want to, whoever the captains see fit. If you don't care, then we'll play with our best buddies, and if that's a great team, then it works out really well, and it just seems to really mesh.

So there's not a whole lot of need for a super imposing leadership presence at all. If there's not a need for it, then don't force it because everyone does their own thing pretty well here.

That's really the major thing is we're not doing anything different. Everybody here does what they do really well, so let everybody get in their own routine, the way that they play best.

That differs for some people, but it's worked really well on captains and assistants have done a great job of spreading things out and kind of being like, hey, Patrick, I know you need more time, physio, and whatnot. Scottie, I know you're going to stay at the course late and practice. We'll make sure we can do this all for you guys. Everyone just feels like they're playing another event.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: In Paris maybe once. I'm trying to think of where else. Last year -- I don't remember, Presidents Cups, the ones I've been a part of, I haven't really necessarily needed to.

Like '17, it was almost locked up on Saturday. But I remember a couple Ryder Cups just kind of stepping in and just trying to use a couple things.

Whether it's in my own group with Justin, I remember having a couple of conversations with him here or there, where, hey, we're a little off right now, but remember we've

got this many holes left. Better to be 2-down through two than 2-down through 16, set a goal. Just kind of set a reset button because these matches change so much throughout -- a lot of times.

It's very rare you see the 1-up, 2-up at the turn, 3-up, 4-up. It's golf, and it's almost heightened, right, because every hole means more than what we're just making a regular par. So it can just get -- I can find myself getting a little ahead of myself and trying to back off by just recognizing that the difference is these events kind of create that instability throughout a lot of matches.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: Well, I haven't played with Cameron Young, but I watched him hit three drives this morning, and I don't know if anybody could hit a drive like that, that long and straight. I'd say he hits a tee ball. I'd probably pick J.T. for approaches. You could go to anybody, Collin for approaches.

It's hard because it's like everyone's got a great short game. Xander is probably the most consistent, top ten putter in the world on our team.

So hopefully that answered that.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: Sure, always. That's what it's all about. I'll learn something. I'll try and visualize it going in. Everybody wants to have that putt.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: Oh, not much. I think it's well done because what was through 18 are just great holes, so making sure we're playing those holes every match, most every match, I think is incredibly useful.

Then I think it's more just the mentality of the 15th hole -- what was 18 is now 15. All right, this isn't the end of the match. You've got to go play these other holes that are just different, right?

Because the hole -- it's almost like you get to 10 -- 16 now after playing 15, and 15's got the massive -- you just had massive grandstands on three or four holes in a row, and all of a sudden there's no grandstands on the next few holes. I think that's a bit odd.

It will be kind of a mentality thing where the matches are decided. It may be a little quieter and a little less of the big structures around, which is abnormal for us.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: Oh, yeah. We're all kind of staying on normal Quail Hollow when we talk about the holes. At least me and Michael and Justin and Bones are staying on Quail Hollow just because it's easier, but it's a bit confusing.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: I haven't felt that way at all. Obviously if you think about both teams and you look at previous -- the previous Cup and recognizing that three or four guys from each team are now with LIV and not here, not to mention there's some other guys who didn't make this team that were on the last team, like myself who wasn't on the last team and is on this one.

So that turnover happens, so it doesn't feel super odd because I think this is my fourth of this, and I played four Ryder Cups. There's teams that looked a lot different over the nine years.

So I don't feel that I thought much about it until you asked that, but there's certainly some guys that have been a stable that aren't here.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: Patrick and Xander didn't get in until late, so I just played Justin yesterday and I got him for a little bit. Then we played against Patrick and Xander today, and we nipped them.

I got them for two units yesterday, and we got Patrick and Xander for two units today. Everyone's units are different.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: When I was told that, I thought surely that can't be, but then, yeah, I guess that's true. It feels weird because I'm not 30 yet, so that just means we have a really young team, which I think is a great thing.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: Over confidence? I think that -- within our team, no. I'm not worried about it with this team.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think that -- we haven't really had any team get together yet. We all went to dinner and stuff like that, but we haven't had just the guys on the team for like a

meeting, like, hey, stay focused because it just doesn't seem like there needs to be that.

It's almost like we're all going to compete against each other to get the most points we can on our team. We want the bragging rights on our own team. And if we stay within ourselves, then I don't think you get over confident in the entire situation because that was -- yeah, the Ryder Cup last year was the biggest U.S. win in Ryder Cup history.

But '19 and the Presidents Cup was close, wasn't it? I don't remember the final score. I saw a little bit.

So if I have one thing to say about the matter on over confidence on our team, it's recognizing that, if you look at the guys on their team and the form they've had the last six months, it's really strong. So I think it's going to be very competitive, and I think we need to be ready for that.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: I went from Tiger's event, and everyone went on planes to go to Australia, and I went on an anniversary trip with my wife. I just remember like I probably wasn't the most fun. I just remember being in a lull knowing -- you know, being in contact with those guys and knowing they're in those team rooms. I just never thought I'd miss one, after being on a number in a row.

And it sucked because I also didn't have a good year where it would help me the next year into the Ryder Cup. And I got a little bailed out in 2020 because I wouldn't have made the team if they had a 2020 Ryder Cup and I was able to earn my way into 2021. I may have missed two if it weren't for COVID.

I remember it was really a tough spot. I hated every second of it because I know how fun they are. And I know how beneficial these weeks are, these matches for how individually, how you're going to play the next year. Every match feels like you're down the back nine of a major championship. It's almost like every hole with the roars and you're going 2- or 3-up and you feel like, oh, I've got this.

It's a very similar feeling of kind of the nerves and like how anxious you are to get started and the nerves on the golf course to competing in a major. So the more you can kind of learn about yourself -- I mean, the 2014 Ryder Cup did wonders for me in '15. I bet, if you ask Scottie, he'd say last year's Ryder Cup did wonders for him this year.

You see that trend a lot of times of guys who come out and play really well and win important matches and go on to use that as fuel, and I certainly did. So there's a lot of

advantages, and that's another reason why I just hated missing it.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: I made a lot of progress in my swing in the last week, probably more so than at any point in time in a long time. So I'm excited to try it out. The feel versus real is off, but I'm structurally getting things right back soundly where I want them.

My ball control may not be fantastic given it's been a week, but I'm extremely excited about it. What was your second part?

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think I've just put so much emphasis on trying to get, structurally get my swing back, my ball striking back where I want it, that it took a bit off my putting. I've just got to get back to seeing the hole a little bit bigger.

I felt like I hit some good putts toward the end of the season this year and didn't make a lot. They were high, low, right, left, short, long, and all over and just missing. It's almost like if you get a week or two where they start to pour in, it could be back.

Q. What is the one hole that makes you the most nervous?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think that the 17th at Quail Hollow, which is our 14th, the par-3 down the hill, 14, I think it's a really good hole from 175 yards. And I think, when you move it back to 230, it doesn't make a whole lot of sense to me.

Having said that, I'll stand on the tee confidently and try to hit as good a shot as I can, but that's probably the hole that would be the most nerve-racking shot that you have all day.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I think I just get more excited than nervous now. I know how fun they are. And I think the 1st tee jitters are something you enjoy. We just don't get that scene very often. We get it at the team events. That's the only time we get a 1st tee that looks anything like this. This one's even bigger.

I think just more like I can settle in a little bit easier just because I know how I'm feeling, how I'm supposed to be feeling, versus it being a new thing like my first one.

I had a really hard time the first few holes of my Presidents Cup career. I had Steve Stricker on my side that was carrying me, but I had a really hard time. I was out of three or four of the first five holes at Muirfield, and then I made a putt, and Strick was like, I got your back until -- you just keep on hitting shots, keep giving yourself chances.

Sometimes people just need that kind of pat on the back, and I'll never forget that. He's such a calming presence. I just try to, when I start, let me be like Strick that first round that I ever played. That's really how I feel.

Q. How do you change your mindset from playing medal play to match play?

JORDAN SPIETH: I haven't played this course in medal play in five years. So I don't know -- this course, there's quite a bit of risk/reward around the turn. So that would make a big difference in how we would potentially play it in stroke versus match. And there's a huge difference in how you play best ball versus alternate shot. So the format matters a lot too.

So the one thing you can do is in best ball, you can play this golf course as aggressively as you really want to, and that's pretty exciting. We don't have to back off of anything, and that's fun for us.

Other than that, you've got to recognize that a couple under is a really nice score around this place in alternate shot or individual play, so you've got to adjust accordingly.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think maybe just that I played in more than the other guys. Yeah, I was saying earlier, I found that the best -- I think the best way I can help from experience is to be passive, let everybody go about, and if there's a situation that I can use, experience I've had before that can be relatable that everybody -- I feel comfortable talking to all these guys as a group or individually, having known them for a long time, and I have trust that they would trust what I'm saying having been in certain experiences where we've been down, where we've been up, where the mentality has worked, where it hasn't within the team.

I've kind of seen it all, right? We've gotten smoked. We've had leads and lost. We've come back, and we've been in the lead and succeeded.

So within Presidents and Ryder Cups, I've kind of seen all scenarios, and that makes it all -- I think if the time came, which is doesn't always happen, I feel like I'm comfortable stepping into that role.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: Right. That's what I was saying. The way the captains -- in the last three or four years, when the team's gone to a bunch of guys who have known each other for ten years, things are different.

Not to say that the guys on the other teams didn't know each other for ten years, but it's like everyone here is going to be pissed if they don't get a chance to play. They think they're going to win the most points on the team. And they'd bet their house on the ability that they have to do that.

But they have so much confidence in everyone else on the team, but it's like -- you know, the whole thing last year was the Bryson-Brooks scenario going in, and that never became an issue. They were sitting with each other eating dinner by the second night.

So a lot of credit to those that have been in charge and involved and the captains and assistant captains over the last few team events of making it essentially we want to -- like they've got cold tubs ready for us. If Scottie wants to stay until 6:00 yesterday but Cantlay doesn't want to be, he's got to have time to warm up in the morning, everyone do what you're comfortable with. We'll find a way to get you where you need to go, and just be the best prepared that you can be.

Everyone here has gotten here for a reason. How are we going to help you individually play your best golf because that's what's going to help the team.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I agree with that.

Q. The follow-up to that would, when you're making decisions that are best for yourself but they do affect people. Do you have feelings of guilt?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think on a guilt but not so severe case, you could talk about tournament directors where I'm like, hey, I want to play there but I can't do it. It's not best for me. I love the tournament. Thank you for wanting me to come. I can't do it.

That's not just the tournament director. It's fans that are in the area. Kids that are looking forward to you coming there. That happens, but you can't dwell on that because you've got to do what's best for you.

If you're talking about changes in your team, people you've

got to let go or hire or whatever it may be.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, sure. What we do requires us to travel. We're not the only profession that does that. How you are able to stay in touch, how you're able to bring your family on the road, we have a luxury of being able to do that where other sports may not be able to and certainly businesses can't do because we're at places for a week at a time.

With how much money you play for in the game, you have the ability to travel with your family and not worry much about it and that's where you want to be.

So I may be the wrong person to ask in that regard, but I would say that, yeah, it's not as easy as, say, some of my best friends at home that work a 9:00 to 5:00 at home and have their families there and it's stable. I've always been comfortable being unstable. I mean, it's just how I've been since I was 13 years old.

So I enjoy it, but recognizing who's okay with you doing that and then who you really need to put emphasis on traveling with, your immediate family, you start to kind of figure out that balance.

The sooner you can figure out that balance and people are happy around you, it frees you up a bit.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: I would imagine I'm probably going to be paired with him, based on information that I've heard.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: It doesn't matter. I mean --

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: No, not necessarily. I love Sebastian. It would be fun.

Yeah, we played the final round of the Byron Nelson this year. We were contending. I've always respected his game, and he lives in Dallas, and I play with him sometimes there. So it would be awesome. It would be fun. We'd have a lot of laughs with Sebastian.

Then someone like Adam, Adam Scott would be really fun to play against. He's the veteran in this whole situation, right? He's the veteran. He and Hideki are the veterans on their team. That would be fun. I don't know if they'll be

a team.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I remember being at 8,000 feet was crazy. The ball went forever, playing so different from morning to afternoon. We ate great food. I enjoyed my time there very much.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: Xander is probably the funniest guy in our team room. He's probably the funniest guy in the room. He's like a silence assassin, but he also could very much be a leader.

We kind of put Xander on Patrick -- and you can quote me on that. We kind of put Xander on Patrick, and he takes care of -- he makes sure Patrick is happy, and Patrick trusts him over anyone else. You kind of need someone in these scenarios, when it's not Patrick's individual team, you need somebody there that's going to kind of make sure he's happy. That's Xander.

So that could be a tall task in itself. But at the same time, he's so fun to be around. He's become a really good friend really the last three or four years. We've played a lot of practice rounds together, and his game's shown a lot this year.

I think just kind of having a little bit of a lull, getting back in the winner's circle, and just parlaying that into a few more, I think the sky's the limit for him.

Q. What is the state of mind that makes a good partner?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think somebody that's unapologetic, somebody that's just going to give it their all. I love Justin's fieriness. I had that with Patrick as well. With D.J., it wasn't that way, right? We still had a great partnership too.

So games that complement each other are always really nice. You understand like with Justin, it's like, all right, I missed that fairway. Okay, well, he doesn't hit every fairway either. Good rough player. We trust each other around the greens, trust each other with speed putts. So it's more like complementing games.

But personality-wise, you've kind of got to have a little yin and yang in a way, like somebody who can be a little bit more chill, somebody who can get it going a little more. I like having at least one, if not both, have the ability to get quite a bit fired up.

Q. (No microphone)?

JORDAN SPIETH: I just think that people are looking on paper and not doing any research. It's frustrating, but it's not out of the ordinary.

I think, if you look at recent form on their team, they're playing great. Every one of the guys on their team has either won or almost won a golf tournament the last few months. If you're playing good, you're playing good. It doesn't matter where you're playing or what situation it is. These guys are playing good golf.

And I have a feeling they were preparing really hard the last few weeks, and on our team we're going to need to equally be -- and we are -- approaching this as seriously as we can, as if it's a major championship individually that we're planning on winning.

I think it's going to be extremely competitive. I think it's not going to be -- it's going to be really hard for it to be a landslide either way. I think that given their form, their recent form -- and I put massive emphasis on recent form. I could tell you, I missed a cut and won the next week, so it doesn't mean everything, but when you're playing well, you continue to play well, and they've been doing that.

So we're not complacent. I haven't heard an ounce of complacency in our team room at all. I'm not worried about that one bit. But I find it distracting for people to say that without looking at -- without actually looking at the stats and looking at really recent form. To me, that's kind of meant the most in these team events.

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