

AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am

Tuesday, February 1, 2022

Pebble Beach, California, USA

Pebble Beach Golf Links

Jordan Spieth

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome AT&T Pebble Beach National Ambassador to the media center here at AT&T. Jordan, welcome back. You'll be making your 10th start here, a place that is very special and where you found a lot of success. What's it like being back and around the course.

JORDAN SPIETH: I mean it's, I think it's arguably the most beautiful place in the United States, especially for a golf lover it's got to be a No. 1 spot. And then when we get the forecast that we have this week, it just amplifies how amazing it is to play these golf courses and I've played well here, I think in part because I've kind of fallen in love with the tracks but also because I have a great time with Jake, we go out there, he keeps me light and we try and kind of feed off each other as if we're playing a round at home.

So I look forward to this week. Yeah, the rounds are long and such, but there's plenty of, plenty to look at while we play these courses. So always really embraced it and had success because of that, I think.

THE MODERATOR: Last year a little bit different situation with COVID, but what's it, excited to be back with the pro-am format --

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah.

Q. -- and the fans?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I am. It was kind of cool to play it last year, kind of felt like the U.S. Open in a way. Obviously without fans, but just the idea that you were playing Pebble Beach three times and playing in a TOUR event and kind of contending and competing. It was a little different for a year, but I think as I mentioned before with Jake, I think it's, you know, somewhat advantageous to have someone that I'm so comfortable with where we've played here before and we can kind of hopefully feed off each other. I mean, he's a really good player too, so we'll be trying to -- it's almost like when you're trying to shoot up the leaderboard on the player/amateur side, it kind of takes your mind off and you start really playing nice and

aggressively and trying to make a lot of birdies and sometimes that's kind of a good mentality to go in with.

THE MODERATOR: With that we'll open it up with questions.

Q. How are you feeling?

JORDAN SPIETH: Good. I felt good, I just, I just had some issues going on last, the last couple weeks, so I wasn't a hundred percent by any means and I'm probably still not, but I'm getting better. I should probably be at a hundred percent by Thursday would be my guess.

Q. Have you lost weight?

JORDAN SPIETH: I did. I did. I think I've started to put it back on. Yeah, I mean everything was just kind of running through me. I got a bacterial infection in my stomach and had to get on some meds and I didn't know that until I finished my round Thursday, the second round, but I, the test had come back before I teed off and it was what they were testing for and I didn't see it until I got done or I may not have played. But it didn't make a difference (laughing).

Q. If this wasn't Pebble week would you have played this week?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think so. Again, I just, we had the, I finished on Friday, I knew I had almost a whole week to kind of get on top of it and I rested for a couple days and started to feel a bit better and things started to get a little more back to normal. So I think so, yeah.

Q. You mentioned Jake Owen. Why have you guys clicked so well and any shareable stories? I'm sure there's some unshareable stories, but a story you could share that maybe conveys how that partnership has helped you here?

JORDAN SPIETH: It's almost like playing with one of your -- it's almost like playing with a buddy that you always play with. Like he's going to give me crap when I miss a putt or do something -- you know it's almost like you don't get the over positive, the over, Oh, man, that's okay, you can get



the next one. The stuff that like you don't really want to hear sometimes. It almost kind of gets under your skin and makes you really focus when he kind of gives you crap or he's like, Hey, man, you know, be nice if you contributed to the team on a couple holes.

That's the kind of stuff that we'll do back and forth to each other and I think that that helps, just kind of makes you feel like you're in a game at home.

Q. You mentioned the forecast this week. Looking like some good weather is coming. Does that change your approach at all heading into the tournament how you practice and get ready or is it just kind of business as usual?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think it just makes it a little bit easier to get prepared because you don't have any limitations. I think the one thing is, is as the sun comes out in the afternoon versus the morning it can play a club or club and a half difference. So I think I may play a little later in the day since I played a little earlier today just to kind of see -- here the ball goes about as short as anywhere that we play, relative to what you would expect. Whether that's the uphill shots or just the heavy air, obviously the cool mornings, but I mean you hit some clubs where it's just almost uncomfortable what club you're hitting from certain yardages, because you almost, you can't go above holes on any of these courses either.

So it's a challenge and I think with when it's going to be gloomy or rainy or anything it plays similar the whole week. But when the sun's going to come out sometimes that ball will start to fly a little bit, quite a bit more than the morning. So I think that's how the difference in preparing is maybe playing some holes in the afternoon.

Q. Another Under Armour Ambassador broke the internet again today. Can you talk about your relationship with Tom and maybe something that you learned from him in order to be a great athlete?

JORDAN SPIETH: Well he plays a real sport, but I think, I was actually a bit surprised just because of the level that's still playing at. And just the limited but quality time I've spent with him, we've played a couple rounds at Augusta National, we've done some things through Under Armour California to Baltimore and then over the phone just keeping in touch.

Just the competitiveness that he has, like I feel like he's got to find a hobby or something because he'll go nuts sitting still. But obviously as I've seen he's voiced that his priorities are going to be with his family and obviously he's given so much to the game that that part of his life he's

going to really, kids growing up and getting older and spending time with them.

So I think his perspective has changed. I think he was quoted as saying he wasn't going to be as, his preparation wasn't going to be as competitive or something, he didn't see himself going through the amount that he would want to go to leading into each week.

As far as our relationship, he's not only somebody who has I think helped when things have been going really well for me, helped kind of boost that and give advice on how to continue to kind of push yourself forward when things are going really well. But he's also one of a few phone calls I've gotten when things are really bad to be able to be somebody that can relate to the ups and downs of a career and kind of what he went through and giving his perspective.

And I'm actually, I've read TB 12 Method before, but I'm in the middle of it right now reading it each night, just kind of going through it again mainly just to kind of look into what he's done. I think he changed the way that athletes should not only prepare but also recover. And I think looking at a sport that was just so rooted in your go lift heavy weights, that's how you get stronger, that's how you perform better, I mean he's totally reshaped the game of football.

But I think in a sport like golf where longevity is key there's a lot to learn from him as well.

Q. You said you were sick for a couple of weeks, you had this thing kind of ongoing?

JORDAN SPIETH: I was, I had some, I've, I always get some nasty sinus infection stuff and I had it and tried to kick it with antibiotics and ran through a couple of those and that kind of destroyed my stomach, as it does. Unfortunately too an extent where I got what I have -- C. diff is what it's called and it was about five or six days straight of it being pretty bad and I thought it was just because of -- I thought my stomach was just -- and it was just going to get better and when it didn't and when I was playing and I started to feel it while I was playing I was like I got to go figure out what's going on.

Q. Did you notice a loss of distance or feel in the swing?

JORDAN SPIETH: No, I was walking differently and very much not, very much not involved in a lot of the holes that I played and I think that -- I mean my parents even, they were like, Yeah, you just did not look like yourself on, whatever, PGA TOUR Live or whatever.

I mean, the first, the last like three holes of the first round I was just trying to get in the house and then pretty much the whole second round was a tough go for me.

Q. Can you spell see defensive because we can't?

JORDAN SPIETH: It's Clostridium difficile or -- it's a, like a colitis, it's a type of colitis, yeah.

Q. Tiger said something a billion years ago as it related to the press and by extension actually the public, that they tend to exaggerate when things are going bad, but they also exaggerate when things are going well?

JORDAN SPIETH: Sure.

Q. Can you kind of offer your own insight to that way of thinking.

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, well I think I shot 61 in the third round of Phoenix last year and all of a sudden I was back. And I'm sitting there going, I shot one good round. And it's like it's almost like it was like, Oh, he forgot how to play the game and, Oh, now he's the best in the world in one day.

It was just, that was like an eye opener for me last year right there. I was like, I kind of just remembered how just you got to just taper things down I think a little bit. I think, yeah, I can just, it can go either way. I mean you feel that way too as a player. It's not just the way it can be portrayed by media, a lot of times as a player your expectations, my expectations are so high that I can feel like I'm way lower than I actually am, but I can feel like I probably should chill out a little bit and check the ego a little bit at times as well.

So I've always talked about staying a bit more neutral on and off the golf course while playing. So it's one thing to be as obviously competitive as you want, but -- and you can get mad, but I think getting negative is what really hurts you.

Q. It's going to be a tough one for you, but Patrick was talking about the Walker Cup and you were playing a match and everyone kind of looking out the tunnel, you got to the first tee early and he said, Jordan had a look about him that you just knew he was going to win. We asked him what the look was, he couldn't describe it. Would you happen to know what he was talking about?

JORDAN SPIETH: The Walker Cup?

Q. Yeah.

JORDAN SPIETH: I don't know. Maybe impatience. I mean I felt like I was playing well, but I was frustrated that we were losing and knew that I needed to get a point, so I know I was just kind of like frustrated with how the week had gone as a team, because our team was so stacked, and should have on paper just been a blow out. And they were the underdogs playing like underdogs and I just, I played Andy Sullivan and it was a pretty good match and then I made a couple long putts and closed the match out. But I don't remember the first hole, I remember like a few holes on the back nine.

Q. Speaking of, which and going back to what you said a minute ago, if you're trying to keep neutral do you have any role models in that regard? Which demeanor would you like to emulate if you could?

JORDAN SPIETH: Well I mean, to be honest, I think Tiger's is historically, like when he's, he can get mad but any round I've ever played with him I never heard him get negative. Then when he's pumped, obviously he, it looks like you would think he's here and here (Indicating), but I actually think he stays more level there and it's just more of an intensity and a drive that's kind of causing the immediate emotion, but still bounces back to pretty neutral place each shot.

So I think that's probably, you know you want to be able to get mad, if you don't get mad at a bad shot it's hard to get a lot better and it's hard to learn from it. And then obviously on the good you want to, that's what we practice all the time for is for those good shots or those big putts. So you should get really excited and pumped up, as long as you can kind of level it back down by the next one. So I probably.

Q. (No Microphone.)

JORDAN SPIETH: Sure, yeah, absolutely. Too many times to count probably. Sometimes that's --

Q. (No Microphone.)

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, that's sometimes can be harder than getting yourself up from when you're mad is calming yourself do you know when you're too pumped up.

Q. You mentioned Jake's impact on you. Is that particularly helpful given your demeanor on the course? I mean you're obviously, we all see you talk to your ball and sort of the intensity. Does Jake help manage that in some ways?

JORDAN SPIETH: Probably. I think, yeah, if I'm doing a

little bit too much he's like where Michael will just kind of be like, All right, I'm just going to let this one go, Jake will step in and be like, I don't know, so, yeah, I think -- he's comfortable to play with, he does great in this event.

The most fun I had was the year that I won on Sunday it was a totally different Jake on that tee. He was so nervous, he didn't want to stand in the way. It was myself and Jake and Snedeker and Toby Wilt his partner. And Toby and Brandt had been in the final group a number of times and he's won it and whatnot. And Jake just didn't -- and Brandt is somebody who will give Jake more crap than I will and he knows him from Nashville and stuff so he was just making Jake uncomfortable from the get-go and then I was just piling it on. And I don't even know how many holes we took of Jake's that day, he was just trying to just stay so out of the way.

So it kind of goes both ways. But that was kind of the most notable difference I've seen. Most of the time it's him getting on me.

Q. And you mentioned the over reaction maybe when you shot 61 in Phoenix and then the next week obviously you contended here. How much did that event here the way you played at Pebble last year really in your mind move your come back along?

JORDAN SPIETH: About the same amount that each round at Phoenix did and then each round at Riviera did and then Bay Hill and so on and so forth. I mean it's just such a process and I just started to gain a bit of confidence in what I was working on and it helped push the agenda more and more and more until -- and then the toughest part then was I would be in the trailer working out and Golf Channel is on and I just see the amount of days since the last win. You know and it's just these outside stuff that you try and -- noise that you try and block out.

And so I just, I think I did a really good job last year of recognizing, hey, I've got some good momentum, I'm working on the right things, I feel good about this track, it's a long-term thing, this doesn't need to be here and now, keep putting yourself in the position, the game will give you one and it ended up doing so in San Antonio and almost a couple other times.

So I think I did a good job of slowing the game down a little bit, just being very pleased with the step by step, week by week, round by round momentum.

Q. (No Microphone.)

JORDAN SPIETH: I didn't feel any different then than I did at any of these other events I was talking about. They just,

the putts went in that day on Sunday. And I hit good putts at Bay Hill, good enough to win, I made a couple mistakes, missed a couple fairways I didn't need to that I couldn't miss.

Here I just didn't quite get the ball to go in the hole on Sunday, but I felt like I was doing everything right and it was just a, I kind of had to, it was a re-learning how to win, when you go kind of winless for a long time you know that patience to kind of be okay of going on the same path and not changing things and I think last year I did a really good job of that.

But when I look back I have a, I look back at the year and, yes, it was a solid season as far as how many good finishes and where it, a second going into the playoffs and the FedExCup, whatever it may be, or World Ranking points for the year.

But I look back and I think, all right, now how can I take this step by step to try and close the door a couple more times. Because holding 54-hole leads and not winning is, leaves a really bad taste in my mouth.

Q. Going back to the Tiger Woods question earlier, during a round which is more difficult for you, to go bring yourself back down from a high or to get yourself pass a low when you're just trying to finish the round on a good note?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think probably the first couple rounds it's more if you make a couple bogeys getting yourself level from there. I think once it hits the weekend or you're contending is when you got to worry about the other side.

I mean, I don't normally first pump Thursdays even though every stroke matters the same. It's just, you know that it's Sunday and you're towards the lead and you want to close the tournament out and so that's when you got to, I think when, is lower it down, kind of keep resetting or have a goal throughout the round that you just stay focused on that goal. That's probably the easiest way to keep the high level.

But the first couple rounds it's kind of getting into a nice routine and doing the same thing, but you don't normally get too high, unless you make a hole-in-one or you hole out, something like that where it gets real exciting.

Q. Earlier to the Daniel Berger didn't know that he now has a TOUR-leading 13 consecutive cuts made streak. Did you know that you had the 20 last week and how disappointing was it?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I knew I hadn't missed one since



that event last year and so, I mean, I hate missing weekends. I wish that there were no cuts ever. It's not something you really want to think about, unless you get to that point on Friday and you maybe have to change the way you're playing something. But it was a little bit of a different circumstance because, yes, I played poorly and it's not to say that I would have made the cut if I was a hundred percent, but I didn't -- I was almost like, I told Michael when I got done I was almost like relieved that there was -- because I felt like pretty bad and didn't have anything in the system and I was just hoping that maybe something actually was wrong so this wasn't like normal, in a weird way.

But safe to say the South Course at Torrey just may not be a place that I see myself for a little while. I haven't had a ton of success on that golf course, other than the U.S. Open.

Q. (Question about Tiger's streak.)

JORDAN SPIETH: Mine was what? Oh, yeah, yes, I mean to go -- it was 142? That's -- seven years? Yeah, I'm not sure if that one will be surpassed. I guess with the amount of weeks like Sungjae plays he's got a chance of doing it in like three years, but -- and with how good he is, I might need to throw that in there.

But, sure, absolutely. That kind of consistency at that level. I mean, you got to beat, there's 156 players last week and 70 make the cut. I mean, that's not where professionals set their standard, but to do that week-in and week-out, have a couple double bogeys in two rounds off of maybe not even making much of a mistake. I mean, sometimes you get -- to think that he went that long with obviously -- I was there the day that, I think it was the Byron Nelson I think he missed it at Cottonwood Valley where they used to play and I was on that hole when he missed the cut there. I think he bogeyed the last, maybe missed it by one or two. I was a kid watching the tournament and like pretty upset because obviously you get to, you missed out on -- nobody missed out on Tiger on the weekend in seven years and now I just missed out on the weekend of Tiger in seven years.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Thank you, Jordan.

JORDAN SPIETH: Thanks.

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