

RBC Heritage

Tuesday, April 11, 2023

Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, USA

Harbour Town Golf Links

Jordan Spieth

Quick Quotes

Q. Talk about that cannon shot. Davis talked you through it, I guess?

JORDAN SPIETH: Kind of. The guys running the cannon were saying, give me the nod and I'll try to wait until you strike it, so I was just hoping it didn't go off early. It might have scared me pretty hard if it did. Yeah, it was really cool. I think the one advantage is I had a modern golf ball, so it made it a little easier. I had a Pro V1 versus what they played back with those clubs.

Yeah, it was really fun. It was cool. I remember I was here on 18 waiting last year when it was happening, so it was cool to be a part of it this year.

Q. The shot itself, it's something that -- usually guys leave Tate, their feet come off the ground when they hit it.

JORDAN SPIETH: I have a jacket on and I haven't made a swing today, so I figured I'm not going for distance, I just don't want to get hurt.

Q. I mean the boom --

JORDAN SPIETH: Oh, right. I think I just was so in the zone, I didn't even hear it. No, the ear plugs did a lot. They helped a lot.

Q. A lot of guys playing here for the first time. What were your impressions the first time you saw this course?

JORDAN SPIETH: I thought it was -- I wasn't in the Masters the week before in 2013 when I played here, and so I got in early and I thought learning the golf course was very important because you can run into trouble pretty quickly as the course firms up, and you can be in the fairway but be blocked out.

It's just a course where you have to pick it apart tee to green based on where the hole location is and really think your way around.



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I guess fortunately having played it, I think it's a significant advantage on a course like this. It's a harder one to learn really quickly, especially guys coming off of a pretty elongated Masters week.

Q. Do you have to move the ball both ways here?

JORDAN SPIETH: You are kind of forced to via trees. I'm sure there's plenty of winners here who have only had to move it the other way once or twice, but yes, in order to get to all the pins and really position yourself the right way, it requires pretty much both ball flights.

Q. The rough you're standing in was cut yesterday, and that's it. They're going to let the rough grow this year.

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, good. It's great.

I think it's still very playable rough but it makes you think about your distance control. The targets into these greens where the pins are, they're so small that fairways are obviously a premium. But just a little bit of rough, you get it long enough where it could jump but it could spin, and that gives all of us fits because we just don't exactly know -- you've got to then protect one side or the other and just hope for the best.

It requires a lot more scrambling around greens that are tough to scramble on.

Q. You come in as defending champion of course but also off a great round Sunday. What's your mindset coming in, and what are you hoping for for the week?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, kind of funny, a balance of continuing off of kind of the stretch of golf I've been on. I've been playing really nice golf over the last six, eight weeks, and then resting, so finding that balance to be prepared to peak as best I can as the tournament goes on.

It's nothing new. But I don't normally have 27 holes on Sunday of Augusta right before. So that's a hard walk. It's not a hard walk this week, but it requires a lot of focus, a lot of -- you can't really take a play off here because it tests

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pretty much every shot. You can get into trouble pretty quickly.

Q. One of the largest crowds that we've seen here for the opening ceremony. How do you think that will set up for the week?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think it will. I think the fact that it's an elevated event, they mentioned 17 of the top 20, it's whatever, it's probably 40 of the top 50. The depth of the field is going to be even more impressive than the top level, and it's a golf course where anybody can win.

I imagine this has the potential to be the most exciting RBC Heritage yet given the field, the condition of the golf course that I've seen so far and just the overall, as I mentioned, the atmosphere with the fans here. It's a small kind of little intertwined piece of property, but whenever there's any kind of space, it's loaded up with fans. They love their golf around here.

Q. You have both tartan jackets now.

JORDAN SPIETH: That's right, Colonial and here.

Q. Which one do you like best?

JORDAN SPIETH: Whichever one I'm at, I guess. They're both special in their own right. But I feel like in our sport you can't have too many jackets, so try and get more.

Q. The field that you were talking about obviously makes it very exciting for the fans. Does it change anything for the players? Does it make it feel bigger, a more exciting event?

JORDAN SPIETH: Hard to tell so far, but when you see the names on the leaderboard that you're maybe not used to seeing here, it may. But all in all, elevated events are just more challenging when the players are -- overall there's more depth and more of the top 50 players in the world. It becomes harder to win, harder to top 10, but the whole point is to get everybody playing together as often as possible, and I think on a course like this, it's going to be more unique than any of the ones that we've experienced in any of the elevated events so far because you have a course where it doesn't matter about length. You just have to golf your ball around. It's an advantage if you hit it far and straight, but you've got to take risk on more than you do other places if you want to try and keep hitting driver.

It could be just such a massively bunched leaderboard of such big names, it's got the potential to be as exciting an event as we've seen this year.

Q. You mentioned that this type of field is more challenging and on this course in particular, so the difference comes from the experience. What do you think as defending champion? You have a grasp of the intricacies of this course. What's the hardest thing that --

JORDAN SPIETH: I think it's finding the right balance for me of the risk and reward, where to take risk off the tee and where to just say, hey, this isn't worth it right now to this pin and this wind. Ideally hopefully it can firm up. It makes it even more so a thinking kind of course, but it looks like rain is going to come in Thursday evening, Friday morning, and if that's the case, then it becomes more of a shootout. But either way, it's a golf course that either way that it plays, it always still has a really exciting finish.

These last couple holes are unlike the rest of the golf course, and it's kind of pretty unique in that sense.

For me it's going to be about kind of patience. Last year what I did really well was I just let the tournament come to me. I didn't go out and try and get anything. I was hitting it well. I had missed the cut the week before, but I was hitting the ball beautifully. I just tried to take each hole one hole at a time and not think about trying to win, but just go out there and post a score that gets better each day.

Q. Any holes you're not looking forward to?

JORDAN SPIETH: No. I really do enjoy pretty much every single hole out here. I think that 14th hole is one that a lot of times can decide a tournament, and I was on the good end of it last year. I think Shane ended up making double or something, and some other guys made bogey on that par-3, but that becomes a really deciding of the tournament; how aggressive do you want to play it; if you need to make a 2 or do you just play it kind of the left side. Even then, you still have to hit a really accurate shot to not be too far left and bringing in a high score.

It's a great par-3 that is under 200 yards. It's one of those ones that I think is one of the better par-3s we play all year.

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