

# Invited Celebrity Classic

Thursday, April 20, 2023

Irving, Texas, USA

Las Colinas Country Club

## Justin Leonard

### Press Conference



PRESENTED BY  
**CHOCTAW**  
CASINOS & RESORTS

THE MODERATOR: Justin, home game for you this week. Just a few comments on how nice and how this helps set the pace for what should hopefully be a good week for you.

JUSTIN LEONARD: Yeah, it's fun to be back in kind of familiar territory, certainly here in Las Colinas and playing over at TPC for so many years. Staying at my parents' house and so a lot of things that are familiar.

And then thinking about this golf course, I played in one charity event here but I used to come over here when I was in like junior high and high school. A friend of mine, his grandfather was the superintendent here so we would come over on a Monday when the course was closed and park down in the maintenance facility. He would have a couple carts ready and we would play 36, 54 holes and spend all day out here.

This is the first time I've ever been in the clubhouse and been kind of officially here. But just looking forward to the week and nice after a long break. I had four weeks off to get back and up and running again.

#### **Q. That said, what are you most confident with coming into the week as far as part of your game?**

JUSTIN LEONARD: I feel pretty good about most of my game. I mean, it's crazy how with four kids and everything how busy you can stay during that much time off.

But, you know, able to find certainly plenty of time to feel like my game is ready. Almost treated it like a little bit of an off-season. My workouts changed a little bit and those kind of things. Worked pretty hard for a couple -- middle weeks outside of a little bit of travel and spent a couple days at the Masters.

And then last week was just kind of more of a normal week where kind of tapered towards the end of the week and really specific with what I'm working on. Game feels good overall. I just want to get out here and get things started.

#### **Q. The course here, is it set up well for you? I know**

**you just talked about your history here. Just details of the course, how it plays into your game.**

JUSTIN LEONARD: Yeah, I mean, I think it's important to put the ball in play in the fairway, because the trees are -- they're low. If you miss a fairway you're going to have some tree issues.

Love the fact the greens are in such great shape. Bermuda grass. I think the course sets up fairly well. Looks like it's going to be a windy week and certainly the wind is going to change kind of tomorrow and then throughout the rest of the week.

So I think -- not that I've played it with the north or east wind, but just thinking about that the last couple days and how that affects lines and decisions off the tees and those things, I think it's something Shawn Segars, my caddie and I, have dealt with pretty well.

#### **Q. Family, friends coming out this week?**

JUSTIN LEONARD: Yeah. I'm sure there will be some. You know, it's fun. Certainly my parents are looking forward to coming out. I've got a couple texts of people who may be out over the weekend.

#### **Q. It's a neat group of competitors at this event. Anyone you're especially interested in meeting or anyone you met so far as a fan?**

JUSTIN LEONARD: I played with Derek Lowe yesterday in the pro-am. We got to ride together, and so that was a lot of fun. Just talking golf and baseball. He did a little TV work.

So relaying those stories and the difference between doing a baseball game and a golf event, those kind of things. So I played with Roger Clemens, who I'm playing with tomorrow at the AMEX out in Palm Springs.

Being here in Texas, being a fan of his and Pudge Rodriguez as well. It'll be a lot of fun.



It is nice seeing these guys in the locker room. I think all of the celebrities are excited to be here. It does, it creates -- it's nice to have -- I enjoy playing events like this because it's just a little change from the week in, week out in the normal formats. When you get to play alongside some of the great athletes and celebrities, it makes for interesting rounds.

**Q. Do you remember your first autograph that I signed?**

JUSTIN LEONARD: That I signed? No, I don't. I'm going it was probably like U.S. Amateur. Maybe the Western Amateur which I won before the U.S. Amateur. Junior golf, nothing like that. Amateur golf maybe.

**Q. How about asking for one?**

JUSTIN LEONARD: Oh, yeah. Ray Floyd, Lee Trevino were a couple good ones to start with. I had a hat that I took to the Byron Nelson, and went behind 18 green and waited for guys to come off. Yeah, I got Lee and Raymond's, so pretty cool. I still have that hat somewhere. In all those moves, I know I didn't get rid of it. It's here somewhere.

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