

John Deere Classic

Thursday, July 8, 2021

TPC Deere Run

Silvis, Illinois, USA

Zach Johnson

Quick Quotes

Q. Just start off by assessing your round today.

ZACH JOHNSON: My round today was fairly roller coaster. Got off to -- I don't want to say a blazing start, but I got off to a really good start. I actually had some putts I didn't make. In that regard I think it was probably pretty good.

Had a couple nice saves, then I struggled there kind of in the middle of the round. Really from 12 on, I mean, the bogey on 11 was bad but it wasn't -- I still gave myself an opportunity to save par there.

From that moment on, I didn't hit many bad shots. I didn't mis-hit any shots, I just maybe misjudged wind or yardage. Kind of righted the ship there, gave myself a lot of opportunities coming in, which was good.

I think all in all it was pretty solid. If I could take out about three swings, three and a half swings, it would have been very solid. But I figured some things out from a fundamentals standpoint and kind of rode it in.

Q. The fans have been back on Tour for a few months now, but first time back at the John Deere. How was the fan support?

ZACH JOHNSON: It was awesome. First tee on, it was awesome. It was just nice to have people. It's nice to hit a shot and actually hear something, good and bad, whoa. It's just great.

This is, as I said yesterday, another home to me, so having local support is -- seems to be very, very consistent, but it's awesome. I'm truly grateful.

Q. You touched on something yesterday that I found interesting. You mentioned the sponsor's exemptions you had here and how enduring they were as being beneficial to you.

ZACH JOHNSON: Sure.



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Q. I followed Alex Schaake today --

ZACH JOHNSON: The Iowa kid? Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Q. I sort of maybe think that what he's getting here today is probably the same thing you got 17, 18 years ago. What is he getting from this?

ZACH JOHNSON: Well, I mean, as a competitor, as a golfer and a competitor, you're in the moment. So Alex is out there trying to play his best. He's trying to go around this golf course and hit fairways, hit greens and make putts. It's that simple.

I think based on my experience and what I felt back then, removed from it now all of 20 or 21 years ago if I think about it, his experience, my experience, is something that I can always dwell on and will continue to learn from.

He's going to learn a lot this week. Whether he plays good or bad, he's going to learn a lot. Even if he plays mediocre, he's going to learn a lot. If he can remain positive with whatever his outcome is, he's going to learn a lot.

Q. This might be a silly question but I don't live in your world; are you as hungry as you ever were?

ZACH JOHNSON: I'm starving right now actually.

Q. You are?

ZACH JOHNSON: Yeah.

Q. Can you elaborate on that?

ZACH JOHNSON: I mean, I had lunch -- no, I'm just kidding.

Okay, I'm not starving. Yes, I mean, I think if you know me like you know me, motivation is not difficult for me. Work is not -- I don't mind putting work in. It's changed, obviously, and it continues to evolve and change, both from a time standpoint and emphasis standpoint and goals.

But I feel like -- I still feel like I can play some of the best golf I've ever played. It's getting harder because, one, the TOUR is getting better, and two, I'm not getting younger. I realize what I'm up against, but again, that's also

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motivating.

If my body is willing, my mind is there. Between the ears, thankfully I don't have to question it. I don't feel like I'm getting out of bed at 23 years old anymore. That part stinks. Any time you put a golf club in somebody's hands for 36 years, it's going to take a toll at some point, and that's why I use the gym, that's why I've got a team of individuals that help me assess both on and off the golf course.

Motivation is now a struggle -- I mean, I'm hungry. I want to win. I want to win every week. I'm a realist. The way my mindset has always been, I'm trying to prepare this week for next.

Q. You mentioned time. With the family that you've got, and I suppose kids of a certain age now, there's a lot of probably things pushing you in different directions.

ZACH JOHNSON: No question, and that hasn't -- that's been pretty consistent over the last decade even. That's my priority, as it should be. When there's time set aside for work, that's got my full attention. When I leave the golf course, I leave the golf course. Physically I really leave the golf course. Mentally, ideally, I leave the golf course. Sometimes that's a little easier said than done.

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