

John Deere Classic

Thursday, June 30, 2022

TPC Deere Run

Silvis, Illinois, USA

Zach Johnson

Quick Quotes

Q. Some windy conditions when you started today.

ZACH JOHNSON: Yeah, I was just telling a couple friends over there that this is -- I mean, even kind of coming in, 15, 16 in particular, this is probably the hardest I've seen the golf course play. I mean, granted, in the afternoon wave.

I'm going to assume that the stroke differential is, you know, I don't want to say significant, but evident morning into afternoon. Oftentimes it is.

That's as hard as I've seen this golf course play in a long time. Granted, you got some roll, so if you land it in the fairway it was going to bounce, which is fun.

But it was hard.

Q. You got off to a great start.

ZACH JOHNSON: Yeah, shoot, I hit it pretty good today. I mean, I had, I don't know if you call it just a mental mishap on the 14th bad tee shot, but still was okay, and then just decided to vomit down my shirt the rest of that hole.

So other than that it was pretty darn solid. I mean, two missed tee shots -- I mean, I didn't struggle early -- you know, I had a lot of opportunities, especially early on, and then even coming in I had some opportunities.

Q. Can you talk about the long putt on 1, the birdie putt?

ZACH JOHNSON: Yeah, again, that's when you know it's hard. I had 129 hole and I'm like, man. On an uphill lie. If I hit a 9, that's my 150 club, low 150s. If I hit a 9-iron it may not get there, so I chipped an 8 from 129.

Yeah, that was probably a solid -- I mean, that was all of 25, maybe even closer to 30 feet. Great way to start the day. Great momentum builder.

It's nice to hit a putt on the line you see right off the bat, but it's also the first hole of the tournament, so got to keep it in



perspective.

Q. Obviously probably didn't score as well as you could have scored today. At the same time, another round under par and you're still okay.

ZACH JOHNSON: Yeah, again, I gave myself ops. I can count three lip-outs. I mean, I guess you could probably say four on 14, but I don't think I hit the hole, so that wasn't a lip-out. Three other lip-outs. So I putted well, made a couple, missed couple. Yeah, I had ops.

Today was of day where it was like, Hey, stay to the fat side of the green. A lot of times here when the wind is very benign and not blowing 15 to 25 it's essentially point and shoot and then it stops, right, it plugs, because of the humidity and how soft it is.

But when you have wind like this and the humidity is down the course dries out and it becomes a lot more trying. I think it's a lot better that way, too.

Yeah, I had ops. I'm assuming Dylan had one of the better rounds in the afternoon. He shot 4- to 6-under. I don't know what he shot, but that was pretty solid.

Q. Ended your round on a good note.

ZACH JOHNSON: Yeah.

Q. 18 had a nice par save. (No microphone.)

ZACH JOHNSON: Yeah, I mean, yeah, you always, as a player, go back to the last couple shots, and I did hit a good drive on 18 and I hit a solid 8-iron, but I had 7-iron out and I was like, I just don't think it's a 7 and I bailed on it.

It was just one of those that probably bad alignment because I hit it solid. And a good up and down, like you said. Actually could have gone in.

Yeah, I'm not complaining. 18 is hole you're trying to make a 4. Doesn't matter what it is, where it is.

I didn't putt great coming in, so good thing I had a two-putt for birdie on 17. That hole was playing really short, and I was able to sneak a drive into the fairway and hit an iron into that green, which is very uncommon for me.



Q. You played this course so much. They changed and made some renovations. Do you notice any difference?

ZACH JOHNSON: Oh, yeah, it's noticeable. I played here so much it's noticeable. Does that make sense? I guess if you haven't seen it that much or you're not used to it you might not pick some of nuances up.

In talking to some of the staff here there is four less bunkers, and in some instances looks like there is more, like 2 for example.

There are four less bunkers, and I think the, whatever you want to call it, square footage of the sand has gone down dramatically. I know that was the issue. Erosion was an issue. If they had any sort of rain any mega storm it was very difficult for the staff.

I think they tried to alleviate that, and the beauty is I think the integrity of the course is still there. The rough and the skirts around the greens where the bunkering has still got to mature. It's still pretty fresh. It's firm, really firm and fast.

So this place is awesome. I mean, everybody loves it. I think next year it'll be even better, and the year after that it'll probably be absolutely perfect. The greens are awesome, and I think they did a lot -- D.A. Weibring did a great job with the bunkering.

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