

John Deere Classic

Sunday, July 3, 2022

TPC Deere Run

Silvis, Illinois, USA

J.T. Poston

Press Conference

DOUG MILNE: All right, we will go ahead and get started. We would like to welcome J.T. Poston, winner of the 2022 John Deere Classic to the media center here.

J.T., congratulations on your second career PGA Tour win. It's been a great couple of weeks. I was out last week, and just to watch what you have done your last eight rounds has been pretty amazing.

With the win this week you move up to inside the top 25 to No. 22 in the FedExCup.

With all that said, let's just take a few comments on your initial feelings after winning.

J.T. POSTON: Yeah, it feels great to get another win. You know, they don't come easy out here, and I really wanted to get that second win to sort of validate Wyndham, so it feels good to get it out of the way.

Like you said, be been playing some great golf the last few weeks, and really going back to April I felt pretty good about my game. I felt like this was coming, and it's nice to get it done here at the John Deere where it's just a great spot.

DOUG MILNE: Hanging on to a lead for one round is difficult enough, but you have done it wire to wire this week. How much added pressure does that put on you now that you got the job done? You could be honest. How tough is it when you take an 18-hole lead and realize you still got a long way to go with it?

J.T. POSTON: Yeah, it's hard. Any time you have the lead it's just tough to play with the lead. There is just a little bit of added pressure. Wire to wire, pretty much having the lead from Thursday on, I told all the media after every round that I was just trying to stick to my game plan and I wasn't going to think about it.

The truth is it's hard not to think about the finish line and what comes with it, all that comes with getting win out here. As much as you try and put that aside and not think about



it, it's tough not to.

DOUG MILNE: Speaking of perks with the win, you earn your spot into The Open Championship after this week. How excited are you for that?

J.T. POSTON: I can't wait. I've always wanted to play in an Open Championship, and this will be my first one. So for it to be at St. Andrews and the 150th is pretty special, and pretty hard to draw it up any better than that.

Q. First player to win wire to wire here in three decades. Have you thought about that? Has it sunk in?

J.T. POSTON: I don't know if it's really sunk in, but I just know it's not easy going wire to wire. I heard of other guys doing it at other events and you see it happen every once in a while, but they always seem to make it look easier than it actually is I feel like.

It was tough, especially today coming out. You're trying to play solid golf and trying to hold on and build that lead as much as you can coming down the stretch so it's not as stressful, but just tough to do.

Q. You wore it so well after every round this week. How did you keep it all composed?

J.T. POSTON: Just trying to draw off past experience at tournaments. You knew I had won out here before, and so I tried to think back to the Wyndham and even winning in college, where you try and draw on some of those memories of hitting the right shots when it counts.

So just focusing on that and trying not to focus too much on the leaderboard or getting defensive.

Q. Brendon Todd said that you show a little excitement, you get a little flappable when he puts a quick gin on you. He said other than that, you really -- you just have that really calm demeanor that you display. You seem to walk with the same pace all four rounds; putting stroke doesn't seem to -- at least this week -- didn't seem to let loose. Is that demeanor part of what you practice? Is that a strength?

J.T. POSTON: Honestly, it's just who I am. I don't -- I

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

know how I feel and I guess I do a good job of not letting -- not showing it, but there is definitely some nerves. I've always been pretty level, even keel. I think that's a strength, not getting too excited, especially today after a great start.

Feel like it could have been easy to get real excited and start thinking about the finish line. I tried to stay one shot at a time and focused on what I had in front of me. But it's just kind of just how I've always been. That goes back to junior golf and college golf as well.

Q. What about the gin?

J.T. POSTON: Gin, yeah, B-Todd has had our number in gin this week. We've got a whole crew of guys at the house. We'll probably play some more tonight, but hopefully my luck has turned around in that regard, too.

Q. You talked about the first win, trying to validate that with the second win. Which was easier to get or which was more difficult?

J.T. POSTON: I think the first one is always tough, but I think the way that I did it going bogey-free at Wyndham, I think I put a little more pressure on myself kind of the last couple years trying to get that second win and trying to be perfect again.

I think it took a little while for me to realize or accept the fact that you're never going to win another golf tournament going 72 holes without a bogey. It's okay to be make a mistake as long as you limit them, and that was something that I would say I finally realized this year and tried not to be perfect, but just tried to be real solid.

Q. How did that mentality then factor in today when you start birdie, birdie, birdie, and then follow it up with back-to-back bogeys?

J.T. POSTON: Yeah, I knew at the end of the day after the second bogey on 6 that I was still in the lead. I knew it wasn't as big a lead as I would've liked or what it was a few holes prior, but I knew I was in a good spot.

I just needed to get back into that rhythm of hitting good golf shots like I had the last few days and hitting the ball in the fairway, hitting a bunch of greens, and I was able to do a decent job of that coming in.

Made a lot of good pars, and that birdie on 17 really gave me the cushion.

Q. What happened on 5 and 6?

J.T. POSTON: 5 was just -- 5 was a three-putt. I had a few of those the last few days. It's not really my game. My putter I would say is usually my strength.

But I hit two good putts. It was kind of one of those deals I had just misread it or the ball bobbled, I don't know. I just missed it. I think the biggest thing was to walk off that green and forget and go on to the next.

6 I hit two good shots. Flener and I felt good really about the club in my hand on 6, and I hit it exactly how I wanted. Just didn't get the help with the wind that we were expecting, came up short, and that was just -- that was a bad place to miss it.

Q. Aaron said he kind of talked to you after coming off the seventh green about committing to the game plan. Did that help you reset? Did it help you mentally going into the back nine?

J.T. POSTON: Yeah, I think those three holes we had made the bogey on 5 and 6 and given some back, and then 7 I hit it over there in a pretty tough spot and was able to get it up and down.

But the up and down kind of settled us down. Flener, he said, you know, just really stick to our game plan and talk through every shot and just to make sure that we're fully committed.

When you've got pressure like that and you're in that position and you're not 100% committed, then you can't really expect to hit a lot of good shots.

So that was our game plan, was keep hitting the shots that we wanted to hit and just live with the results. If it didn't go exactly where we wanted, at least we were committed to that shot.

Q. How did it help you mentally reset? Was it a mental reset at that point?

J.T. POSTON: A little bit, yeah. The mental reset for me was saving par on 7 and kind of settling the nerves a little bit. Getting off to the great start and giving a few back immediately and the lead getting down to one was a little bit -- I don't want to say jarring, but it got my attention.

I knew there was a lot of golf left and I needed to play well in order to finish with a win, so it was nice to get the up and down. Flener has always been good about saying the right things at the right time and knowing when to kind of let me do my thing and when to step in and say, hey, we need to reset.

Q. Almost have to do that again on 13, don't you, after the point there and the lead is again closing and they're nipping at your heels? Do you look at the board at that point?

J.T. POSTON: Yeah, I was peeking at the board a few times throughout the day. I tried not to look on every hole just because I feel like it's easy to get locked into that and not stick to a game plan of hitting the right shots.

Yeah, there were a few times throughout the day where I made some key putts. I think that putt really kind of kept some momentum going, being able to make par there on 13.

Q. Kind of reading up on you a little bit. It seemed like your grandfather of a pretty big influence on you with the game of golf. First win since he passed. What does that mean and what were some of the qualities you took from him that you applied to yourself?

J.T. POSTON: Yeah, he meant the world to me and still does. I wouldn't be the person I am today without him and his guidance. Yeah, we're probably coming up on a year since he's passed, and I really wanted to play -- right after he passed this fall I really wanted to play well kind of for him; just didn't happen. I think I was putting too much pressure on myself.

I know he's smiling right now. I know he's probably working on his short game. He meant so much to me and my family, and everything from a golf standpoint he was there growing up, so I owe a lot of this to him.

Q. He was a pretty accomplished player. Did you get a lot of those qualities I guess?

J.T. POSTON: I learned a lot from him. He got me into the game. He and my dad got me into the game when I was probably three years old. He gave me my first-ever golf club, a persimmon 5-wood that I think my mom or grandmother still has somewhere at the house.

But I learned the most from him just by watching him, how he carried himself. I learned a lot from the passenger seat of a golf cart. That sort of thing, it's irreplaceable. I can't even put it into words how much it means to me, how much it meant to have him kind of there throughout my career.

He was able to be there for the win in Wyndham and I would've loved for him to be here to see this, but I know he's smiling right now.

Q. How much pressure are you under now to pick up the house rental?

J.T. POSTON: I think that's already probably said. I think those guys are already celebrating a free house for the week. They're going to have a head start on me on the celebrations, but hopefully we can catch up.

Q. Talk about the synergy that that's brought to you guys.

J.T. POSTON: Yeah, it's fun. It's something that we've done a little bit, staying in houses with some of guys. This week we had a big house with I think six of us. It was myself, Patton Kizzire, Greyson Sigg, Denny McCarthy, Brendon Todd, and Ben Kohles. So we had card games going every night. We had all kinds of dice, bets, whatever. It's fun.

Kind of feels like college golf again. I loved that team atmosphere. I'm still real close to a lot of my college teammates. I just love the team game, the team atmosphere, so it kind of has a little bit of that feel.

Even though we're not playing on the same team you're coming back to the house and everybody is pulling for each other.

Yesterday Denny and I played in the final group together. We're going out there and having fun and trying to beat each other.

Q. Been about two and a half seasons since the first win. Talk about how you and Flener decompress after a tournament when you have a good finish and you motivate yourself to do well? We're just curious how you go about that process.

J.T. POSTON: Yeah, the goal is obviously to win out here when you show up at a tournament. When you don't win, usually we'll take a step back at the end of the week and figure out how we can improve, how we can get better.

For the better part of last year it's been my actual golf swing and ball striking. My putting has always been pretty consistent and a strength of mine I feel like.

But, yeah, I just flat out wasn't hitting it good the last year, so that's kind of what's been our approach, is how can we hit it better, give ourselves more looks.

Q. Can you address your expectations now? Does this change anything? How big do you dream?

J.T. POSTON: Big. You know, I have some career goals of playing on Presidents Cup and Ryder Cups and stuff like that, winning majors.

J.T. POSTON: Thank you.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

I haven't done anything like that yet. I haven't really played that great in a major yet, so I'll probably take a step back and reevaluate some of the goals.

But right now, a good start would be playing well in the majors, getting in the mix in the majors and playing well in some big events. Yeah, I would love to be on one of those U.S. teams. I know I have a lot of work to do to be relevant there, but it's a goal of mine and something that I'm definitely going to try and accomplish.

Q. Zach said that you stayed with him in Phoenix. You ate least got that going for you, right?

J.T. POSTON: Zach is a good friend. Lives down there in Sea Island where I live. Played a lot of golf with him on the island and out here. He's been a great mentor at times. Yeah, doesn't hurt that he's the captain right now.

Yeah, hopefully I'm -- obviously hopefully moving in the right direction, so we'll see how it plays out.

DOUG MILNE: Just one last question.

Q. Just going to say, now that you're a champion of this event, what do you like about this event?

J.T. POSTON: I love the community. I love the fans. I was saying earlier that this is the first time I really played well here. I made a couple cuts but haven't put four good rounds together.

Always seems like I've been received pretty well with the fans and the community. I love coming back. I love being in the Quad Cities. It's a great area and everybody does such a great job with the tournament, and I can't wait to be back.

DOUG MILNE: Along those same lines, just going to finish with a question about Clair Peterson. Last one as the tournament director. How cool is it that you're winning before he passes the torch?

J.T. POSTON: It's great. Clair is a great. I see him at other tournaments on the road all the time and he's always been super nice saying hey to me. I didn't realize that he was stepping aside after this year, so thank you Clair for all that you've done with this tournament.

It's very much appreciated. I'm honored to be your final champ.

DOUG MILNE: There we go. J.T., congratulations.

