

John Deere Classic

Tuesday, July 2, 2024

TPC Deere Run

Silvis, Illinois, USA

Luke Clanton

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Okay, first press conference of the week, Luke Clanton, thank you for joining us for a few minutes. Talked to the Golf Channel outside. You obviously got lots of questions about how exciting, this and that. All good questions.

You are coming off a top 10 finish in your second career PGA start last week at the Rocket Mortgage Classic, largely credited for that 7-under 65 in round three.

I know it's been a whirlwind. If we could get you to take a deep breath and just look back and tell us how life has been for you out past couple weeks.

LUKE CLANTON: Yeah, it's been no joke for sure. It's been a lot of traveling and a lot of golf. But, again, it's awesome to be busy as much as I am now.

To be able to do what I did last week at Rocket Mortgage and be in contention with one day to go was unbelievable.

Especially at the U.S. Open as well and nationals, and now coming here just a lot of golf. So just staying in the process and realizing I get these opportunities to play more golf and it's just awesome.

Q. Kind of got thrown into the fire with your first career start being a U.S. Open course layout. You handled yourself well. Made the cut and then come and get the Top 10 last week. Did you come out with any kind of expectations when you were starting to make these PGA TOUR starts or did you just want to test the waters and see how your game held up?

LUKE CLANTON: Again, you kind of get ahead of it a little bit and it kind of messes with you a little bit. To me, I try to stay in my process and what I'm doing as much as I can.

No matter if it's a U.S. Open or PGA TOUR event, I try to stay in my lane as much as I can and do as good as I can.

I think at the U.S. Open it was definitely a different experience with thousands of people watching you, and



especially even at the Rocket Mortgage as well. It's been awesome.

Q. Here at the John Deere Classic this week. I understand you've gotten to see at least the front nine. Thoughts on the course, how you see it setting up for your game, and how excited you are to be here this week?

LUKE CLANTON: Yeah, I actually played the back nine yesterday as well in the afternoon. It's been -- it's awesome, in perfect condition. Greens are rolling great; fairways are firm.

It's crazy how much the different the conditions jump from week to week. I would say that's something I'm learning a lot from U.S. Open to Rocket Mortgage to here now. It's definitely different. So still getting used to around the greens and everything, but it's awesome.

Q. You mentioned Saturday I think somebody asked if you were considering following Nick Dunlap's -- if things worked out. Did you come into this with any expectations or a game plan and are you committed to -- you said you were committed to returning to school. Is that where the mindset still is?

LUKE CLANTON: Yeah.

Q. Even with \$200,000...(indiscernible.)

LUKE CLANTON: Yeah, there is definitely a big number for sure. Again, I want to win a national championship with the team. That's been my number one goal in college and we came pretty close this year. All of us back home are very driven this year to do it.

Again, I think whatever happens happens. I'm still 20 years old. I'm still learning the ropes as much as I can. I'm going to do what I do.

Q. Are you aware of how many PGA TOUR University accelerated points your collecting and are you looking at the paths that will take to you your goal of ultimately of being out here eventually?

LUKE CLANTON: No. I'm out here to play the best I can. Simple as that. If I put four days together and it gets me



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more accelerated points, awesome. Number one goal is play as good as I can.

Q. Is there NIL money involved in college golf?

LUKE CLANTON: There is a little bit, no doubt, for sure.

Q. Comparatively to that you could make...(indiscernible.)

LUKE CLANTON: Again, I think it's enough for college student for sure. I think it's -- I don't really need a lot of money right now. I'm 20 years old, still at Florida State University. It's enough to handle what we have here and to be able to travel. I think it's good.

Q. Are you measuring yourself against other players at this point? Nick for instance. (Indiscernible.) Do you kind of see how you stack up?

LUKE CLANTON: Sorry to say, but no again. Again, I just stay with myself as much as I can. I think trying to compare yourself to other people is nothing good out of it. I learned that from a couple friends at Florida State.

You know, just staying in your lane as much as you can and working as hard as you can. I'll do my process while they do their process.

Q. What are your expectations for this week?

LUKE CLANTON: Again, I think I want to put four rounds of good golf together. If it comes out with a good number and a win, that would be awesome.

Again, I think I'm not going to try to jump too far ahead. Still got to hit each golf shot as good as I can and see what happens.

Q. What kind of takeaways have you got from the professionals you played with or walking around over the past few days?

LUKE CLANTON: Yeah, I mean, I've definitely played with some good players for sure. Played with Scottie in the practice rounds and Brooks as well. All those guys are unreal with what they do.

Again, I think just how they do their practices and process of everything is something I'm learning. Again, I'm still trying to learn how to travel and stuff. It's still new to me.

It's just awesome being here and learning from them and staying in that zone more and not worried about the future outcome of everything.

They kept telling me I'm young and you're learning. I just want to compete with them as much as I can. That's the goal.

Q. Quickly about the young talent out here. Young kids come out and have immediate success. What do you think contributes to you being able to come out here and have success so quickly?

LUKE CLANTON: Yeah, I been saying this a lot: College golf a hard. I don't think people realize how hard it is to win out there. I think every single week of college golf we have 20 guys amazing at golf that can play out here. My generation of golfers is going to be awesome.

I think we have great players coming up. I can name 20 right now that can win a PGA TOUR event. It's awesome to see. Winning in college feels pretty sweet because it's hard. No doubt about it.

I think even the younger ones, like Miles Russell, as well. I mean, the guy is 15 years old. Absurd for him to play his first PGA TOUR event like that. It's awesome to see for sure.

Q. Your dreams, where did you see yourself when you were, say, three, four years ago to where you you now?

LUKE CLANTON: That's a great question. I think if I look to myself three years ago to now, I would say I'm probably pretty close to where I wanted to be. I would say I think I had pretty big goals growing up, a lot of expectations for what I wanted to do.

Again, I think I'm pretty close to it. There is one thing I want. I think that's pretty obvious of course. I think we're just goon see what happens the next couple weeks.

Q. Were you at all surprised when you walked off the golf course Saturday with that number and the way you were able to comport yourself?

LUKE CLANTON: I didn't know where I was on the leaderboard to be honest. Me and Jason have done such a great job. U.S. Open to Rocket as well, of just kind of staying in our zone and not worrying about what other people are doing. Realizing that we can put three good numbers up and be in contention like we were and hopefully win.

Q. When you go back to college, what will be goals be?

LUKE CLANTON: I think the goal number one is win a national championship with the team.

Q. Team or individual?

LUKE CLANTON: Both. That would be great, no doubt. With the team is number one for me. I think no one realizes how long that week is and how hard it is. Just to be put there for six seven days and try to win a national championship is just brutal.

To fall just short like we did this year was definitely hard, and it still hurts to this day. That's why I want to go back and win a national championship with them.

Q. What does it mean to get an exemption into these events?

LUKE CLANTON: Yeah, that's unreal. Usually I'm playing the Elite Am Series and amateur events, and now I'm playing in these pro events. Definitely different. Different experience and I'm learning every step of the way as I go, and it's awesome.

Q. What's your schedule from here moving forward?

LUKE CLANTON: Playing the ISCO next week at well and take a week off and playing the 3M as well. So pro events coming up and definitely going to be a long couple weeks of golf. Again, it's awesome to be busy and I'm excited.

THE MODERATOR: You'll be seeing a lot of me. Luke, thank you for your time. We appreciate it and good luck this week.

LUKE CLANTON: Thank you.

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