

The American Express

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La Quinta, California, USA

PGA WEST Pete Dye Stadium Course

Justin Thomas

Quick Quotes

Q. 61, right in contention, got to feel good, put yourself in contention. It's got to feel good.

JUSTIN THOMAS: It feels great. I've been playing well, I've been, I felt good, felt confident, at that point it's just about coming out and playing. Obviously, not playing in competition awhile, you never know how it's going to be, but I felt comfortable at La Quinta to start, and start making some birdies. But, yeah, everything feels good. I just got to go out tomorrow and make a lot of birdie and capitalize, and hopefully just get within striking distance going into the back nine.

Q. You talked about last year when you were struggling about kind of the mental anguish of wanting to make the Ryder Cup team, get in the playoffs, and how that was weighing on you. Are you just in a much better frame of mind as you reset a new season and start anew?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Definitely, but I'm playing a lot better, which is, I don't want to say more important, but just as important. I think with one can sometimes come the other, but at the same time I'm still in a position where I need to try to play well for the elevated events and just play well for myself. I mean, I think that was what I got away from is, last year, I'm playing to finish top-whatever, to try to get in the playoffs, and that's not me. I'm out here to try to win golf tournaments, and win as many as humanly possible. Once I start feeling better, like I am now and like I'm starting to, I feel like that's what I'm out here for. Hopefully, we can go get it tomorrow.

Q. You mentioned you haven't played with Nick before. Looks like that might happen tomorrow. Speak of what your relationship is, and what you thought about his game or what you heard about it?

JUSTIN THOMAS: I mean, I've heard I think what everybody's seen. I've heard he's an unbelievable player. He rises to the occasion and to the moment, which is something I don't think you can really teach to anybody. He's played well in all the biggest stages, which says



something very impressive. Yeah, tomorrow's a great day for Alabama golf, I know Coach Seawell is going to be tuned in very closely to the TV, but, yeah, for me, it's not necessarily about that, I'm trying to go chase him down and outrace everybody else.

Q. Just speaking kind of what he's going through, going through contention for the first time on the TOUR, what do you remember about kind of the first time you were put in that pressure cooker? I'm sure it feels a little different than amateur days.

JUSTIN THOMAS: My rookie year. I think I still should have won this tournament my rookie year. I think I was tied for the lead or one-shot lead or something with three holes to go. I just made a couple birdie to get right there. It is, it's a nerve wracking feeling, but it's fun nerves. That's why we all play. Yeah, so, he's going to feel things he hasn't felt tomorrow, but at the same time, he's played really, really well under similar circumstances. I know that I'm going to need to go out, not just for him, for everybody else, and go shoot a low round.

Q. The near hole-in-one, what did you see, and then I want to show you the video to get your reaction?

JUSTIN THOMAS: I don't think I'm going to like it. I really, it's, like, it's weird. I've told Bones, I feel like I'm about to start holing some shots out. I've been close. And I feel like I am. It just looked great. As soon as it got on the ground and it was going to the hole, in my head, I'm like, this is going to go in. I really did think so. Once you see the people up by the green stand up, you know it's got a good chance. I'm pretty sure I saw it lip out, so I don't know if I'm going to like this video.

(Showing the video).

That is so cruel. What's funny is, Bones and I were walking up there, and we saw the ace yesterday, and it was obviously a great shot, but going 20, 30 feet past, and that one does that. Oh well, good 2. One and a half.

Q. Let's hope you don't lose by one tomorrow.

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, thanks. Appreciate it.



