

AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am

Sunday, February 5, 2023

Pebble Beach, California, USA

Pebble Beach Golf Links

Justin Rose

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Justin Rose to the interview room here at the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am. Let's take questions.

Q. I've got to ask you about the bunker shot on 6. All the times you've played here is it, is that a comfortable shot or what are you aiming at there?

JUSTIN ROSE: No, that's not comfortable. First and foremost, it's actually a really well-designed hole, first and foremost. The fairway's huge, but the fact there's a cliff on right those bunkers are just in the right place. They're not too deep because they give you a shot.

But you got to strike it. You know that if you catch it half an inch fat, you could be in the ravine dropping and making all sorts of trouble there. So, yeah, I was really just focused on putting the ball in the middle of my stance, making sure I hit the back of the ball. Obviously for it to climb up there to 6 feet was, there's a little element of a nice hop, skip, and a bounce up there obviously.

But I did my part. I struck it, stayed out of trouble, committed to it. Because, yeah, it would have been easy to have played a different shot, just try to hit a high cut 7-iron up onto the top of the ridge, give myself a wedge shot, but I only had 214 to the front so the shot was on.

So obviously at that point I was looking for some momentum, looking for something good to happen as well, it just, that came at the perfect time for me.

Q. What club?

JUSTIN ROSE: 4-iron.

Q. As you mentioned this morning, you were in the last group in the final round here in 2019 at the U.S. Open. Obviously I think tied for third. Obviously in the hunt again here now. How does your game sort of fit? What do you think about playing Pebble? And not to jump ahead, but I mean, it's, given the reputation of this course if you were to add your name to the

winners' list what would that mean, given that it's Pebble?

JUSTIN ROSE: Sure. Yeah, I mean, obviously it's one of those places that you just come to and you feel inspired and you look around and you're like, wow, what an amazing place to be. There's a little bit of gratitude in just sort of -- you know, the fact that you're actually enjoying being here I think always lends itself to playing well, and that's not unique to me.

Strategically I think this golf course has a lot to it. There's a lot of angles, a lot of strategy. The greens are quite steep in certain areas. I think I read sloping putts pretty well. It's probably a strength of mine. So I think some of those things stack up to why I've been able to do well here.

Of course, yeah, to tap in on Monday I guess but thinking it was Sunday normally, but to win with that view there on 18 at Pebble of course it's iconic.

Q. The positive vibes coming into the week knowing you've had some great history here throughout the years, whether it was a major not, and then how that carried over into the week and potentially into tomorrow.

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah. I mean, listen, I didn't really come in here thinking, okay, this is horses for courses, this is my place. There's a lot of dynamics at play this week. You have your amateur partners. You have three courses. Obviously you have weather, which we have seen this week.

There's a lot of things to not get ahead of yourself, do you know what I mean, that happened this week. But I came into this tournament enjoying it for what it is. I think it's a very special event on the PGA TOUR. I think if come into it with the right mindset and enjoying your amateurs, enjoying the -- the greens aren't perfect, pace of play is pretty slow, but if those things are going to frustrated you, then you shouldn't be here in the first place.

So I kind of came in with that mindset. I really enjoyed my time out there with James Gorman from Morgan Stanley.

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We had a brilliant time. He's become a friend through the years.

So there's definitely an element to sort of the more relaxed nature of this event as well. I think that's helped me to this point. Obviously, today changed. Today was like Sunday PGA TOUR, all pros, all business. But that's kind of also why we play. The business end of things is what matters, and I thoroughly enjoyed it out there today.

Q. You always hear you got to score on the first seven holes at Pebble and you obviously 3-under on the front today, Denny went 7-under on the front.

JUSTIN ROSE: Did he?

Q. How much do you have to kind of flip your mindset tomorrow? Now you come back, you're trying to protect a 2-shot lead, and you're playing the tough side. I imagine it's a different kind of approach; yes?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah. No, I mean, listen, yeah, it was good to get the tee shot done on number 10. I think the wind shifted a little bit out of the east tomorrow, which if that's true that helps the back nine a little bit. So that's a break.

So that's kind of why I chose to -- well, I was quite keen for us to keep moving and hit the tee shot on 10. So I feel like there's still some opportunities out there tomorrow coming out. Good golf lends itself to opportunities. So I'm going to have to just, that's what I'm focusing on. A two-shot lead is great, and there's obviously -- normally you sleep on a two-shot lead. There's 18 holes to play, tons can happen in 18 holes.

Now there's eight holes to play. Less can happen in eight holes, but still, you know, two is not enough to sort of -- I still got to come out and do a job tomorrow.

Q. When did the horn blow for you?

JUSTIN ROSE: I guess it would have hit after a couple of minutes after hitting the tee shot on 10, but walking down the fairway to the ball.

Q. Did you hit your second shot at 10?

JUSTIN ROSE: I decided not to, no. It was just getting dark. I had a bit of a hanging lie where depth perception is quite important, so just decided to --

Q. You hit the fairway on 10?

JUSTIN ROSE: In the fairway on 10, yeah.

Q. The whole mindset thing you said coming in because of everything that's involved with this tournament, do you think that makes to some extent the difference for you this week?

JUSTIN ROSE: Maybe. I've been working hard. I've been trending, I would say, as well. So sometimes when you know you're trending, you put maybe too much emphasis and you try too hard. So I think maybe this, the other factors that come into this event probably help me know that I am playing well and have maybe let that come to the fore a little bit easier rather than maybe trying too hard for it.

Q. What exactly happened at 1 and how deflated, if it is deflated, coming off of that green making a bogey there? And then two, talk about if you do win tomorrow, is it really all in to what happened on the second shot at 6?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, a lot there. So obviously anytime you tee off with a lead you want momentum straight away. It's always nice. Just get up on the front foot.

I missed the fairway on No. 1, which is really a bit of a cardinal sin. I missed it, well I've missed it twice with a 4-iron now this week, which is -- but I've had a lot of tee shots this week where I'm between 5-wood and 4-iron, so I'm stretching the 4-iron. I'm trying to hit the 4-iron hard.

So I felt like it's been a good week to have had a 3-iron in the bag, to be honest with you. But that kind of led to a lie in the right-hand rough that came out a little bit quick. But I had to get it up and over the tree, so I had to swing hard.

Actually from over the back of the green I hit an unbelievable chip shot which I thought was going to be -- I didn't think I could leave it short, but left it four, five feet short. Such a quick putt as well. I dribbled it down there a bit. The greens actually were slower. Took me a couple holes to key in to -- I think maybe they hadn't quite cut the greens based upon -- yeah, I mean I kind of -- you can see it, but it's one thing seeing it. It takes maybe a couple of holes for it to, for you to feel it.

So I felt like slightly slow start with the putter today keying into the speed of the greens. But, yeah, that was the difference, I think.

And yeah, if I do go on to win, yeah, that was the momentum maker for today. Then knocking in the putt on number 7. Birdieing 8 as well.

The way 8 played when we played it, it was a unbelievably

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tough hole. So to get through there with a 4, that whole stretch was great.

Q. What was that second shot that club into 8?

JUSTIN ROSE: 4-iron.

Q. That club seems to come up a lot.

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, I know. Actually, I'm glad I didn't have the 3-iron that time. That was a good 4-iron. Yeah. Yeah.

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