

Valspar Championship

Thursday, April 29, 2021

Palm Harbor, Florida, USA

Innisbrook Resort (Copperhead)

Paul Casey

Quick Quotes

Q. Two-time defending Valspar champion, what was it like out there going around on day one?

PAUL CASEY: Nice to have some fans. Nice to finally be back, two years after I wanted to be back defending. The golf course is as good and as tough as it's ever been and I played a nice solid round of golf. Got the bogey out of the way early and then just played some good golf after that. So pretty happy with that start. It can be treacherous. And all I want to do -- I mean, a three-peat is going to be, has been talked about a lot and will be talked about until I'm done here, and I just want to kind of hang around, which is kind of what I did today. I certainly can't win it today but I want to hang around. It's a tough thing to do a three-peat, I think only 10 guys have done it, something like that. So we'll see what happens.

Q. How different is it for you to come back to a place like this that you've won the last two times this tournament's played than maybe any other golf course on TOUR?

PAUL CASEY: What was the question again? I genuinely didn't hear it.

Q. How different is it for you to come back to a place where you won compared to anywhere else on TOUR?

PAUL CASEY: I've got a great familiarity, which is nice. It's just a ease and a comfort and a knowing inside deep down that it doesn't guarantee anything, but I know I kind of got a way of getting around this golf course that, I mean nobody's beaten me for well three years now around this golf course, which is a pretty cool feeling. That's just a nice -- that just sits well, plane and simple. And my ball striking wasn't great yesterday, I didn't hit even some -- I missed some shots today early on, I struggled a little bit, but it's just that feeling I've got a way around this golf course and eventually kind of it came around and I showed it shooting a 3-under.

Q. Where do you stand on the Olympics? In terms of, if you make it, will you participate or do you have any



reservations at this point?

PAUL CASEY: No, no, I don't. I've always stated that I would love to play and I still do. It's a weird one, we don't know a lot of what's going on. It seems like there's now doubts, it seems like one of my sponsors, JIG-SAW, is a Japanese software company so I hear things from the owner and his team about sentiment towards the Olympics and so it's a difficult one. Yeah, I want -- I desperately want to go to the Olympics and play the Olympics, but then you also hear that you maybe, whoever goes you can't watch other sporting events and things like that. And that's part of going to the Olympics, isn't it, being part of the whole thing and opening ceremonies and hanging out and watching other athletes and watching amazing sporting events.

So I don't know what to tell you kind of thing. I'm still in. I'm outside on the qualifications but I'm still very much into it. But it's a weird one with that. There is a touchiness in Japan as to how it sits over there.

Q. Is the way you think of that, just get inside the top-15 and not worry about it?

PAUL CASEY: That is exactly it. Love him to death but Fitzpatrick has been my nemesis so far this year, he's always just ahead of me. And who else is in there? Tyrell's in there. Tyrell's got COVID this week so that means he'll be fine when July, August comes around, he's got it out of the way. Yeah, it is what it is. It's just one of those things, I need to, I would love to be top-15 and to be honest if we had four of us going for Great Britain it would be amazing, so the more the merrier.

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