

Valspar Championship

Friday, April 30, 2021

Palm Harbor, Florida, USA

Innisbrook Resort (Copperhead)

Zach Johnson

Quick Quotes

Q. How was today out there for you?

ZACH JOHNSON: Today was great. Yesterday was good too. There was a lot of just quality golf, a lot of opportunities, a lot of I would say for the most part a lot of fairways and if I got myself in trouble I played the percentages and kept the course in front of me. So I had one bad break, but then I made a couple too. I made some putts. So it probably evened out in that regard. Overall the last two days have been solid.

Q. When you take a look at this golf course, seemingly it would be tailor made for how you have success around here on the TOUR. How accurate might that statement be?

ZACH JOHNSON: I mean, if you're playing well it doesn't really matter where you play, we know that. But I can certainly appreciate that sentiment. I think the beauty of this golf course is that we have seen individuals that hit it left-to-right, right-to-left, maul it and absolutely kill it and guys that plot their way around. We've seen Furyks win. Sean O'Hair hits it long. Paul Casey is not short. So we have seen every style of golf win here and that's the beauty of a really good golf course. I feel like it just rewards -- it separates and rewards quality golf.

Q. How do these past two days validate what you've been doing to work on your game?

ZACH JOHNSON: I know my coaches are going to be, I don't want to say surprised, pleasantly -- they're going to be happy with it. We did some assessing after Augusta, and I would like to say that the assessment's been spot on. I've kind of been telling them, even though I've missed the cut in Hilton Head, that was, I just I didn't short game it very well there. But right after Augusta I made some changes that feel like miles upon miles, but they're really only about that far (indicating). And when I say "changes" it's really just kind of going back to what I'm accustomed to doing. Very encouraged by it.

I think that's the beauty of Augusta is even if you play well



there, but especially if you don't play well there, it really magnifies exactly what you need to do, because you have to have everything on. It's extreme in a good way. So I took missing the cut at Augusta with a distinct positive and that assessment was good and my team helped me with that.

So very encouraged. I'm putting well too, which is part of it, driving it pretty darn straight, which is part of it. But I like the trajectory of my game.

Q. What's the biggest change or the most important part of that assessment?

ZACH JOHNSON: Sure, I mean it was really kind of going back to what I -- this is going to sound ridiculous -- but where my grips were a few years ago, if not further. I've got a strong grip, and my grips have a reminder on them and they have been actually pretty neutral, if not strong. So when you combine a strong grip with a strong grip, the ball's going to go left a lot. And now the grip sits open, my grip is a lot weaker because of where I put my hand on there, especially with my left hand, and I feel like I can play free. I can swing at it and it's not going to go left too much. Which is freedom.

So I'm not suggesting that it's the end-all be-all, but I know it's the right direction.

Q. What are your memories of Kiawah in 2012?

ZACH JOHNSON: Kiawah, it's an island. Sits off the coast of South Carolina. I remember it being very difficult. Obviously always windy. I know they call it the Ocean Course, they could probably call it the Gust Course, Gustly Course. I remember it being a Pete Dye gem that requires trajectory control, just control all along. But I remember it being very good. I remember Rory dominating. Especially the last so many odd holes. I remember the par-3s being brutal. That's about it. I think I made the cut. But I don't remember where I finished.

Q. When it comes to courses like that where it's a one-off that you haven't seen for a decade, do people sometimes tend to put too much stock in how a player



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played that particular week, nine years ago, in this case?

ZACH JOHNSON: For sure. I mean, the bottom line is the cliché is anybody can win any given week, so, yeah, I mean now there is something to be said about having confidence at a venue, where your feet are. There's something to be said about that. When did we play there?

Q. 2012.

ZACH JOHNSON: Oh, wow, that's a long time ago. So there's something to be said about that. But, shoot, anybody can win there.

Q. Do you look at the Sagarin rankings at all?

ZACH JOHNSON: For football.

Q. Not for golf?

ZACH JOHNSON: No.

Q. I was wondering, so you're fairly -- you're like 25th in those in the world and I was wondering --

ZACH JOHNSON: I like that one then.

Q. Well it's a different way to measure success through consistency and basically do you feel like you were playing better than your results maybe or how have you felt about the way you've been playing?

ZACH JOHNSON: No question. I've had opportunity to climb the boards on the weekend, which is frankly why you play, right, to have a chance on the weekend, specifically on Sunday.

I mean, I rarely miss cuts, so I'm beating more than half the field any given week. Somebody threw out the amount of events I played on TOUR versus the amount of cuts I made and I was pleasantly surprised. But this is obviously recent, I'm assuming Sagarin is a 2-year?

Q. 12 months.

ZACH JOHNSON: 12 months, okay. Yeah, I'm not overly surprised by that. I don't know. I mean, I think the world rankings are based on two years, weighted differently.

Q. More for high finishes versus --

ZACH JOHNSON: Correct. They're two measurements, two logarithms, right? But, I mean, I don't know, I really don't have much to say about it. It doesn't surprise

me and but I'm not going to dwell on it.

Q. Is there something that's been going well in your game that maybe you feel like your results haven't shown?

ZACH JOHNSON: Yeah, I just, the consistency has been there, but it just needs to be a little sharper and I know that, so I have addressed that, I feel like I've addressed that in the proper way with my team and there's been some specifics with how I grip the golf club and where the grips sit and then I've switched drivers to the new PXX driver. That's been fantastic. So I almost feel like when I take it back now there's a little, there's more freedom on the way down, which that sounds ridiculous, but it's like I can swing really, really hard and I feel like my miss is going to be a little bit right, which is awesome.

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