

Valspar Championship

Thursday, March 16, 2023

Palm Harbor, Florida, USA

Innisbrook Resort (Copperhead)

Jordan Spieth

Quick Quotes

Q. You must be pretty happy with that start. How would you assess that 4-under round?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I would have said -- I would have signed for 2 or 3, as you kind of do around this place. Yeah, it was cold and then it got a little breezy, so it wasn't playing easy at all. With only hitting like five-ish fairways, you do that around this place and shoot under par, it's pretty solid. I was able to sneak a couple extras with the putter today.

I've been feeling like my putting's been working towards where I really want it to be. I felt like I made a few really nice par saves from that 4- to 8-foot range that kept that round alive. Bogey-free around this track is not something you're going to do every day. So very pleased with it.

Q. Talk about that group, Sam and Gary, that you played with this morning.

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I mean, they are two of my favorites to play with. I've known Gary for a long, long time, and then I was paired with Sam two weeks ago. So, you know, when you're playing with Sam, you kind of know what the standard is out here, so you're just trying -- if you beat him, you probably beat everybody else based on the last couple years.

So it's fun to watch him kind of work shots around this place, especially roll it on these greens. Gary's so easy to play with. We got a lot in common. He's a friend of mine. He plays super fast as well. So very easy group.

Q. You obviously want to hit more fairways, but on a day you don't and still produce a really good score, what's the inner satisfaction of that?

JORDAN SPIETH: I mean, very satisfying -- on a course like this, yeah. And I had four or five that were within a yard off or something like that, but that's a big difference out here, you can't really spin it into these greens.

With feeling comfortable with the speed control and just



overall with the putter, it allowed -- even if I was missing them, I felt like I could play to center of greens and not attack pins. That's a different place than I've been living as I've been trying to get better and better with the putter. So holes like number 7 today, I didn't go at the pin at all. I just went to the center of the green and said, I'll 2-putt from 35 feet and move on and try and get a look on the last two.

So that part's freed up the fact that I didn't hit a lot of fairways and then if I start to, my ball striking been really solid, including off the tee, in the last month or so and it just needs to tighten up a little bit. I didn't feel like I did great work the last three days and it kind of felt that way today. So hopefully just gets better each day.

Q. On 6, what did you have for a second shot there? And how big a lift was walking out of there with birdie?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I mean, when I struck the tee ball, it's just a crap shoot. I've been in those right trees a number of times on that hole. It kind of sets you up to try and slide it over there. But I got a really good break for it going as far as it did because I only had one tree. I had a gap wedge that I opened up and tried to slice it as much as I could out of the rough. I was just trying to hit it on the green. They're soft. I was very surprised at how soft the greens were. They were softer than Tuesday. That allowed kind of a jumper shot like that to just stick about pin high. And making a putt that range, you can do all the things right and you still got to find the hole. There's a lot of variables from that distance, so pretty fortunate to escape with a 3. I didn't really have a shot at the hole there, but I told Michael, if I walk up and I have any form of a swing, I'll be happy. So there was no complaining regardless of where that, where I was able to hit it.

Q. Does the course ask you or require you to think about it a little bit more off the tee here? I mean, are there more options as opposed to, well, you know it's a driver, you know it's a 3-wood?

JORDAN SPIETH: You hit a lot of less than drivers, not even really that you have the option, but they bottle neck so much and they turn so much that there's no real advantage. So, yeah, you really have to -- you kind of



have to play both flights and you really got to keep some down, hit some high off the tee. I want to say I probably hit four or five 3-woods today and I hit three or four others, hybrid or 4-iron. It's not a ton of drivers. Be interesting to see tomorrow, if it's super windy, if it means it's going to be hard to hit any fairway so you hit a lot more drivers.

But there's two holes that force you to kind of hit iron anyway on No. 3 and No. 12. And other than that you could kind of play with some options. But there's just such a premium on being in the fairway and being able to control your distance.

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