

Valspar Championship

Sunday, March 19, 2023

Palm Harbor, Florida, USA

Innisbrook Resort (Copperhead)

Taylor Moore

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome our 2023 Valspar championship winner, Taylor Moore, to the interview room.

Taylor, you just earned your first PGA TOUR victory. What does it feel like to be a PGA TOUR winner?

TAYLOR MOORE: Yeah, it still really hasn't sunk in. It's a pretty awesome feeling, obviously, knowing everything that goes with it. Super happy and -- not only for myself, but everybody that's here with me today, my family and my team, and really looking forward to what's to come.

THE MODERATOR: You just mentioned your family and team. Didn't know they were here through out the week. When did you realize the family was out here supporting you for the final round.

TAYLOR MOORE: Yeah, I didn't really know anything before I teed off. I had kind of a hunch, but I never saw anybody from my family until I was done. I saw my fiance' and her dad, saw them off 18 green when I finished up. Obviously, knew at that point they made it out, and I was super stoked to get it done in front of them.

THE MODERATOR: Walk me through this final round, just a few shots back, what was mentality, scoreboard watching, just kind of the whole final round.

TAYLOR MOORE: Yeah, I didn't see my first scoreboard until 17. Kind of before I hit that bunker shot, I knew where I was at. Really got off to a good start, though, today. Hit a great 3-wood into 1, made birdie there, and then it pretty smooth sailing on the front nine. Was happy to get that birdie on 9.

Then I think the shot on 15 is really when I kind of locked in for the finish. Hit a great 9-iron there. We had a perfect yardage, good wind, hit that one close, made the putt.

Then 16, got pretty lucky on that drive to be right of the cart path there to where I still had a shot at the green. But I was trying to just hit the middle of the green there. It got a



little closer than I thought it would and made that putt, and finished it off.

THE MODERATOR: What was the stat you were just reading earlier? Your putter, that was feeling hot today.

TAYLOR MOORE: Yeah, I didn't realize that. It was 64, 64 inside of 7 feet this week, so that was pretty awesome. I don't think I've ever done anything close to that, so that was really cool. Just a testament to the work I've put in with my coach and my team and, yeah, that was pretty sick to see.

THE MODERATOR: All right. We'll take some questions.

Q. You say you didn't see a leaderboard until 17, but did you feel in it down that back nine? It seemed like a lot of excitement was building around, and then you had those two big holes at 15 and 16.

TAYLOR MOORE: Yeah, I thought I was in it. I didn't really give up any shots today except for 7. So I thought I was maybe a shot or two back kind of that whole back nine. Once I made that one on 15, I thought I was right there, maybe tied for the lead at that point or within one.

Then, yeah, I saw that first leaderboard on 17 green.

Q. Tell us about the tee shot you hit at 15, and then what was the shot you faced on 16 and pulled off?

TAYLOR MOORE: Yeah, tee shot on 15, 175-ish, wind down off the left, it was a pretty comfortable 9-iron there. Once it took off, I knew it was going to be on the green. I didn't know how close it would be. But, yeah, it landed perfect and went to 6, 7 feet there, and I was able to knock that one in.

Yeah, 16 was kind of a bare lie there in the left rough, had some trees overhanging, so I had to keep it low at first, and then really was just trying to get it to land front edge of the green with a little bit of a lower flight. That way, it would kind of run back to that pin if I got it on line. So had a gap, really didn't have much tree trouble. Yeah, it came off the club good and I knew it was going to be past the front edge



once I got clean contact.

Q. Have you seen anything of late that told you this day was coming?

TAYLOR MOORE: I played pretty good to start out the season -- or the 2023 year, I should say. I had three top 15s there on the West Coast, played good at PLAYERS last week minus my finish. I was really poised for a top 10 there, I felt like. I played good minus the last six holes. I was frustrated about my finish Sunday night. Went home for a couple nights and reset and then got back out here and got back to work.

So I have done a lot of good things this year, excited about where my game's at, for sure, and, yeah, just so happy to get it done today. I mean, that was insane. But, yeah, overall, really like where my game's at.

Q. Two quick questions: The first one, you kind of sat under the radar for the first 15, 16 holes. Did you like it that way, that they were looking at everybody else and you could just play your game?

TAYLOR MOORE: I mean, I really wasn't worried about everybody else with how tricky this place is. I was just really trying to focus on me and my conversations with my caddie and what I was doing. I might have been under the radar to some people watching, but I felt like I was in the golf tournament from the time I teed off today and was just excited to control what I could control and get it done.

Q. Were you the most surprised person that it's not in a playoff?

TAYLOR MOORE: Can you say that again?

Q. Were you the most surprised person -- I assumed you thought there was going to be a playoff afterwards because everybody's sitting there at 10.

TAYLOR MOORE: Yeah. No, I was definitely surprised by that. I thought with Jordan one back and hitting it close there on 17, I never saw the putt, but I thought he might knock that one in, and then, yeah, I was tied with Adam when he was on 18 tee.

So, yeah, I went to the range and putting green and tried to stay loose and in competition mode until I was told it was done.

Q. When you're teeing off today, what are you thinking? Are you going to yourself, I can win, I can do this? Are you more just trying to shoot the best score you can? How are you approaching it,

especially not having done it before and obviously knowing some of the guys around you?

TAYLOR MOORE: Yeah, I thought the winner would be around 10-under. Obviously, I got to that today, which was cool. Yeah, I was just trying to shoot the best round I could. I think I got a little bit ahead of myself at PLAYERS, looking back, trying to have a nice high finish in that field, and went with the mindset this week that Thursday's the same as Sunday and every golf shot has the same value.

So I really tried to tell myself that today and remind myself of that and just go shoot the lowest number I could, and Chris and did I a really good job of that.

Q. I read a couple years ago your right lung collapsed and you had to take a little break from golf. And further into the story, I read you were at a stop light and you were actually going on your way to a flight, so if you turned left, you were going to the airport, and if you turned right, to the hospital, and you ended up turning right. Do you ever think about that moment, and about that moment, would you ever believe that you would be here today, Sunday?

TAYLOR MOORE: Yeah, I think if I would have taken a left, I might not be here in front of you guys tonight. So, I mean, that was God's will just to tell me to take a right and go to the hospital and check out what was going on.

Yeah, that was a crazy situation. I was super fortunate to get through that moment in my life and get back on my feet and get proper care and all that kind of stuff. It gave me kind of a new perspective on life and realize at that time that golf wasn't necessarily everything and there was life outside of this game. I was able to kind of reframe my life and put things in perspective for that time period. But once I knew everything was going to be okay and I was going to get back to playing this game, I refocused and got after it.

Q. While you were recovering, was there ever any doubt that you would be on TOUR some day?

TAYLOR MOORE: I don't think there was any doubt. I still had full Korn Ferry Tour status. I was only a couple years out of school. I think the more important thing was just to know that I was healthy again, was able to move and travel and not have to worry about my lung collapsing again after surgery, which was nice.

So I don't think there was any doubt internally that I was going to get out here. I think it was more of getting frustrated how long it was taking to get out here because I knew deep down I could be out here and compete and show everybody what I could do in this game.

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

Q. Could you describe what it was like waiting for the final pair to come in?

TAYLOR MOORE: Yeah, that 20 minutes or whatever felt like a long time. Really didn't have like a monitor or a TV to watch either, so I was getting updates from some of the staff out there. But, yeah, I was really just trying to stay loose and get in competition mode just in case I had to go back out to 18 tee and try to win this thing in a playoff.

Q. Also, you said you didn't see the leaderboard. Did you not want to know what was going on while you were out there or was it just the fact that you didn't see it?

TAYLOR MOORE: Yeah, I don't think it was intentional. It wasn't something I necessarily thought about. I think it was just kind of how the day went. Maybe anytime I had a chance to look at one, Chris and I were talking or I was focused on what I was doing. So it was not an intentional thing.

And then can't really miss that one on 17 when you're in the right bunker. So, yeah, saw that one and was excited to hit that bunker shot there on 17 nice and close to finish it off.

Q. So you were 103rd, I saw, ranked in the world. I think you're going to make a huge jump here after this. Do you look at that stuff? What does this mean to you?

TAYLOR MOORE: I think I've looked at it a little bit as of late, just as I've kind of been getting closer into some of the bigger events, like Match Play next week. I was looking at it for that reason. But really not too focused on that number. I think, obviously, this year with some of the schedule changes coming up, top 50, top 70 is very important. So FedExCup is kind of what I've been looking at more so than World Ranking.

And, yeah, I'm going to make quite a jump, I think, after this, which is awesome, and really excited for what's coming in a couple weeks in Georgia.

Q. When you think about the perks of winning, I guess you'll find out in the days ahead, but the Masters, does that stand out as maybe the biggest thing to you right now?

TAYLOR MOORE: Yeah, I think so. Just being a golfer and a kid growing up always wanting to get there, right, I think it's been something that I've obviously dreamed of since I decided to play this game and pursue it full force.

I've turned it down a couple times when I was in high school and college and maybe just as I turned pro, just because I wanted my first experience to be when I qualified and knew I was going to be competing there in April.

Q. I guess you came up mostly playing or playing a lot of baseball. When did the baseball dream become the golf dream and why was that?

TAYLOR MOORE: Trying to think back. So after my freshman year of high school was kind of when I decided to go full golf. I played some baseball tournaments that summer going into freshman year of high school, so I was 14 or 15 years old at that point. Really knew I wanted to play college golf and ultimately out here. Yeah, my dad coached baseball for 20 years so it was a little tough telling him that I was going to stop playing the game. But I think he loved golf too, so it was, it made sense and it's what I wanted to do deep down.

Q. Where did you play?

TAYLOR MOORE: Played shortstop and second base.

Q. Did you talk to your dad?

TAYLOR MOORE: A quick FaceTime there on 18 green when we were doing some pictures, but, no, I haven't sat down and talked to him yet. I'm going to give him a call after this.

Q. What did you think of the Valspar Championship prior to this week and I guess what do you think about it now?

TAYLOR MOORE: Yeah, it's tough not to like it a lot more right now, you know (laughing.) I played here last year as a rookie and I thought it was a good course for me. I missed the cut last year but I was optimistic about the golf course and the property. I think this place is a ball-striker's kind of paradise, fairway and green it to death. I think you can do a lot of good things. But it's been a fantastic week. It's been an easy week. Staying out here at Innisbrook has been awesome and convenient and the staff here has been really good to me and my team. So definitely thankful for that and excited to come back here in the future.

Q. What was the biggest difference today?

TAYLOR MOORE: I think just really having the self belief deep down. I've won at the college level, I won on Korn Ferry Tour and I think when I get myself comfortable and handle my emotions and get into my space where I'm really calm, I can play at the highest level and compete and I

thought I did a really good job of that today.

THE MODERATOR: Perfect. That's all the questions we have. Taylor, thanks for joining us and again congratulations on your first victory.

TAYLOR MOORE: Thanks, guys, appreciate it. Thank you.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

