

AT&T Byron Nelson

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McKinney, Texas, USA

TPC Craig Ranch

Jason Day

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Okay, we will go ahead and get started. Jason Day, thanks for joining us for a few minutes prior to the 2021 AT&T Byron Nelson, a tournament you've had a lot of success in. You're making your sixth start. You've had four top 10 finishes, including the win in 2010 and a runner-up in your most recent start.

Obviously a different course this week, but just some thoughts on being back here at the tournament this week.

JASON DAY: It was actually quite surprising that I've had four Top 10s and played it six times. I don't know why.

THE MODERATOR: Five times.

JASON DAY: There you go. I don't know why I haven't come back and played it a lot more. Good memories. I used to live not too far away from here back in 2008 to 2010, so similar kind of grass. Obviously this week is a little bit different with the Zoysia and all this stuff.

But, yeah, I've had good memories. I can't believe that it's been 11 years since my first win, so that's -- feels like it was only yesterday and then it's 11 years gone by.

But I'm pleased about being back, you know, in Texas, McKinney. I've never played this golf course other than the last three days. We had some weather Monday, Tuesday, but we've got some great weather coming in starting from kind of the rest of this afternoon going forward.

And I feel good about the game right now. I been working very hard. I know that the results haven't come this year, but it's nice to be able to come back not essentially to a place that I've played before, but to a tournament that I've played before.

You know, seeing all the familiar faces and everyone is so nice here. It's been actually quite a nice change to be able to come back and relax into a tournament.

THE MODERATOR: You mentioned the course. Just your thoughts? You said you had a chance to play it this week.

Just your thoughts on the course and how you think it might set up for you.

JASON DAY: Yeah, I think going forward the fairways and the greens are holding up nicely with how much rain we've had. The rough is obviously patchy in parts only due to the fact that it is bermuda, and bermuda can be patchy depending on how the growth is during the spring and everything.

But I feel like the course is in tremendous shape. I think it'll set up nice. You know, kind of over the next two days conditions will be a little bit softer, and as we get into the weekend and things start to warm up a little bit, it'll start to firm up a little bit, especially on the greens.

And the green surfaces are perfect; bunkers, the grain of the bunkers, they're not huge pieces of like grainy stone in there, so you can get a little bit of spin out of it, which is nice.

Obviously the one thing that makes thing tough is bermuda rough. Fairways are perfect, so bermuda rough is always inconsistent coming out, so that's the tough part. But the golf course, I think the guys are going to go pretty low this week. I think there is some long holes out here. It's a big course.

But I feel like it's weather dependant in regards to the wind, but I think there are a lot of holes out here that you can get after.

Q. Just quickly, how is Ellie doing and how is the timing of that, and do you expect to miss any golf in the next four, five weeks?

JASON DAY: I could get a call this week or next week. She's two to three centimeters dilated and 15% effaced, which means -- and her belly has already dropped. Could come in this week, next week. In the next four weeks it can come. She's full term on Friday, so, yeah, I'm on call waiting for her to -- we have people staying with her obviously because she is not looking after three kids by herself, so we want to make sure that -- I want to make sure that I can get back. That's the biggest thing.



If I'm playing golf, whatever, it doesn't matter. I just want to make sure that I see the birth of our fourth child. But she's feeling good. I think she's ready to get out. She's a very strong woman, so I couldn't handle it going what she's going through.

Watching her go through pregnancy is difficult enough and I'm not even pregnant, so...

Q. So given that state and that you could effectively leave at any stage during the next two weeks, how are you approaching the need to try to get into Torrey Pines?

JASON DAY: Yeah, obviously being on the outside looking in kind of thing, that's something I haven't even thought about missing a major championship in a very long time. I'm obviously on the border of missing that. I've got to play got next two weeks.

To be honest, if I don't get in I'm not qualifying. I've got a scheduled event for NetJets that I've got on Monday after the Memorial, so I'm planning on doing that instead of going to qualify.

So I got to do it the other way round, which I got to play well or win a tournament in the next two weeks. Yeah, I mean, it's obviously disappointing in regards that I haven't played the way that I've want to, but to be honest, it might be a good little time away if the baby does come early or if the baby comes on time, you know, that I get to spend at home with Ellie and the newborn and obviously the family.

But don't get me wrong, in that time I'm still going to be working hard, because I'm not thinking about just Torrey Pines. Obviously I would love to play Torrey Pines U.S. Open because I've had a lot of success around that golf course, but my thing is that I'm starting and I'm just trying to build that confidence. I feel like my game is starting to come around nicely and I'm starting to feel good about it.

Q. So just back up for a moment. Are you saying that if you don't get in with your play this week, Memorial, whatever, that you won't try to go through qualifying?

JASON DAY: Yeah, that's correct.

Q. Okay. Totally unrelated question. Next week you guys will be allowed to use Range Finders at the PGA.

JASON DAY: Yeah.

Q. Two things. One, how do you think that will impact play or more specifically performance? And then

secondly, do you like the idea of being able to use them?

JASON DAY: I don't mind the idea. I mean, golf is always evolving and changing, and obviously Range Finders, I think if you hit ne way off the map and you can't quite get an accurate -- if the angle is off, if you hit way one right or way left and the angle is off a little bit, that's when a Bushnell, or a Range Finder will come in handy.

I'm probably still going to do -- I don't think I'll use a Bushnell, Range Finder next week. I'll probably still do the yardage book, me and the caddie. Essentially, if there is a guy that's doing -- I can understand if you as a player didn't go yardages and you just were solely relying on your for yardages. Then you could do it to double check. But if you're doing it and looking at yardage book, it's just one more thing.

So maybe. I don't know if they've done studies and tests on if it's slower or faster. It'll be interesting to see how many guys will do it. I'm not going to do it next week.

Q. Just curious how the work with Chris Como is going, what you guys are specifically working on, and then being in Dallas, are you going over to his house and his lab?

JASON DAY: Right, no. The work is good. So like at the start of the year we wanted to make sure that we could swing it in a way that the body wouldn't hurt. I feel like the body is in a great position right now, so been working great with my trainer and obviously great with Como.

Certain positions we're trying to get into. Now we're looking at certain other things like release patterns and all that other stuff now. So we're past the stage of like kind of just gently get into it so I can swing in a certain way it doesn't hurt my body. We're past that and getting into the nitty-gritty stuff, the really small, finite stuff that put the whole swing together.

I've got to be careful because I'm excited about changing and making change quick, and sometimes if you make change too quick it throws your playing feel out. So I was working with a guy named Jason Goldsmith. He worked with Justin Rose over last few years. I worked with him end of 2012 through my kind of No. 1 years.

It's nice to be able to mix what Chris is putting into and then also keep the playing feel going as well. That's what I've been working on. It's been great to work with Chris because my body feels great.

Q. Going over to the house or the lab?

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

JASON DAY: No, no. During tournament weeks I don't want to work on -- I'm not like -- Bryson probably be there or whatever it is, but I'm not going to work on anything with my swing. I'll take a few videos, but when I'm here I'm trying to work on playing feel and just get going.

Q. This is a question more regarding next week and the PGA, and is kind of a twofold question. One is what is your familiarity with Kiawah and the Ocean Course? And my second question is about Rory and just kind of he just broke through obviously at Quail. Like a lot of you guys, he's a pretty good frontrunner when he gets things rolling. We've seen him get rolling and obviously he won at Kiawah. Just curious what you expect out of him next week as well.

JASON DAY: Yeah, so it's kind of funny. I don't have a lot of memories of Kiawah. I remember playing it and made the cut, I think, and then didn't really finish.

Q. Missed cut.

JASON DAY: Missed cut? Well, thanks, Benny. I couldn't remember. Only thing I do remember is Rory ran away with it and killed it.

And in regards in Rory, obviously I didn't watch a lot of it, but I was trying to keep track of him on ShotTracker. I can't remember. He didn't hit a lot of fairways last week, but you can kind of get away with it because the rough was down. So he was hitting a lot of quality iron shots into the greens. He was hitting 75-ish percent the greens in regulation. Sort game was off the charts and holing a lot of good putts.

Kiawah Island is a pretty big course. He'll need his distance. I don't necessarily think he'll need to hit it as straight as -- I just can't remember. I think obviously his distance is crucial out there, and his short game going to be crucial. I think he's already hitting his irons really good.

With that being said, he's coming off a win. He's very confident right now, so going to be very dangerous next week.

Q. Jason, can you describe how different it is to be No. 1 in the world versus now being No. 62?

JASON DAY: It's definitely a lot more quiet. There is not a lot of these that go around. I think the biggest -- there is a lot more stress, I would say. Different kind of stress. When you're No. 1 in the world there is a lot more people kind of wanting more of your time. And that's fine. I understand that part of it.

You know, this is a different kind of stress, because at the start of the year I had no idea what was going on in my game. I was trying to change my swing and putting hadn't been the same and I got too technical with the putting. The rhythm of the stroke went off and I was too like kind of slow, stop, jab, stroke and then I couldn't control the speed of my putts well, especially at short range.

Lost a lot of confidence in regards to my game, and it's crazy, because I feel like in my good putting days I was the best putter in the world. It was the one thing that was holding me back. I explain this way. My analogy is that we live in our solar system and there is a sun, and putting is my sun, my everything. We need the sun to kind of live and kind of go on.

For me, putting was the middle of my universe, the sun for me. To be able to not have that killed a lot of my confidence. It didn't matter how I hit it. I could always work something out. To not have that crushed me. I struggled a lot with trying to score and I -- I mean, you could see it in my scoring.

For a moment there I would average four, four and a half, five birdies a round, and more so recently I was averaging is maybe less than -- maybe two or three, maybe less than that. So being No. 1 in the world is -- how do I explain it?

I enjoyed my time getting there. I didn't like it, but I would do stuff differently to enjoy my time a lot more the next time I get there. Being here right now, it's more of I'm not trying to rebuild stuff, I'm trying to gain my confidence back and not swagger, but I'm trying to learn things.

When I was No. 1 in the world I really didn't know how I got there. I always had Cole taking care of everything. Everything in regards to mental or physical or anything like that always went through Cole, so I just went out and played. He took care of everything.

Now I'm quarterbacking everything. I'm talking to my trainer, my mental coach. I never had my hands in that because I had it taken care of.

So, yeah, it's definitely a lot different. At some point you get to a point where you kind of get in the position I am and if -- you get to a point -- because my big thing was I can't fall outside of top 50. I can't do that.

You get to a point where you're like, Okay, forget that. Just try and work on some things. Obviously priorities are changing for me with a new child on the way, but, yeah, I feel comfortable in myself now that I'm just kind of like getting things back in order and aligning things.

I feel really good about my game. I know I got to keep persisting. If I don't do it, it's not going to be enjoyable for me. If it's not enjoyable for me, I may as well retire. I can't play the way that I'm doing and beat my head against a wall essentially.

But, then on the other hand I'm like, No, you can't quit. You got to keep pushing, stay persistent, stay positive, patient, keep moving forward, and it'll come back.

So right now I'm trying to do that.

Q. We make a big deal about the majors. I'm curious, are the majors less important to you than they used to be?

JASON DAY: No, majors are very, very important. Right now they're not important just because I, you know -- they're more important when I feel like my game is in a position to win. Right now I'm like feel like my game is in position to win if I get lucky.

But that's kind of before last week. What I've worked on this week, I don't know how I'm going to play this week, but for the first time in a long time I feel really good about where my game is at.

Man, I've always struggled sleeping, but the first part of this season I didn't sleep -- I haven't slept that great. You're stressing about the game, the results, all these other things happening in your life, and I just didn't -- I hadn't been sleeping that great at all because of that.

And the majors per se, you always kind of want to work yourself up to it, but when you have no confidence in your game it's just really difficult to even think about winning one.

So right now I'm like it's not at the top of my priority list. Obviously you want to play well, but right now I'm trying to build a good foundation where I can build a nice building on it and build my game around it.

If I can do that, then I know it's going to be better off in the end.

Q. One last follow-up. Earlier you said you have an outing with NetJets. Did you schedule that thinking there is no chance you'll be qualified?

JASON DAY: I just -- in my mind there are certain -- there is nothing to qualifications or anything, qualifying for a tournament or anything like that. I've qualified. I never qualified for a major, but I qualified for a couple Korn Ferry

Tour events back in the day.

I just feel like if I do it that way that in my mind my mindset will say, Okay, it's fine. You can just go qualify next year and I'll get used to qualifying instead of going, No, I'm not going to qualify. I got to earn my way into that spot.

That's what I'm essentially saying. It's not nothing against qualifying for a tournament. It's just that in my mind I've got to earn it. It's like I never wanted to go and play Augusta before earning a spot there. I had plenty of opportunities, but I never wanted to go and play Augusta until I earned my spot, and I ended up earning it back in 2011.

So, yeah, it's interesting to be in this situation. To be honest, I'm totally content where I am right now in regards -- I'm here for a reason. What do I need to do to get out of it and push forward and get my ranking back where it needs to be.

During 2015 and '16 there were guys struggling looking at me holing every putt, winning tournaments, winning six out of -- four out of six events in a short period going, Man, that's so nice. That would be nice to be able to do that. Now I'm on the outside looking in watching other guys do it, and it does suck watching it because I know what it feels like.

But right now I'm not in position. I'm not jealous or anything like that. I just got to understand I'm here for a reason and I'm in this position for a reason. How do you get out of this position and try and come up with a plan.

Because if you don't come up with a plan to get out of this situation, I will just be kind of walking around in circles.

Q. Did you say you're working again with Jason Goldsmith?

JASON DAY: Yeah, I'm working.

Q. Do you think that the baby's birth will alleviate some of that stress you've been feeling?

JASON DAY: I think, yes. I mean, I've thoroughly enjoyed spending a lot of time with my kids and this is our last one, so we're done after this. Like I said, priorities do change a little bit, but obviously having a child is the greatest thing that I feel like you can ever do.

Fortunately for us we were able to have four, which is such a blessing. I could get a call in the next four weeks or whenever, this week, next week, and I could be on a plane going home. If it happens to be on Sunday at a major

championship where I'm in contention, it happens. You got to do it.

I'm not going to miss it because I'm in contention. I would much rather -- a golf tournament is -- it would be nice to win, but family is a forever. You got to be very careful of that.

Yeah, right now I don't have anything distracting me other than the potential of a child coming in the next four weeks. Other than that, I'm just all golf. That's all I am. Very motivated right now.

THE MODERATOR: All right, Jason, we appreciate your time. Wish you the best of luck this week. Thank you.

JASON DAY: Thank you, Doug.

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