

AT&T Byron Nelson

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McKinney, Texas, USA

TPC Craig Ranch

Jordan Spieth

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Jordan Spieth to the interview room here at the 2022 At&T Byron Nelson. Jordan as a Dallas native, what's it like always to come back to this event as a hometown event for you?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, it's special. I always want to play really well here. It's obviously one that's starred on the calendar as I've got so many of my friends that are able to come out. A lot of times on the road family can come out but friends can't. So in that sense it's a really, it's got an opportunity to be a really fun week. And I always want to play really well and I think last year may have been my best finish, so maybe I can take a little confidence off the shifts in courses over the years and maybe this one's the best fit for me.

So had a few weeks off and excited to get going. Obviously an exciting group, having KH who won last year and then obviously Scottie. So tomorrow afternoon should be a bit crazy and I think we'll embrace it.

THE MODERATOR: Got done with a practice round now. What are you seeing and liking from the course with second time being here?

JORDAN SPIETH: It's in incredible shape. The fairways are firmer, so I think last year we got some rain and I think they will play narrower, so I think that in that, because of that I think the scores will be a little bit higher, just because it's harder to hit the fairways and the rough's really high.

So if you're in the fairway you can attack pins on a lot of the greens, but if you're not you're really out of position because they stick 'em over in corners and the way the course is designed it's, you have to be able to have spin on the ball to get close to the pin.

So it's still going to be a premium on driving, probably more of a premium on driving the ball accurately than it was maybe last year, just because the fairways will play 5 to 10 yards smaller with how firm they are and I think that that's going to be what the tournament, the TOUR, everybody wants out of this place. It can show a little bit of teeth and



it's certainly in the best condition, shape I've ever seen it in.

THE MODERATOR: Justin Thomas was in here earlier and I hear you have an extra roommate for the week. Is that going to mean an extra baby-sitter as well?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, well, yeah, it's a lot of fun. I got a couple roommates this week. So all hands on deck helping out and so whenever I can I'll put the stress on him, maybe that will wear him out a little bit for the week.

THE MODERATOR: Questions from the media, please.

Q. You've kind of been the hometown star here in this tournament the last few years. Now obviously Scottie has risen up. You guys being paired together, both being Longhorns, your thoughts on what that means and what it means for Dallas golf too at the professional level?

JORDAN SPIETH: We played together last year and to be honest I don't think he's any different as a player. You guys just maybe look at him in a different lens than you did at this tournament last year, for me I'm used to playing with him weekly here in town and so it will just be a good time, we'll have fun and I think it might add a little bit to the afternoon round, obviously, tomorrow. I think the end of the morning round, maybe.

But I'm excited to kind of see -- I mean I've come here and played this tournament after winning the Masters and kind of maybe that year what that extra was like and I'm kind of interested to almost be a little bit of a bystander in that situation and watch kind of the extra craziness surrounding Scottie's return here home after winning, what, two tournaments ago for him.

So it should be really fun, like I mentioned before, I think we're both going to really embrace the hometown crowds and you hear a lot of "Hook 'Em" and then in Dallas there's a lot of Sooners, a lot of Aggies and they make their presence known as well, they want you to know that they're here.

So as far as both being from the University of Texas, we'll



hear a little bit of everything, I'm sure. But it will be a blast, hopefully we can both kind of feed off each other.

Q. Obviously you're playing well, you won your last start, but your putting isn't where you want it to be. You have a whole month off, what do you do in that timeframe to kind of work through this or is it something where you put the putter down for a little while?

JORDAN SPIETH: I work on putting.

Q. Well of course, but I mean is there something --

JORDAN SPIETH: Well I took like a week and a half off all together and just kind of hit the reset button. It was a really busy spring, even the weeks off I was traveling and really busy, not ideal for your golf, but just some -- my brother got married, stuff that's more important. So I finally had kind of a break, used it to actually be a break and then started back into practicing some and then playing more the last four, five days to just those little kind of fine tuning shots, having to make your 5-, 6-footers that you, that on a practice greened you end up knowing where it's going to break, so that takes part of it out. So getting back to reading greens, matching line and speed up, so I feel good about where things are. I made a lot of putts from fringes this year, it's a weird statistic that will show up on chipping and not on putting.

So I'm not -- for me I feel like things are in a good place, it's a matter of I hit a lot of lips, it's just one of those see a couple go in and all of a sudden the hole can start to look really big. So that's what I'm looking for this week, I'm looking forward to hitting good putts and just believing that they're going to drop.

Q. We finally settled into this majors schedule. The PGA Championship got moved to may a few years back, but then COVID hit, things were all out of whack. JT said, I'm still trying to figure out my schedule, like what works. Do you feel that way or do you feel like you've got this now with the PGA Championship in May and kind of what you need to do to prepare for all the majors?

JORDAN SPIETH: I've taken three weeks off and won a major, I played three weeks in and won -- I mean for me I don't, I like to be sharp, so I like to have played at least up close to a major. I've never played into the U.S. Open, but I've played four weeks in a row before that week off prior to the U.S. Open.

So my schedule has really not changed at all. I don't look at it as I have to play the week before, you would like to be

a little sharp enough, but if you play four weeks in a row and have one week of rest you should be sharp enough anyways.

This year I look forward to playing the week before The Open Championship, something I haven't done since 2015, so I look forward to that at the Scottish Open and that opportunity to kind of play in some of that weather leading into the British and seeing what that can do for me.

So I feel good about it. Akron was always before the PGA now it's the Byron Nelson before the PGA, so it really didn't change a whole lot for me. But a lot of guys that didn't play the Byron Nelson now as you see we have a great field this year, are choosing to come play into Southern Hills. So that's obviously great for this tournament and I certainly enjoy that, but it didn't change my schedule much at all.

Q. One sentence. Mavs prediction tomorrow?

JORDAN SPIETH: I like Mavs in seven.

Q. So you got to meet Nadeshot after your pro-am round, so I guess if you could -- I don't know involved you are in the Esports community or anything like that, but if you want to just talk about what it was like to meet him and maybe anything that relates to gaming that you know of?

JORDAN SPIETH: I'm not very involved in the gaming community at all, but when you meet somebody you tend to then follow them and their careers and going forward and obviously it's taken such a massive stage in sport now, so it will be kind of fun to watch that process going forward.

Q. Second major knocking on the door in Oklahoma in five or six days, what did you take away from your recent round at Southern Hills?

JORDAN SPIETH: I just, I played it in the U.S. Amateur but it changed so much and I was 15 or 16 years old, so I just wanted to see it. I wanted to take maybe some stress off practice rounds next week and be able to maybe do nine each day instead of feeling like I got to go out and learn a lot.

Major championship practice rounds can take three and a half hours per nine. So trying to knock out as much as you can ahead of time is really nice.

I thought the golf course was fantastic. I loved it. I think the green complexes are perfectly fitting to the holes. There's going to be a lot -- the greens play maybe three quarters of the size that they actually are. There's a lot more runoffs than I remember into Bermuda chipping areas

and into runoff areas that are mowed. So you can be left with a lot of really delicate little shots. And then they have that hydronic system that a lot of courses have adapted now where they can cool it off and make it firmer, make the firmness whatever firmness they want. So they have the ability to essentially control exactly what almost score to par that they want, obviously weather dependent.

But I think it's going to be a really firm and fast PGA and I think it's going to be one of the higher scoring PGAs that we have seen. Now I did play it in 35 mile an hour winds with Justin, so I saw it, I saw the teeth of it, so that could change. But it was a great test. I really enjoyed playing it.

Q. Question about how this houseguest stuff works. Does JT invite himself over? Is it just understood? What's the background there and is it just him who is staying or are there others?

JORDAN SPIETH: No, Jason Dufner and his girlfriend and then Justin and his fiance' and then their dog and our dog are good buds. So I think in an ideal world he would stay closer to the course, but I think he would have felt too guilty not staying at our house since we live here. So that's kind of, he didn't say that, but that's probably how, you know, when he's driving home at rush hour I think he's probably like, Man, you know, all right, I guess we got to go back there.

But it's a lot of fun. We stay together probably more than half the tournaments in a season anyways now and so it's not really much different, other than I get to sleep in my own bed. But it's nice hanging out at night, get to kind of show him around Dallas a little bit and eat some good food and then we'll go on next week and do the same thing.

Q. What are the pros and cons to that? Is he messy? Does he at least make the coffee in the morning?

JORDAN SPIETH: I don't go into their room, so, no, he's very clean, they're great houseguests. I've got no complaints thus far, but it's only Wednesday, so ask me later in the week.

Q. Curious, do you think it's an advantage or a disadvantage to play a home event where you can get reps in prior to a major?

JORDAN SPIETH: I didn't, to get reps in, like to come here, last week or whatever, I didn't this year.

Q. But this tournament, like playing in the tournament field the week prior in your hometown, what does that feel like?

JORDAN SPIETH: I'm sorry. Can you?

Q. Do you think it's an advantage to be able to have home tournament feel prior in your hometown prior to the Masters or the PGA?

JORDAN SPIETH: Prior to next week? So in relation to next week. Yeah, I think more so just because I think that our crowds the next two days will be more similar to a major championship type crowd, like the nerves will be higher. You're at your home event. Like I mentioned before, I want to play really well. That's always been that way here and I think that that kinds of put you at the heart rate level that you feel in majors, so more often you can put yourself in that position the more comfortable you get in that position.

So I was in that position the last couple rounds I played, just contending to win a tournament, but it's been a few weeks off, so it will be nice to kind of jump back into it and see. And that's where you really see where things are. So then you can kind of sharpen the axe a little bit more efficiently for next week.

Q. Back to Southern Hills, it seems like after the Gil Hanse renovation likes the short grass is back in play, I think it was JT talking about scrambling around the greens being really important next week. So obviously it's like you, JT, Cam Smith, Scheffler showed it off at Augusta, really good short game around the greens. Curious your thoughts on other players that you think are exceptional around the greens that maybe don't, most people wouldn't realize or you're impressed by?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think Daniel Berger's about as impressive as anybody around the greens. And I guess if you just look at the stats it shows you that, but I play a lot of rounds with him so I'm just saying off of random shots here or there that don't even go on the stats, it's fun to watch him around the greens get the job done.

There's not many that aren't very good. You kind of need that part of the game around here for your golf rounds to be able to shoot low scores. So he's the first one that comes to mind as far as having to travel anywhere, any kind of grass types. A lot of times, like next week is really grainy Bermuda, so if you grew up in Texas, Florida, or along the South, you grew up on that grass and it's a different kind of chipping and putting. And that's where you can see guys who aren't used to that struggle a little bit with that into-the-grain Bermuda.

So I'm sure there will be a lot of guys on the chipping green trying to work a lot of those shots that you see like at Memphis and you see there and places with that and even

like Albany, down at Tiger's event, super grainy, thick stranded Bermuda. So it's about as anything as hard as anything to chip off of, that's why your greens in reg will be really important next week because you might be in position where even the best in the game with a wedge in their hand have to kind of hit a chip to 10 or 12 feet.

Q. Wanted to get your reaction to the news yesterday about the TOUR denying the waivers for the LIV and you come from a background and experience on the PAC and I'm sure you probably have a lot of discussions in there with other guys, just your reaction and what other reactions you might have heard from other players.

JORDAN SPIETH: I would say I'm not surprised by it. I don't think anybody's really surprised by it, by the TOUR's stance on it. And I believe that they're likely getting the best legal advice possible to know what the steps are going forward.

I was on the board and the PAC, but I rolled off, so I'm not in those discussions anymore and I'm perfectly happy with where I'm at and so I'm kind of as a bystander going to be a little interested to see how things play out.

THE MODERATOR: Jordan, thanks for joining us and we wish the best of luck this week.

JORDAN SPIETH: Thank you.

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