

# FedEx St. Jude Championship

Sunday, August 18, 2024  
Memphis, Tennessee, USA  
TPC Southwind

## Maverick McNealy

### Quick Quotes

#### Q. How long has your little brother been on the bag?

MAVERICK McNEALY: It's his second week. So between 54 holes in two days on the weekend in Greensboro and 110 heat index in Memphis, I've really put him through the ringer. If he can make it through these two, I think he'll be all right.

#### Q. Is this indefinitely just going forward?

MAVERICK McNEALY: Through the fall, and we're having an absolute blast. For two of the biggest high-pressure weeks of the season, we've had so much fun.

#### Q. What does it feel like to know that you were out there knowing exactly what was on the line, you knew what you had to do, you set a target number and you hit all your marks under pressure, in the heat and everything? It must be extremely gratifying.

MAVERICK McNEALY: It is. There's something about having your back against the wall that lets you do things that you can't normally do under normal circumstances. It narrows your focus. It heightens your awareness. It does some pretty fun stuff, and it's a feeling that you really chase as a professional athlete.

When I holed that bunker shot on 16, it was a do or die. I needed to hole it to have a chance. That was pretty cool. I was like, this is a chance for something special. Might be one shot short, might be just enough. We'll see. But either way, I'm really proud of my effort today.

#### Q. How did your mentality change between before you set up on that bunker shot to then seeing it go in?

MAVERICK McNEALY: You know, my mentality really was the same all day. I was just trying to make as many birdies as possible. I just knew that my energy level spiked a little bit when that bunker shot went in, and I was like, my job from 16 green to 17 tee is to bring that heart rate down and



right back into that kind of optimal zone and just watch the speed of my walking, speed of my breathing. Went through my process, and hit great shots on 17, too.

#### Q. You knew coming to 16 tee that you wanted to go -- you needed to go 3, 3, 3 to move on?

MAVERICK McNEALY: Yeah. Starting the day I thought 7-under was going to be the number I needed to shoot to get to Denver. But I got off to a great start, had one kind of unlucky bogey, and then fought hard and figured I had to hole that bunker shot on 16, and I did. That's what kind of gave me a chance.

#### Q. Can you think of a time in your career where you were in a situation where you're either trying to close out a tournament or it was sort of a do or die, you had your back against the wall and you came through in the way you did today?

MAVERICK McNEALY: Yeah, the biggest example of that is probably the Ellie Mae Classic at Stonebrae in 2019. I needed a third-place finish to secure my PGA TOUR card, and I don't know what it was. I remember I eagled the 15th hole, almost holed a 2-iron from 290 yards and made eagle and I think one more birdie or something like that. I just finished really, really well. That T3 finish was what secured my PGA TOUR card, and that was kind of the biggest moment that stands out in terms of shaping my career.

But there's a lot of times. It happens even on a normal week when you're not playing that great. You've got to birdie the last hole to make the cut; you want to birdie the last two to get in the top 10, something like that. That's the beauty of this game; there's always a rung on the ladder you're going for.

#### Q. If this is where it ends, how will you reflect on this year?

MAVERICK McNEALY: I'm really proud of my year, even if I finished 51st. I started the year on a medical, was not in any of the Signature Events, and with the huge number of points those events got, I am really proud of the fact that I had a chance to make it in the top 50. I'm 12th in strokes gained this year. I played really well. This is my 21st



tournament. I've played a lot. My name is ahead of a lot of guys that were playing for those big points, no-cut events. I'm really proud of my and my entire team's effort. We really gave it everything this year.

**Q. What are the next few hours going to look like for you?**

MAVERICK McNEALY: First, I'm going to go shower because it's 105 and you don't smell very good, and check out of the hotel room and go sit in the airport parking lot and decide if I'm going to Denver or Vegas.

**Q. Did you fly your own plane here?**

MAVERICK McNEALY: No, I didn't. I was looking at that Cessna 208 thinking, man, that would be a pretty cool way to get around. No, I don't have a plane. Plus I haven't flown in a month and a half. My next flight will probably be with an instructor for safety.

**Q. I'm assuming this affects how you approach the fall and whether you're going to go to Napa and all that stuff?**

MAVERICK McNEALY: So yeah, like eight points is the difference between playing seven tournaments and playing four tournaments this fall. There's weddings I want to go to. There's life stuff. There's taking a bit of a break and a rest. Getting to spend a little bit of time at home. Those are all things that are on the line. I know I'm for sure going to play Napa, Vegas, Japan, and probably Bermuda and RSM just because those are really fun places. I'll add Sanderson and Cabo, too. I love those tournaments, as well.

Yeah, I don't know. I haven't really looked that far. But it'll be nice to be on the West Coast a little bit this fall.

**Q. I see you've got your family here with you. How does that help when you're dealing with a pressure packed round and now as you have to sit and wait and see your fate?**

MAVERICK McNEALY: Well, having my brother Scout on the bag was really nice for me this week. He knows me so well, and it's funny because -- there's four of us, four boys, and all of us have caddied for all of us in some kind of combination or another. We all shared a room growing up, all the way through college for me, so we know each other extremely well. He knows probably better than most how I'm feeling, what I need to hear, and he knows golf really well. He's a great player in his own right.

He was a huge asset on the bag for me. To have my wife

Maya here all year was a game changer. It's the first time she's been able to travel with me, and with the amount of golf you play and spending way more nights in hotel rooms than in your own house, having a little bit of home there with you on the road is just -- it changes everything. We joke we just watched "Modern Family" and ate Chipotle last night, and that's exactly what I needed to come down from a really challenging, stressful round and prepare and recover and recharge for the next one.

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