

# Aberdeen Standard Investments Scottish Open

Wednesday, 7 July, 2021

North Berwick, Scotland

The Renaissance Club

## Justin Thomas

### Press Conference

#### **Q. Your thoughts on the course and being here at the abrdn Scottish Open?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: Course is great, course is a little bit firmer, got quite a bit of rain the last two days and was even beautiful today. Saw my shadow today which is something I don't know that I've seen in Scotland before. That was nice.

It's an enjoyable week. The European Tour always does an unbelievable job of treating myself and all of us from the PGA TOUR that come over here, make us feel like rock stars. So it's a very, very enjoyable week.

#### **Q. I'm guessing that you haven't played St. George's?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: I have not, no.

#### **Q. Okay. So please explain to me why you think playing at the Renaissance, which isn't like St. George's, believe me, is a good preparation for The Open?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: To be perfectly honest, my best Open Championship finish came the year that I played The Scottish Open before. So I'm strictly going off of that. I feel like for me, it can't hurt. It's not like getting acclimated to links golf, even though it could be a totally different golf course, just getting used to chipping on these surfaces, putting on these greens.

You know, basically the stuff I've been doing the last three days to try to get used to these conditions is just going to save me then next week, instead of using up Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday of a major week trying to get accustomed to the condition and the turf and the speed of the greens, hopefully I'll be able to do so this week. And then once I get there at St. George's next week, I'll be in a little better shape.

#### **Q. What do you think lies in store for you? What have people told you about St. George's?**



A Rolex Series Event

JUSTIN THOMAS: I'm not sure. I heard it's a little different. It's got some tough fairways to hit is what I've heard.

I think like a lot of links courses, it really just depends on how the course is. If it's firm and fast, it's going to play very, very difficult and the bunkers will probably come into play, and if it not much wind and it's soft, I'm sure we'll shoot some pretty low scores.

I don't know anything about it. I can't -- I'm sure if I saw some highlights of it, I might remember some holes. But you know, I'm just worried about this week and then once I get there next week, we'll take that place into consideration and see what I've got to do.

#### **Q. I just wonder if it feels a bit different in terms of this whole process of acclimatising yourself to British seaside golf. Because obviously there wasn't an Open Championship last year, you weren't able to travel and there has been that sort of two-year gap. Is it a more demanding process this time around?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: Well, yeah, it's definitely different than it was two years ago. But it's not that different than what we have in place in the PGA TOUR. I mean, it's a little bit different but you still have to go through testing and allowed certain places, not allowed others, whatever it might be.

Yeah, I don't think you can quite compare what the experience was like two years ago versus now.

#### **Q. The point I was making was getting used to the style of golf that you have to play on these British seaside courses compared to the usual diet in America when you've been playing that exclusively. So obviously it's been a longer gap in terms of acclimatisation golf-wise.**

JUSTIN THOMAS: Sorry, I misunderstood your question. Yeah, I guess a little bit. I think not being overly firm I think made it probably a little easier to get accustomed to.

There's a lot of greens out here, especially if you get it in the rough or even you're just long, far away or downwind or something, for the most part, you can run it up on the



green.

But I would say there's a couple greens here and there that especially on some of the par 5s, that it's hard to run it up to the green because it's either kind of crowned to where if you go one side, it goes one way; you go the other side, it goes the other way; or it's a false front and a big upslope going into to the green. You really just kind of have to take what the course and where you are gives you.

I think it's something I've learned with links golf, at least although I haven't played it particularly well, I try not to get a game plan for the entire golf course. I try to more so take a game plan on each hole and situationally.

There's a hole like 5 out here that if there's no wind, I'm trying to drive it on the in front of the green, but if it's raining in off the left blowing 30, I'm trying to make a par. It's little things like that that you're just trying to get used to being over here versus in the States.

**Q. It's not Kapalua, that's for sure, but great to see you over here. Tell me, your short game is so good but as you're talking about it, the grain is different, all the rest of it. How do you adjust to this and in such a short time? You're only here for a couple of weeks. Amazing. What are you doing with Jimmy to work on that?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: I just tried to spend a lot of time on the practise range or on the golf course in the practise round just getting used to it.

For me, the thing I have the hardest time with is getting a consistent strike in hitting it exactly how I want. I think in America, I have a pretty good idea of how it's going to come out every time, or at least the ball sits very similar to where if I want it to run out, I can get it to run out or if I want it to spin a lot, I can get it to spin a lot.

I think at least for me, that's something I have the hardest time with over here is judging how the ball is going to come out, especially if you get a little bit of moisture on the ground or on your ball, then you can't really get any spin and it kind of comes out high with no spin. Then you're kind of using the contours a little bit more.

So it's kind of like I was saying earlier, I think it was Iain, that said you just have to take the situation at hand and assess it when you get there, kind of thing. It's not like I'm using one technique all the time. You have a lot of weird stances, a lot of weird lies, especially whether it's in bunkers or fescue or whatever it might be. Just trying to hit a lot of different shots over the course of today and the last two days just to try to make sure when I get in a certain

situation, it's something I'm comfortable in.

**Q. And quickly, last but not least, what's your best memory of playing over here?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: A lot of great memories. I unfortunately haven't really had any good results at any tournaments. I played pretty well here a couple years ago.

But honestly one of the most fond memories I had was two years ago when we came in for the Scottish, myself, my dad and Kevin Kisner, we went out to North Berwick and played and that was really fun. You don't often, basically never, would we be going to a golf tournament in the States and get in a day early and want to go play golf somewhere.

But being over here, having the opportunity to play a course that obviously none of us would play unless we were here; and we needed to stay awake, it was our first day, so we knew if we laid down on the couch, we were toast. It was fun. We took some trolleys and went out and played 18 holes and went in the pub and had a couple pints after and just really enjoyed the whole experience.

**Q. It's a great place. I know they loved you being there, too.**

JUSTIN THOMAS: Thank you.

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