

# The 150th Open

Press Conference

Friday, 15 July 2022

## Dustin Johnson



STUART MOFFATT: Good afternoon, everyone. I'm delighted to be joined by Dustin Johnson, who leads The 150th Open at 9-under par.

5-under par 67 today. What are your thoughts on the round?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I thought I played really nicely, just drove it well, hit a lot of quality iron shots, gave myself a lot of looks at birdie. And just really solid day.

Never really got out of position. Other than missed a few short ones for birdie, but other than that, felt like I putted well and rolled it good.

**Q. Cameron Young was in here yesterday, and he said that you could play here every day for a year and still learn something new. Knowing that you don't like to over complicate things, how did you approach this week from a preparation standpoint?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Well, I've played here -- I played the last two Opens here, and I played the Dunhill. So I played the golf course enough, so I know it well enough. I don't think you could ever know this place as well as you would like to just because there's so many humps and bumps and bunkers.

I felt like I've done a good job over the last couple days just off the tee, just getting into the right positions and putting it in the right position around the greens.

**Q. D.J., you're up there, Gooch is up there. Sergio is 6-under, Poulter and Westwood are playing well. Have the LIV guys been galvanised at all by everything that's been said the last few weeks?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I don't -- I mean, I don't really know what you're talking about. For me, obviously, they're all good players and playing well this week.

For me coming in here, obviously, it's a major. I want to come in here and play well and compete. I feel like I put myself in a good position going into the weekend. Probably be a few back by the end of the day, I would imagine. Still in a good spot going into the weekend.

**Q. In contention now for the weekend. I just wondered about your experience and disappointment from 2015. Will you do anything differently for the weekend? How can you hang in there this time?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: No, just keep doing the same thing. I feel like I've got a good game plan. Kind of depends on the wind direction, how you attack the golf course. I feel like I'm swinging well. Obviously, it's just avoiding the bunkers as much as possible. It's really hard not to hit it in one of the bunkers. I've been in three so far, and two of them I had to chip out sideways, and the other one I had a shot.

If I can just keep out of the bunkers and just keep playing kind of smart golf where, when I have a good number and a club that I can get it close to the hole, I can be aggressive. But when not, just kind of hit it to 30, 40 feet and try to two-putt.

**Q. Dustin, what did you learn from the third round seven years ago that can help you over the weekend?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: To be honest, I don't even remember the third round from seven years ago. I've played a lot of golf since then, and that was a long time ago.

Obviously any time playing in a major and playing golf courses, you learn stuff about yourself. But that was quite a while ago. I'm sorry, I really don't remember.

**Q. I'll bring you back to this one then.**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I don't want to go back to it obviously. It wasn't very good.

**Q. Bringing you back to this week, the challenge this week, the fast-running golf course. Some people might think it doesn't suit you, but you talked about playing smart golf.**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I really like the golf course. I like when it plays firm and fast like this. You've got to really think your way around it, kind of on every shot -- where you're trying to pitch it, where you want your ball to stop. Obviously sometimes it's very hard to do.

I feel like I've done a really good job with that the first couple days. Want to do a little bit more of it over the weekend.



**Q. Dustin, can you walk to work? From where you're staying this week, can you walk --**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, I'm at the Old Course Hotel.

**Q. Do you just walk to work?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: No, I've been getting a car just because it's easier and I've had my clubs with me. So I've been taking a car. I think last time I was at the Old Course Hotel, I just walked across.

**Q. You know how people use the phrase "the home of golf," It's a really meaningful thing to some people but not to everybody. "St Andrews is the home of golf," is that a meaningful thing to you?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, it is. I've always enjoyed this place from the first time I came. I think it was '07, we came and played a college event right down the road. Obviously it's a special place. It's a special place to have The Open Championship. The start and the finish here is not like any other.

So I always enjoy it. Yeah, it's definitely got a lot of meaning. Obviously it would mean a lot to be a champion too.

**Q. Talor Gooch said that LIV golf has banded together this week considering all the negativity surrounding you. Is that the case? How does that make you feel? Is it motivating you in any way?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Not me because, honestly, I don't read anything. So I wouldn't know what you were saying or if there was anything negative being said. I don't pay attention to it.

**Q. I was wondering how much different the course played this morning compared to when you played in the afternoon yesterday?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: It was raining when we started this morning. Obviously rained some overnight, and early this morning it was raining up until about 10:00. It's still firm, but it was definitely a lot softer.

You could tell even the greens were a lot greener than they were yesterday. Greens were a little bit slower, little bit softer, and so were the fairways.

**Q. Dustin, you're so relaxed, so calm, you show little emotion. There's a lot of noise, whether it's not about this tournament or something else. You're always one of the favourites getting into a tournament, having been No. 1 for so long. Of course not this week, of course. How do you shut**

**all this noise around you? Does it take special effort? Or you're just built like that? You said you don't even read anything.**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: That's exactly how I do it. I don't read. I don't look at it. It doesn't bother me because obviously, everyone has their own opinion and I have mine, and the only one I care about is mine.

**Q. So when you say that it's a kind of a bubble that you made around yourself, it just focuses on you and your golf?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, absolutely. That's all I try to do is focus on myself and the golf. Everything else will take care of itself.

**Q. With the controversy surrounding the LIV golfers particularly this week, has it felt a different experience this Open? Or do you feel when you're out on the course the crowds just want to see good golf?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, the crowds have been fantastic. I've always had a lot of support over here. Yeah, it's been that way this week. A lot of support out there, and the fans have been great.

**Q. D.J., you say you really enjoy this town. What has been the highlight for you this week away from the course?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Not much. Went out to dinner one night, had a really nice dinner. Other than that, I've just been in my room resting and trying to prepare.

Probably Sunday afternoon, I played a late 18 Sunday afternoon which was really nice. Not a whole lot of people out. Finished about 9:30. So it was just a nice day. It's always a good week being here at St Andrews.

**Q. Dustin, what was your first experience of links golf? Do you remember the first time you played it what you thought of it? Did you like it? Did you not like it? What do you like about it now or dislike about it now?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, from the first time I came over, I always enjoyed links golf. I came over, the first time was -- I think it was my senior year in college. We played -- there's a tournament right over at St Andrews Bay. Then the second time was Walker Cup, came over and played at County Down. We played a couple of courses there too before the Walker Cup.

I've always enjoyed it. I like the way it makes you think on every shot, where you want to hit it, where you want the ball to end up. It's something I've always enjoyed.

**Q. What does The Open Championship mean to you?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: It means a lot. First of all, it's a major. It's the only course played over here -- I mean, the only tournament played over here, especially as a major, and kind of the only one that I ever play.

It's a big tournament. It's a great tournament. Obviously if you look at the history of it, it's a golf tournament that I would love to have -- it's a trophy I would love to have in the office when I'm done with my golf career.

**Q. Dustin, it's been a little while since you truly contended. During that stretch, it doesn't seem like your game's been that far off, but I wonder if there's been any issues with patience, pushing it or trying to get over the line, or how you've dealt with that?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I've played some good golf, but I just haven't been able to -- just not consistently. I feel like over the last few months the game's starting to see a lot more consistency in the shot shapes and the strikes and starting to putt it a little bit better. I think that's probably been the biggest key for me over the last year, just haven't been putting as well, and the driver hasn't been quite as good as I'd like it.

So those things are starting to -- I can just see them trending in the right direction. That's why I'm playing a little bit better here as of lately.

**Q. Well done on a great round today. Do you think being in the same group as Adam Scott provided some healthy competition at close range?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, I always enjoy playing with Adam and Marc. Obviously, Adam played really well today, had a great round. Any time you've got a guy in your group playing well, it kind of pushes you to play a little bit better and make some birdies.

**Q. Dustin, congratulations on your rounds. What's your mindset for tomorrow's round or for the weekend?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Once I see what the wind direction is and we get the pins later tonight, we kind of go through and map out a game plan. It's all based on the wind how you attack the golf course and kind of where you hit it and where you want to hit it.

Pretty much the same as I've done the last couple days, just try to keep it out of the bunkers off the tee.

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