

PGA Championship

Tuesday, May 13, 2025

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

Quail Hollow Club

Jordan Spieth

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good morning, everybody. Welcome to the 107th PGA Championship at Quail Hollow Club. We're pleased to start things off in the interview room with Jordan Spieth.

Jordan, welcome to your 13th PGA Championship. How are you feeling about your game coming into this week?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think I've been trending really well. I had an off approach week last week, which has actually been something that's been, I think, trending nicely for me. Just made some kind of dumb mistakes that were multiple-shot problems around that kind of old-school course.

But kind of throwing that out, I feel really good about some of the stuff I've been working on, some of the mechanics and traction of how I'm swinging the club or getting more sound and more consistent. I'm getting more confident in that, feeling like I can play all the ball flights that I'd like to.

You need that around this golf course because you've got to work it both ways, different heights. Obviously the greens -- although the course is soft now, the greens, I played yesterday in that rain, and even as it was raining, the greens were still firm, and they had the SubAir going. So you're just going to have to be a shot maker around here.

I feel like that part of my game has been improving as the year's gone on. Yeah, this is a place I've -- you can't fake it. There's a number of great golf courses that we play, and this is one of them. You'll get guys shooting 5-, 6-, 7-under, and you'll get guys shooting 5-, 6-, 7-over.

There's no faking it. The rough is up a little more than what we normally see when we come here during the season. A little more premium on the fairways. Trying to find greens in regulation will be my goal.

Q. Since the Masters, have you found yourself thinking more about the Grand Slam than you might have in previous years?

JORDAN SPIETH: I don't think so. It's been more -- I've been surprised at -- there's been a number of years I've come to the PGA, and no one's really asked me about it. There's been some years where it was a story line, I guess.

It's funny, I think, if Rory didn't, then it wouldn't have been a story line for me here necessarily. I mean, it's always a story line if I work my way in, but at least ahead of time, I just feel like I've been asked about it more than other years, including years where I've come in -- I want to say '22 I came in after winning and finishing second back-to-back, which I would have thought would be a time where that would have been one.

So I've kind of been surprised by the dynamic a little bit. But it's always circled on the calendar. For me, if I could only win one tournament for the rest of my life, I'd pick this one for that reason. Obviously watching Rory win after giving it a try for a number of years was inspiring.

You could tell it was a harder win than -- most of the time he makes it look a lot easier. So that obviously was on the forefront of his mind. Something like that has not been done by many people, and there's a reason why. But I'd love to throw my hat in the ring and give it a chance come the weekend this week.

Q. When you came to a PGA and people weren't talking about the Grand Slam, did you find that insulting?

JORDAN SPIETH: Not really, no, because the years I'm talking about, I wasn't in -- a lot of times, I wasn't in very good form. If you're not in very good form coming into a major -- I mean, I had a chance in 2019, and I was not in form. I was in the final group on Saturday with Brooks, and I was like, I know what it's like to have control of my game. I've played with Brooks with control of my game, and I see what he's doing right now, and I don't have mine. Let's see if I can fake it these next two days.

I feel a lot better now than, say, I did in that, but it's very -- I'm not insulted by it. Typically there's a lot of story lines. I feel like for so many years watching Phil's at the U.S.

ASAP . . . when all is said, we're done.®
sports

Open, there was some, then it wasn't some, and then he wins the PGA recently, and all of a sudden it becomes a story line in the U.S. Open. It just kind of bounces back and forth within the noise, I guess.

Q. Jordan in 2017 right after the PGA here, you and I had a conversation in Dallas, and I asked you about winning this championship, and you said you thought it would be the hardest one. You said it wasn't because of the psychological component of it being the Grand Slam; you thought it was the setups of this championship. Knowing all the events that were ahead, knowing the sites, has that opinion evolved from then to now?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think the hardest one, I believe statistically for me, if I look back at all my history of professional golf, would have been the U.S. Open, but I somehow snuck that one out. So then the PGA would be second because the Masters and The Open play a lot more into my strengths than the other two do.

So I think that's why I was saying that because I'd already won the U.S. Open because I'd snuck it out on a course that's not a normal U.S. Open golf course.

Yeah, I would say, had I won the PGA, I would have easily say the U.S. Open, and if I didn't win the U.S. Open, I would have reversed that. But having been the case, I think I'm in a position now, just because I have faster ball speed than I did back then by a significant amount -- you know, it was really just kind of the driving statistic that you need at U.S. Opens and PGAs that would have held me back.

There's just going to be certain courses, like maybe a Whistling Straits, that you could get away with it, and I had a good shot there. But some of these big American golf courses with thick rough, which are typically -- more PGAs are played on those than U.S. Opens, I would have expected it to be more of a challenge than the other couple majors.

Nowadays I think I actually, because of my driver becoming a weapon more than it used to be, that leaves me in a position where I feel a little more comfortable on these courses.

Having said that, you've got to go out and execute, but a familiar golf course is nice. I don't feel like I have to learn where all the pins are and where all the misses are and stuff. You can ask me the hole location on any green around this place right now, and I can tell you how I'm going to play the hole and where I'm going to try to hit it.

So it's nice to be at a familiar place this week, and I think that's an advantage a little bit. Then the fact that it's this big slopy Bermuda, you know, I grew up on that. So it's a good opportunity this week for sure.

Q. In Austin at the UT Golf Club, which you're very familiar with, I know there's a trophy and display case that's right there in the clubhouse. Just explain the significance of that memento to you and kind of what that means to your legacy as a Texas Longhorn.

JORDAN SPIETH: It's very cool. I loved going out there. I spent not long enough, but a lot of days going out and working on my game out there. They have a really cool majors trophy in the team facility as well. It's a Longhorn trophy, and every Longhorn that's won a major and what it was. That's a pretty awesome one too.

There's a very cool one at the golf course I grew up on at Brookhaven in Dallas. Just places that are close to my heart, where I learned to love the game, got better at the game, led me to being able to play it professionally and compete at a high level. Those are a few of the most special places to me, anywhere in the world, to be honest, and I love going back to UT Club when I get the chance and plan on doing it more often in the future than I've been able to do the last couple years.

As the kids get a little older, it will be fun to take them and show them. It's just a very nice thing to do. It's moved on to Scottie's more recently, and I'd love to step back in there and add to it, I guess.

Q. You mentioned your physical preparation up top. How does your mental preparation for a major differ from a standard Tour win?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think it's more about the golf courses than it is anything else. They're just going to present a little more of a challenge in a different way, and each one -- each major is different from the next in what that challenge is. Whether that's a side to miss on on the fairway that you might get away with in a PGA TOUR event that you don't get away with in a major, it's just a little bit of an extra level of course management.

Ahead of time, a lot of the course management preparation that's more of kind of the mental side. The crowds are bigger. The grandstands are bigger. That over time kind of just becomes a blur.

We always have huge crowds at this event. It's one of the -- and a lot of amphitheater-type seating here at Quail Hollow. So I don't think it will look as different as maybe when we go to an unfamiliar place like Valhalla last year

with huge setups but we don't know the course very well, so it all is just a big thing. This is normal for here.

Obviously they're not triple decker. They may be double decker, right? The PGA always throws in incredible grandstands, whether it be the PGA Championship or the Ryder Cup.

Everything's just a little bit more heightened, but it's more ahead of time. As you start to get into it, I think it's actually a little easier on the mental side -- easier than it is ahead of time. It just kind of settles into more of a normal tournament.

As you start to contend on the weekend, that changes. You sleep a little uneasy. Majors have that historical presence to them. They mean more. Every player that's playing this week will tell you, if they were going to win one of four tournaments, they'd probably pick one of the four majors. That settles in as you work your way into contention, and that becomes a little bit of a different animal, just sleeping more uneasy and anticipation.

It's all the off-the-course stuff that's harder to handle mentally than on the course.

Q. In the aftermath of the wrist surgery, are you now able to swing the club the way that you want to or had wanted to? Has there been any lingering effects to this point still in the recovery?

JORDAN SPIETH: Less and less as the year has gone on, which is great. It's hard to tell if it was preventing anything that I could or couldn't do, so I'm not going to say that it's everything. But just the ease of not worrying about it dislocating, I guess, or subluxing, I think, is the term for this specific, is really nice.

Just off the course, I'm able to pick my kids up and throw them around, and my wrist doesn't dislocate. You can imagine that's a good feeling.

So when I'm golfing, I haven't really been thinking about it the last couple of months. I wake up in the morning, I'm very aware I had surgery. My left feels twice the size of my right for about a half hour every morning. They say that stops about a year post-op, and it's getting -- some days are better than others. I haven't exactly given it a lot of rest in the last few months, and I'm sure that will help once we hit the off-season.

It's still there, very much so. I'm still aware, but I'm not worried about the same thing happening anymore thanks to the doctors that I've had and their rehab process that I went through. It was a lot of hard work. Last fall and into

the winter, physically and mentally, it was one of the hardest things that I've had to do.

Anybody who's come back from an injury, you want to be out there doing more and more and more, especially when I -- it's not like I was top five in the world last year, right? I felt like I was going to be coming from behind, and I wasn't able to do much while other guys were getting better. So just a hard, hard process to be patient with, especially for me.

It tested every bit of what I could do, and I went by the book. By the time I was able to play, I think I played well and was kind of in contention in Phoenix, and I was just like, man, I am just incredibly grateful just to be back out here doing this because there was months where you're going through the process wondering if or when that would happen again.

I didn't expect this year to be a ridiculous year. It's going to be something that I needed to work slowly towards with a long-term outlook, and I think it's going really well so far. I've got a big stretch and a lot of good opportunities coming up and a lot less distractions on it than I had last year.

Q. Looking at the four major parts of the game - driving, approach, around the green, putting - if you were forced to replace one of them with any other player on TOUR, which of the four would you choose, and who would the player be?

JORDAN SPIETH: I'd probably replace approach with Scottie. I think that probably would lend to the lowest score differential for probably most anybody, but I don't actually know how they're weighted overall for scoring average. I don't know that specifically.

But that would be my short, easy answer there. If you're going to lead in approach at historic levels, you're going to have a chance most every week.

Q. Over the last couple years, driving has really improved. You just called it a weapon. I'm wondering any of the changes you've made to make that a weapon, have any of those hampered your approach play? Has there been any push-pull with the changes you've made that maybe helped one area but hurt another?

JORDAN SPIETH: Not necessarily. I think the longer lever and the more full shots last year were better for me with where my mechanics were off. That would be -- I was not in a place that I played very good golf from, but because it was a longer lever, the timing was just easier hitting full shots with a driver.

Not to mention, the drivers that I have now are just incredible. The improvement Titleist has made in their drivers, like the mis-hits being just as fast and just as straight, I think the technology has a lot to do with it. But you're looking at strokes gained, so that's relative to everybody else having better technology too.

I was just more comfortable in full, hard shots. Yeah, it was more -- it was less of -- it was coincidental that the driving was better and the approach wasn't. I wasn't mechanically sound to hit all the shots needed to have an approach game that was up there with the best of them.

I didn't try to become a better driver by any means. It just kind of happened. This year it feels pretty good, and luckily, I think, I'm on the right path to having everything follow right behind it.

Q. Just a little followup on the wrist and the mechanics and all that. Your numbers really dropped off kind of on short approach, and then they're picking up again this year. How much do you think that was related to mechanics versus maybe almost kind of a fear factor going after the ball?

JORDAN SPIETH: Probably 75 percent mechanics, 25 percent fear factor. They were at their worst on any upslope, faded wedge shot. As I look back, that's just going to be -- I play with as much shaft lean as anybody, maybe ever, or just definitely in the highest percentile.

We played on some zoysia last year -- even the PGA is a good example. That 9th hole last year at the PGA, I think I hit good drives all four days, and I think I hit one shot on the green with a wedge off an upslope on zoysia. I noticed it at home; we have a couple of courses that we play on zoysia at home. You get me upslope on zoysia with a wedge, and I was dead.

I think that was some of the fear factor because on that zoysia, there's no give. It just gets stuck in the ground. And a fade, like you're trying to play it low off the upslope, trying to take spin off or something like that, but 75 percent mechanics for sure at least, but there was certainly a little bit of it that I think I was dumping underneath just because of that. I just didn't want to get over and get it stuck in the ground. It's almost like I was going to hit a root, you know.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports