

# NBC Sports Group Media Conference

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**Rich Lerner**

**Justin Leonard**

**Brandel Chamblee**

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everybody. Thank you for joining today's call. We're going to be joined by NBC Sports' lead golf studio team featuring Rich Lerner and analysts Brandel Chamblee and Justin Leonard.

RICH LERNER: Thanks for joining us. Now that I live in New England, in Connecticut, the Golf Channel has moved, I'm more acutely aware of sort of the waiting game that golfers play. Wait for the snow to melt. We had plenty of it. You wait for that first warm day. And obviously if you love the sport you wait for The Masters. It's always nice when the waiting is over.

Last time we were together at Augusta National, we were talking, if I remember correctly guys, we were talking about Leo Diegel and Denny Shute and Willie Fernie, who are the only men to have won majors later in the year than Dustin Johnson last November. Brandel can give you a full debrief on Willie Fernie.

The storylines that I have my eye on, I think a lot of people would like to see, if I had to sort of ranked them pre-tournament, I think the best story would be Jordan Spieth winning again at last, first time since Birkdale in 2017.

Bryson at Augusta. Rory completing the slam in his seventh try. Dustin becoming the fourth to repeat. I'll throw a curveball here -- Phil at 50. And though he hasn't been great of late, you never discount someone like Phil at Augusta. And I think the other story, I think if it happens, if he plays, Brooks Koepka on one good leg.

A lot of really good storylines going in. Brandel, how about you?

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: Look, there's a lot to look forward to this week. Starting off for me, I'm going to be watching and talking about the Augusta National Women's Amateur.



The inaugural gave us an epic back and forth between Jennifer Kupcho and Maria Fassi, not only of athleticism but of goodwill towards one another.

I think that was the sport represented at its highest. Jennifer Kupcho did her best to duplicate the shot heard around the world in 1935 when Gene Sarazen, not at the 13th but the 15th holed it out. But who could forget Kupcho's shot in the 13th for a final-round 67. Of course, she's gone on to have a good start to her LPGA career.

Also looking forward to the drive, chip and putt.

And as the week goes on just watching Jack Nicklaus, Gary Player and Lee Elder get The Masters started. It's been two years since we've had one in April. And while it was nice last year for us to get to see The Masters played, and it was beautiful in fall colors, I think most people are looking forward to the golf course playing more with players who are accustomed to -- a little firmer, a little faster.

I'm also looking forward to Bryson DeChambeau take two. I think the first go-around was not what he was looking for, not what anybody was expecting.

And then, of course, the shortest time elapsed between a player winning in his defense, Dustin Johnson, not much has happened since then in terms of his game falling off. It's still almost as sharp as it was coming into the event. So looking forward to watching Dustin Johnson try to successfully defend and just be the fourth player to do so.

Justin, there's always a lot to talk about, those are just headlines for me. But we can go on and on and I'm sure you could as well.

JUSTIN LEONARD: Certainly could. You guys hit on so many great storylines that we'll be really detailing starting Monday night, first part of the week, and then kind of see how the golf plays out.

It seems like -- I was just driving from Augusta to Atlanta to catch a flight a couple of weeks ago. Even though it was four months ago, it seems a little strange for such a quick turnaround.

I know that, I believe the last two editions of the Masters



Tournament has set scoring records. I've also heard through a couple of different folks that the golf course right now, or at least in the last week or two has been playing very, very firm.

And I'm guessing that, and I look forward to finding out for sure, that we're going to find a little tougher Augusta National. I think they want to put a little bit of teeth back into it. Certainly, you know, we're under some constraints weather-wise and the overseed everything in November. I think they'll have a little more control over the golf course next week, or, excuse me, starting this weekend.

And it will be really interesting to see if they keep the golf course firm. I doubt it will be as firm this weekend. But going into this tournament, starting Monday through Wednesday, how the golf course firms up, the weather looks to be pretty good.

And, like you say, Dustin Johnson, can he win two in a row? Bryson after his first go-around, what adjustments did he make? And then, of course, Jordan Spieth. And also one name you didn't mention was Rory McIlroy, trying to complete the career grand slam.

I don't think he has a whole lot of confidence in his game right now. But maybe he can gather some this week and, you know, find something magical next weekend.

**Q. I'm wondering if Augusta National does play as difficult as some people are pontificating, who do you think that benefits next weekend?**

JUSTIN LEONARD: Well, I think Brandel has convinced me that the angle of descent is very important at Augusta National, even more so when it's firm and fast. When I played in it in the years I did, I always looked forward to playing fast because it meant that I would be hitting 4-irons into all the par-4s.

But knowing what I know now, and thanks to Brandel just continuing to hammer this home with me, it's the guys who can bring it in from a steep angle.

And I think if the golf course (indiscernible) fast, I still love Dustin Johnson and his ability to play that golf course. I think Rory McIlroy, I still think that when he gets to Augusta, having such a shorter timeframe from November to April rather than having to think about it for an entire year, probably suits him.

Then you have to go to a guy like Bryson, with as high as he can hit the ball with less clubs than anybody will hit into the greens and especially the par-5s, I think a firmer golf course plays even more into the longer hitters' hands. And

certainly a guy like Bryson would be somebody you'd have to consider. If not the favorite, then certainly one of the top four or five.

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: I would agree, it's somewhat counterintuitive. The softer the golf course plays, the more it opens it up for everybody, even those with lower ball flights and less spin. And the firmer it plays the more it's sort of imperative to control your landings with angles.

So I would look at Justin Thomas for sure under any circumstances, but certainly Justin Thomas and Bryson DeChambeau. And beyond that I'd go to those players -- if it's playing firm, obviously what a player does tee to green is important, but around the green is hugely important. So I look to the most well-rounded players, and that's Patrick Cantlay. He's certainly in that group.

I hope Rory McIlroy finds something with Pete Cowen and his team. I hope he's able to show up with some sort of semblance of form, that he'll have an aha moment sometime between the last time he played at the Match Play and we see him at Augusta.

I hope he has one of those aha moments. Justin can certainly can speak to this, you just never know. You can go out to the range one day completely lacking in confidence and think you stink, and walk home that night and feel like you're Jack Nicklaus and think I found it. Nobody else may know it. But he could show up, he could really show up and be a completely different person because we're talking about -- two weeks I think one of the most exciting things going into this Masters really for me is to see what Pete Cowen and Rory McIlroy are capable of doing when they're home for a week and they have time to work on -- if you're arguably looking at the most talented golfer in the world and you're already talking about arguably the most talented teacher -- I'm curious what those two could do.

I don't think it's going to take the two-year incubation period that Nick Faldo took or Tiger Woods took, or at least I don't think it should have to. I think teaching has improved since those two-year incubation points, as the ability to measure with more accuracy golf swings, because of the devices they use teaching has improved.

So, I'm really curious what Rory McIlroy shows up with at Augusta National.

RICH LERNER: I would throw in one other name among others, but John Rahm. To me it's not a question of if but when. And I think it will be soon and I also believe it would be a Greg Norman/Ernie Els surprise if he never won a Masters. So well suited does he appear to be for Augusta

National. I think he has a ton of game. John Rahm, another guy, I think that will play well.

**Q. You already mentioned a little bit about Bryson. What do you feel like he did wrong last time when he tried to take apart -- he tried to just overpower Augusta National. Is that something that can be done?**

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: I think that -- look, I believe him when he says he wasn't feeling well that week. I think some weeks you show up and you don't have it physically. And I think it was an off week for him. I also think he was hugely unlucky at the third when his ball -- I've never seen anybody lose a golf ball there. We'll be watching The Masters for the next 20, 30, 40 years, you'll never see another golf ball lost where Bryson hit it.

It was a hugely unlucky break. He got off to a bad start. I think one of the more if not the most ironic moment of 2020 was him making double bogey at the 13th hole in the first round after all the buildup to what he might do there.

So a lot of things have to go your way for a player of any skill to have a great week. And one of them is to feel well. I take him at his word, if you're paying attention, he's altered his diet. He's come a long way down from the four, five, or 6,000 calories a day; he's having 1500 calories a day. And I've thought this all along, that a larger part of the equation of him hitting it far was not his diet and his bulk but the changes he made in his golf swing.

He says as much when he talks about the more sinewy build of Kyle Berkshire. He's going to come into Augusta more sinewy than the last time we saw him, less bulked up and hopefully feeling better. And Bryson DeChambeau take two at the 2021 Masters, I wouldn't be surprised if he gave us all the excitement that we were expecting in 2020.

JUSTIN LEONARD: I think for Bryson is not trying to do too much as far as there may be a hole where it's fine to hit a 5-wood or a 4-hybrid, if he had his cracked one replaced, which I'm sure he has from the Players.

But not try and completely overpower every single hole on every single shot. There's times when it's a good idea just to play to the corner. I think of the hole like 5 where if it's a stretch for him to get over that last fairway bunker. If he hits a 3-wood out where most of the other players are playing from he's still coming in with a shorter iron than they are. He's still coming in with a steeper angle.

So I think it's a void -- the need to overpower every single tee shot there. I think it's take advantage of the ones he's comfortable in doing and maybe driver at 13 is not the right play. Maybe it is.

Obviously he can hit it very high. He can do it from right-to-left. But I just would like to see him avoid some pressing and trying to do too much off the tee, because his game is solid enough to (indiscernible) around that he doesn't need to drive it perfectly on every hole in order to put himself in position.

He can play to certain spots where the rest of the field is playing from and he still has an advantage. And yet on the holes where he's very comfortable off the tee, those are the ones where he needs to put the pedal down.

RICH LERNER: I would just add that I think Bryson, what makes him so intriguing is that he's pushing the sport to its most modern edge. But I think with that he's having to figure out how to manage every aspect of it, when you come into a big championship. And so it's not just, to Brandel's point, managing his diet but it's managing the media and managing expectations and managing the hype.

And so as Bryson figures that end of it out, and I think he's in the early stages, I think we may see something really extraordinary, because I think we're just -- this moonshot has just been sort of liftoff. The other side of that is how long can Bryson, at full throttle, he always appears to be at full throttle, how many (indiscernible) have we been to where the round was over -- it was at Winged Foot and deep into a Saturday night he's still hitting driver full force.

So the other side of it is how long can he last without sort of the engine blowing. And I think Bryson and his team are smart. And I think they're looking holistically at his program and how to best manage it. So to that end I think there will be a much better performance from Bryson this time around.

**Q. Justin, but please, Brandel, can jump in as well. You've heard Phil say many times that no matter how poorly or indifferent he had been playing before The Masters, that once he got there and drove down Magnolia Lane that everything seemed to change. Do you think a lot of players feel that way? Or maybe just players who have won there before, or just Phil?**

JUSTIN LEONARD: Well, I think there's a few players. That list is pretty short. It certainly works for Phil Mickelson. I think Jordan Spieth is another player. He's probably not -- there probably isn't another golf course in the world where he's more comfortable, he's more excited about playing than Augusta National. I think he and Phil, of the modern players, they're really the only two players I can think of, maybe Tiger Woods as well -- and the reason I just didn't say it immediately is because he's not playing.

But for those players, I don't think it matters what sort of form that they're in when they get to Augusta National, because they're so confident in what they do on that golf course, in particular.

And that their form, recent form doesn't really matter. Now the fact that Jordan Spieth is coming in regaining his form rather rapidly over the last two months says to me that's a little bit dangerous for the rest of the field because he's got to be one the rest of the favorites. Phil, you wouldn't have him as a favorite, but it's certainly fair to watch because of his record there. And he's talked about it. It's his favorite week of the year.

And while I know he's playing this week in San Antonio, I don't think it matters a whole lot how he plays, because the shot that he's hitting this week in the tournament, it's all with next week in mind.

So those two players, I think, you have to keep an eye out for them no matter how they're coming into the week.

**Q. Rich, you're such a big sports fan even beyond golf. And so often in sports we always talk about the teams that kind of sneak into the playoffs under the radar and then do something once the playoffs begin. So you were out there in Austin last week, obviously, calling golf for five days. Is there somebody off the radar that you think we should keep in mind that maybe you talked to on the range or saw something that you think could have a big week next week?**

RICH LERNER: Well, personally, I can't quite expunge from my mind the image of Tyrrell Hatton, who seems to have perfected the art of club flip. And as questionable acts of decorum go, his happens to be mildly endearing. But as I called it, sort of the peaky blinders put on, shouldn't detract from the fact that Hatton can really play.

And I think you look at his body of work -- in the last two to three weeks he hasn't been great and he wasn't especially good at the Match Play. But if you look at his body of work over the last two years, oddly enough, after a wrist/hand issue -- and here's another guy you could look at, though he's more of a little low ball hitter, that typically is not the best at Augusta, but that's Daniel Berger, who also had a wrist/hand issue and has rebounded nicely.

I'll give you Tyrrell Hatton. I'll give you Danny Berger. I'll give you Webb Simpson. Again these aren't prototypes. This is not John Rahm, high ball hitter, for the obvious reasons that you like.

Webb, and Brandel and Justin can correct me if I'm wrong here, Webb would fit into the category more of a Patrick

Reed -- excellent short game; hard, competitive streak; doesn't give much away.

So those are -- and he's a Wake Forest guy. Right? I think he went to Wake on the Arnold Palmer Scholarship. He certainly would know what Augusta National meant to Arnie. But those are a few guys I would throw out there.

**Q. To the point about Daniel Berger, and Justin and Brandel you can weigh in on this, he's had to wait the longest for this because he won the first event out after the restart.**

When you're someone like Daniel Berger who thought that they should have figured out some way to get him in for 2020, he did not. He's been waiting and now he finally gets this chance, how do you keep yourself mentally focused going into Thursday knowing how long you've been waiting for this moment to happen?

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: I don't think he'd have a hard time keeping mentally focused. Quite the contrary. I think he's probably never been more focused in his entire life because you work your whole life to have these sorts of opportunities. And you could make an argument that since the restart after the pandemic, there's been maybe two or three players play as well as Daniel Berger.

So he must realize you can go in and very easily calculate your own World Ranking points accumulated since the pandemic. And he would see right there plain as day and he would know this as well that he is amongst a handful of favorites to play well.

So I mean I'm sure it's focused like using a magnifying glass on the sun on paper. That would be how focused you'd be. And he would be doing everything in his power to have the right mental state.

And in terms of players off the radar, look, it's a very hard tournament to win if you're outside the top 15 in the world, flat out. It's the easiest tournament to predict who is going to win of all of them.

The Players would be the hardest. The Masters is the easiest because, one, there's smallest field in major championship golf. And some of them are past champions, well past their prime. So it's even smaller than the number.

And then once The Masters sort of identifies those with the talents necessary to play well there it has more repeat winners than every other major. And basically those talents are, it allows you to have wiggle room off the tee, but if you have the ability to hit high cuts off of hook lies or in the case of the lefties obviously the opposite of that, you've got



a tremendous advantage at Augusta National.

So ball-striking is important everywhere, of course. But you have to look at players that are capable of hitting high cuts. And because we are asked so many times there, even a back, right hole location on 6 on Sunday is so important. If you think about what Dustin Johnson did last year on Sunday, after bogeying 4 and 5, the hole location's over on the right on 6, the high cut of his that he only went to late 2015, like, December 2015 is when he stumbled onto that cut. And that's when he's done his best work. And that high cut on that hole like 6, you just have to have it.

So I look at -- I look at -- it's sooner or later, another first timer is going to win at Augusta National. So outside of 34 and 35 Fuzzy Zoeller is it. So the question always is, who is the first-time player there or who was the someone with the least amount of experience who is likely to win.

I almost look at November as sort of a wash because you wouldn't have learned what you needed to know from the November Masters to play in an April Masters. But I look at Will Zalatoris, who is amongst the elite, and I'm talking about the top-five-strokes-gained-tee-to-green players in the world who can show up and -- I say surprise; he wouldn't surprise his peers, but he would surprise the sort of the casual golf fan who mostly tunes in to watch the bigger events and certainly The Masters is one of those.

JUSTIN LEONARD: I was sitting here going through the World Golf Rankings, and there's always debate on what's off the radar. It's hard to say that a player is off the radar if they're ranked top 25, top 30 in the world. But as Brandel laid out, it's typically guys up there at the very top of the World Rankings that seem to do well. But I look down and think of a guy like Harris English, a guy who likes to hit high cuts, who's putting as well as he has in his entire career.

And I think somebody like a Harris English has a great chance playing on a firmer golf course, hitting those high cuts, and obviously he's played with a lot of confidence through the last two years, and then finally getting that victory back in the fall. He's somebody that I'm definitely going to be watching with a lot of interest.

**Q. Brandel and Justin, curious your thoughts on why Jordan Spieth -- and you touched on this a little bit already -- why is his game so well suited for Augusta National. Is it as simple as it's a good draw and there's a number of holes that set up for a draw? And then obviously the short-game skill set there. Or is there something more to it than that?**

JUSTIN LEONARD: Well, as you know, Augusta National did not allow greens-reading books. So many players are

so used to using those books each and every week. And I think for Jordan Spieth, he gets there and he sees the line of putts on the greens and he doesn't have to go to his book to kind of reconfirm that. I think the fact that he's got some room off the tee, he understands the angles, hole locations where certain places where you can miss it, other areas where you can't.

And you don't have to hit the ball perfectly around Augusta National, but you do have to manage where you miss it and when you miss it. And I think that's something that Jordan has done so well around Augusta National and throughout his entire career.

But I think the big thing is on the greens. He's just so comfortable there on the greens with his short game, being able to get the ball up-and-down. And it is, it's going to be at more of a premium assuming the golf course is firm and fast. Ball-striking is going to be important, but gotta have your wits about you on the greens, understand where you can miss it and then play the right shot from there.

So to me those are his biggest strengths, and I think they're on display at Augusta National.

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: And I certainly agree with everything that Justin said. I'll go back to this time and time again. You look at the man who won the most Masters ever, Jack. And his release pattern, you can just scroll through any Masters he won and watch, you can just watch his release pattern and watch how high he finishes. You can see the way his left arm works through impact.

It's very much sort of the chicken-wing look that Jordan Spieth has. It's funny how he was criticized for that, so was Jordan Spieth. But the very thing he's criticized for is the thing that makes him great. It's his release pattern.

And his release pattern goes left to right. And you think about how many times you have a ball above your feet or a hook lie, and if you have a draw you'll slam that club into the hill and get a surprise pull left. But if you're cutting across it, you get no surprise; you hit high soft cuts into the greens and you can always sort of, the ball's general working left to right on greens that are sloped from front to back. And they stop quicker and more often than not they end up underneath the hole.

It's a combination of Jordan Spieth being able to, yes, as you said, work it beautifully right to left when he needs to. Mostly he does that with his 3-wood. He'll hit 3-wood at 13 mostly; he'll hit 3-wood at 2 mostly. And he's a smart enough player to know when to hit 3-wood and when he can go with driver.

Beyond that, it's his extraordinary iron play coupled with his ability to pitch the ball like Phil Mickelson. There's been very few players come along who have been able to trap -- everybody talks about using the bounce. And, look, I get it, how using the bounce works. But Phil didn't; he trapped it, covered it in his pitch shots. So does Jordan Spieth.

They sort of trap cut them in their own way. And on tight lies where there's very little room for mistakes, Jordan Spieth, more often than not, hits the most amazing pitch shots.

The audio on his pitch shots is like Phil Mickelson's. And it's like Jose Maria Olazabal's and Sergio Garcia's. I mean, these are great pitchers of the ball.

So, again, it's a place where he gets to show off and the golf course is a perfect fit for him because he's not the best driver of the golf ball, but it allows you room to recover and then he can work his magic.

RICH LERNER: One other thing I would add -- this is obviously not as technical -- but if ever a play seemed to be sort of born for a place, it was Spieth. You think about the depth of his experience at Augusta and he's only 27. In 2014 he's chasing Bubba on Sunday. He led it early and then Bubba pulled away.

2015, he tied what was then Tiger's scoring record, since broken by Dustin. 2016 he has the mini meltdown at No. 12 and Willett wins. So, he experiences the range of emotions inside of two years.

In 2018 he shoots 64 in the coulda, woulda, shoulda game. Had a chance to be 61 or 62, which I thought at that moment would have been the greatest Sunday in the history of the sport had he come all the way back to win and then Reed ended up winning.

So just the depth of what he's already experienced there is uncommon at any single venue for any player. He obviously loves it there.

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: And to Rich's point, he's the only player since 2000 that's shot multiple rounds of 64. It is just a perfect fit for him.

**Q. Brandel had a great post on Instagram yesterday where he wrote when you watch younger players come up you wonder if there's any of him or her left in their swing or are they simply chasing some emulative dream. Could you expound on that? And why is being more results-driven tends to yield better results than players who pursue this technical perfection? And of the young guys that you mentioned -- Morikawa, Wolff,**

## **Scheffler -- who has the best shot of winning The Masters?**

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: In an age of so much data and information and video to sit down and ponder, there are a lot of ways you can use that. And when I see players chasing some aesthetic ideal, I see them not really ever taking ownership of their game. They essentially turn over their entire swing, ideas, their thoughts to teachers or other people who are around them.

When you see somebody take ownership of their game -- and I'm really thinking of Viktor Hovland or Matt Wolff or Collin Morikawa, the players I posted, they take ownership of their game. And there's vitality in that. And there is a certain arrogance in that.

Lee Trevino certainly had that in great quantity. And I think -- it's curious to me, in an age where we have so much data about the golf swing, and there's so much video on YouTube of all these great golf swings -- and I see this even on the LPGA Tour. I see some of the best golf swings losing to golf swings that are more idiosyncratic like Inbee Park. If you looked at Anne van Dam and you looked at Inbee Park on the range, you'd never in a million years guess that Inbee Park can beat N van Dam handily.

Mind you, Inbee Park beats almost everybody handily. But I think there's a difference in chasing an aesthetic ideal and learning from the ball flight.

This is one of the great things about Butch Harmon, is that none of his players swing alike. And Butch uses the ball flight more than anything else. He talks about how the ball flight never lies.

And I think these players have come along in an age of data and they've used it to shape their strategy, and they've used it to sort of complement their, I guess, intuition about how to play the game; but they haven't used it to conform to an aesthetic ideal or to methods that are everywhere out there in the world.

And every teacher has an idea about how to swing the golf club and they differ. Almost every single teacher differs with one another.

But to see the players come along and look so idiosyncratic and look like -- I quoted Bob Dylan in that speech only because the singer Bob Dylan reminds me of the players I was sort of posting about. There's this beautiful imperfection. There's this wonderful sloppiness to their work, like a Jackson Pollock painting. You can't quite make it out but it's amazing. It works. And I love that about this generation.

And to answer your question, I think Collin Morikawa is the obvious choice, because simply, of all those players I posted, he is the best iron player, he's the best ball striker, and that allows you to separate yourself from everybody else quicker and more consistently.

RICH LERNER: Brandel, quick comment. On top of that, because it's fascinating. But you still play golf; you don't swing golf. It's a game to be played. And that's entirely, the swing -- not to minimize the importance of certain sound fundamentals -- but you quoted Dylan, I'll quote Hal Sutton, who said to me once: You show me a guy with a homemade swing and I'll show you a guy who believes in himself. So you think about the long history, right off the top, it's Arnold. It's Hubert Green. It's Lee Trevino. It's Raymond Floyd.

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: It's even Jack Nicklaus, by the way.

RICH LERNER: Right.

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: Yeah, Jack Nicklaus's golf swing would have been nothing that anybody was teaching. You think Jack Nicklaus took up the game in 1950. That was the year that Hogan came back from the accident and won the U.S. Open, and the whole world was in love with that flat golf swing. And Jack came up with this fly-the-right elbow. His swing would have looked as homemade then as Bryson DeChambeau's does now.

JUSTIN LEONARD: And to throw a couple other names, to prove Brandel's point, Scottie Scheffler, with his really high hands and his footwork is kind of all over the place. And Joaquín Niemann. Those are two golf swings that you don't -- probably don't -- you probably don't have a lot of junior players that are putting pictures of those two swings up on their, above their bed.

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: Right not at all.

JUSTIN LEONARD: But they're two golf swings that work beautifully for them and there is beauty in imperfections.

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: Think about it. Those are the players that made it at the youngest age -- Scottie Scheffler, Joaquín Niemann, Viktor Hovland, Matt Wolff, Collin Morikawa.

And you look at those people and say how did these players -- go to any driving range at an NCAA event or top amateur event and you'll see nothing but Adam Scotts.

I'm not disparaging Adam Scott's golf swing. It's amazing.

But the point is you'll see nothing but technical perfection. And they didn't make it. These kids did. And it begs the question, how? Why? And you have to say at some point it's empowering to be different.

RICH LERNER: How about John Rahm?

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: John Rahm, much the same way. You wouldn't teach that swing. You couldn't teach that swing.

RICH LERNER: Right.

**Q. Brandel, what have you seen in Jordan's swing that's different in this little resurgence?**

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: Well, if you watch him when he rehearses before he hits a shot now, it's weird, even when he's hitting bunker shots, he'll make this very flat golf swing and then in transition he'll bring his right elbow much closer to his left elbow than I've ever seen him, and then he will round it off and sort of curve the hub.

He'll swing very much around and to the left. The only other person I've ever seen make practice swings like that is Jason Dufner. So it would not surprise me in the least if he was not -- if he wasn't taking lessons from Jason Dufner, talking to Jason Dufner about the golf swing, or watching Jason Dufner make golf shots. Or Cameron McCormick is.

RICH LERNER: He has, Brandel. I spoke to their camp at Bay Hill and he has confided in Dufner, which sort of caught me by surprise.

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: There you go, because you can see it in the moves. And, look, anybody who watched Jason Dufner hit golf shots knows that, for a guy who doesn't have great club head speed, there's still an audio to his shot that is arresting.

And he's a high-quality ball striker. And he's spent a lot of times studying the swing -- mind you it's a very golf machine-oriented view; but, listen, the answers are wherever you find them.

And this has worked wonders for Jordan to keep from getting stuck. It's got the club flipping out in front of him again so he can get on top of it. And it's teacher-speak. We say swing left or whatever. But it's getting around and getting the club back out in front of him and stop getting it stuck.

**Q. D.J. has been doing this for years. Have you seen more guys with the bowed left wrist? You look at**

**Rahm, Morikawa, Hovland, do you think there's a reason we're seeing more of this, or just idiosyncrasy that some of these guys share?**

BRANDEL CHAMBLEE: I don't think we're seeing any more of it. I just think that golf is on TV 24 hours a day. So we're noticing it and we have high-speed video and cameras so we can see it in slow motion.

But there was a great teacher, unheralded teacher by the name of Kelvin Miyahira, who almost every teacher today has either, I say steal from, borrowed from, been influenced by -- sadly he had a stroke a few years ago.

But Kelvin did a deep dive into the number of bowed left wrists, shut faces, and the majority of major winners since World War II have had bowed left wrists and shut faces.

The majority of them. There's obvious benefits to it in that you have less work to do on the downswing and you only need clear your body as fast as you can to hold off the face.

And it helps you hit cut shots which, again, is the more preferable ball flight when it comes to winning major championships for the height with which you can hit it, the way it works left to right, so forth.

But I think the equipment, too, has allowed guys to have stronger grips, which has made the face even more shut at the top; allowed them to sort of hang back a little bit with their upper body, have more spine tilt, stronger grip and launch it higher.

So the equipment is contributing to it to some point. And maybe that's why you're seeing even more shut faces. But the bowed left wrist -- Palmer was that guy. Claude Harmon was that guy. Loads of players are shut-faced players in the past.

RICH LERNER: I want to say thanks to all the guys. It's obvious you're covering this sport and not soccer. Those were some great questions. And we look forward to seeing you guys next week at Augusta.

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