

PGA Championship

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Louisville, Kentucky, USA

Valhalla Golf Club

Jordan Spieth

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Jordan Spieth is joining us here at the 106th PGA Championship. Jordan, welcome to Valhalla and what is your 12th PGA Championship. How has your week been and what have you seen of the course so far and what do you think?

JORDAN SPIETH: Thank you. Yeah, I was here 11 years ago. I actually didn't remember a whole lot about it. I remembered really I think the back nine or at least 13 in. I've only played the front nine this week. I plan on going out in a few minutes here to the back and seeing it.

It's a big golf course. Obviously a premium on hitting it in the fairway. The greens are small and there's not really a lot of areas to run shots up on to the green. So if you do miss the fairway in the rough, you're kind of playing to where the easiest up-and-down is versus really trying to hit the green. So premium on obviously tee to green and then the greens are pure.

So I think if you're giving yourself looks, you don't necessarily have to be in tight to the hole. You'll see guys make some putts this week. They're very pure surfaces.

Hopefully, as we say every week, hopefully the rain kind of holds off so that it doesn't get too soft. But yesterday it was I thought kind of a perfect firmness. Yeah, it's a major championship. It's the one that's eluded me so far, and it would be pretty incredible to work my way into contention and have a chance this week and see if I can try to make that history. I've had a number of chances since having the other three and come close a couple times, but never quite close enough at the end to really have a chance, so that would obviously be the goal this week.

THE MODERATOR: That's great. We'll open it up to questions.

Q. Kind of expanding on what you just said, do you like that talk of the career Grand Slam? Only a handful of players have ever done it. Does that motivate you or do you get tired of hearing that you just need this one?

JORDAN SPIETH: Neither. I mean, I'm aware. It's very cool, but I would take any and all and as many majors as possible regardless of where they come. It's just kind of a cool thing if you're able to hold all four. There's just not many people in the game that have done that and you have an opportunity to do things that are very unique in the game of golf, that's what kind of stands out, stands the test of time afterwards, so, yeah, anytime we come to these weeks the idea is to have prep to try to peak for really four times a year, and this is one of them.

Q. Seems over the last couple years the PGA Championship has kind of taken on its own style of how they setup a golf course or courses they pick, Max Homa was in here, called it the old U.S. Open kind of setup that they have adopted. Just wondering how you've kind of seen maybe the setup evolve of this tournament over the years and what you think of them kind of taking that kind of approach?

JORDAN SPIETH: Well, I think the move to May opened up opportunities like just where they could go. I think that that helps change the variety of golf course. I think ever since that move you've had -- I thought Bethpage was a phenomenal PGA setup. It's a great golf course too. But then you have, which is a big, you know, U.S. Open-style golf course, they have had a U.S. Open. Then you have Kiawah, which played totally different. Then Southern Hills, which is kind of in between the two.

So I think there's a variety and I think what's cool about you go to these great golf courses but now you've opened up the opportunity to go to places like Texas in a few years where you don't have the opportunity in August. Certainly I wouldn't advise it in August. Which that will be fun.

I think it's been a really good change for the tournament. I think they have played a little bit faster, obviously with some exceptions, as just May is still a rainy time of the year for anywhere, but it's just a little less of the where you have to keep the greens as soft and stuff. So you got opportunities to kind of have a little faster golf courses some years and the setups have been awesome.



Q. As a dad who is a golf pro, what advice would you give to Scottie Scheffler?

JORDAN SPIETH: As a what? Sorry.

Q. As a dad who is a golf pro.

JORDAN SPIETH: Oh, like me and then give it to Scottie?

Q. Yeah.

JORDAN SPIETH: I wouldn't have -- it wouldn't have anything to do with being a golf pro. I think we've done a good job of taking home on the road as long as we can until our oldest will start real school. I think knowing Scottie and Meredith, that's probably what they will try to do as well.

I think that it's very doable. We go somewhere for a week and we bring home on the road with us and instead of it seeming like or, one, I would just be away from my family, which fortunate to not have to do that. Or, two, kind of not fully committing, I guess to it, and it all being a little crazy. I think we've just fully committed to that and I would just tell him that this is how we did it and we really like it.

But to each their own. Everyone likes to parent different ways. I think it's probably the number one piece of advice you guys would say is don't tell someone else how to parent is because everyone does it differently and it's -- I'm glad everything's gone well and they're doing great there at home and he is able to be here this week.

Q. Is that a lesson learned? Is that something over time that --

JORDAN SPIETH: No, I just think that's kind of an obvious thing, like just tell him -- like go off your own experience and then maybe people make their own choices, I think. So he knows what's coming, he's going to be very involved as a dad, that's just who he is. I feel like I am, so I feel like I can -- you know, if he asks I'll tell him how I do things, but I don't think giving advice to him right now serves anyone in this field very well (smiling).

Q. With how close you are to JT, how big of a sense do you get that this tournament in his hometown is for Justin this week and do you give him any advice?

JORDAN SPIETH: No, I don't. He's won this tournament twice, I haven't won it. So that would also be a bad idea to give him advice. I played nine holes with him yesterday and I play a lot of golf with him. Yesterday felt different. There was a massive amount of support for him already, and I know that will just continue as the week goes on.

I know he's maybe if there's one tournament this year left that he would want to win, it would be this one here, and it would be something that would be one of the coolest moments of his life, maybe forever. Just the significance of it and so he's -- at the same time, he's pretty good at shutting out distractions and keeping his head down, so I think he's embracing it, but not, he didn't seem any different yesterday.

Q. After what happened at Augusta, can you kind of assess what you did from there and what you're trying to do to get to this point and play well here and then keep going forward?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I had two bad holes and they were costly mistakes and otherwise I think I could have made a run. I stand by what I've kind of said a little bit this year, like I feel like my mechanics are more sound than they have been in a long time, I feel like I'm driving the ball better maybe than I've ever driven the golf ball. I feel like I'm playing better than my results and that's really frustrating. It's a different kind of frustration. It's not kind of the same as when you're searching for stuff.

I'm not very good at being patient, but that's kind of what I have to be and then something will click and I feel like I'm close to going off and doing some really cool things. But it's just kind of been a couple shots here or there where I'm either playing the wrong shot or I took out too much club or not enough club and it's just really costly mistakes at wrong times at some tournaments that maybe should only affect a couple shots but end up bringing me down a little bit because I'm -- I then try and force it, because I haven't had the results I've wanted.

I think that's been my biggest mistake is last week on Friday I'm in fourth or fifth place on the 17th hole and I hit a really good shot and caught a kind of a wind-dying-down wind flip. I had the same ball speed as Collin in front of me, who hit it 30 feet past the hole, and mine goes 30 feet short of the hole into the water, I make double, and then bogey the last after our delay. So I go 3-over there when I was looking to go par, par and it should just be three shots, but then I come out trying to force it Saturday and make it all up and have a bad day.

So it's kind of been that, this weird little bit of lack of patience, but my game feels actually really good. It's just kind of a funny timing right now that I thought the weekend, I thought Sunday's round was really good, and I could build off that coming into this week and I think any week, it wouldn't surprise me if I found my way into contention any week right now.

Q. Just a question about your other job, which is actually being on the policy board. Obviously with the Jimmy Dunne thing which kind of caught most of us by surprise, it seems like reading his comments and just looking at the landscape, that the players now are really more in control of the situation than they ever have been before, and that may be part of the reason why Jimmy felt like he was not involved in the discussions. Do you feel like as a player that you now are in more control of the PGA TOUR and which way it's going than you did in past times?

JORDAN SPIETH: I would say that I think that the, there's been a shift that direction, but I think that we're finding the appropriate balance going forward. Yeah, I think there probably was a need for it from years ago from pre-COVID, and maybe the balance got tipped a little and there's just a little seesaw kind of to try to make sure it's figured out, but on Enterprises, you know, it seems to be based on what I hear from the experts, lawyers, that it's a very good situation that the governance is in a very sound place there and things are moving actually a lot better than what people think they are.

So, I think we'll get, I think we're going to be at a really, really good place where the players can feel really good about, players on the PGA TOUR can feel really good about it, as well as not having players making business decisions -- like that's not -- if you're in the room, it's very obvious that players are not dictating the future of golf and the PGA TOUR. Like, it needs to be, you need to have everyone's perspective on both sides of it, and everyone that's involved within Enterprises. You have a lot of strategic investors that know a heck of a lot more than any of us players.

So that's a false narrative that the players are determining all these things. That's not even what Jimmy was saying. Jimmy was saying more of the balance of things, and I think that balance is being restored on (C)6 to kind of maybe a place where it probably should be on the (C)6, and now that things have split up, they're two very different boards. But I hope and feel like everyone's trying to row the boat the same direction and get it to where it's a very -- they're both in a very sound place that everyone -- that stuff like what's been happening just doesn't keep happening.

Q. Is Jimmy's leaving a loss do you think?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I think Jimmy Dunne not being involved when he was involved is a loss. I've spoken with him just he and I quite a few times over the last few months and had really good conversations, and when he explains kind of how everything went about since he came on the

board, it makes a lot of sense to me. So I was a bit surprised, for sure.

Q. Largely asked and answered right there, but in addition to that, I'm wondering if a stronger player-driven part of the board, if that's empowering or if that's at all distracting to your other job of trying to win golf tournaments?

JORDAN SPIETH: It's just balanced. It's not player driven. So we got, you guys have got to stop saying that. Like, it's not the case. It's balanced in a way that at least from what I've heard the investors, TOUR management, and independents feel it should be. I think we're in a place where that's the case -- we're being told that this is how it should be as well.

It went from a lot less players to a balanced board. And on a -- especially on the Inc. side, it seems like we've been told that's a really good idea on a what was told to be a player-run organization, to have a balanced board with independents that are essentially making the decisions that we are not qualified to make, but us offering insights on how the membership would feel and whether it's eligibility matters or whatever is left on the ink board, you know, we both have an opportunity to offer insights to make the right decision. So it's balanced.

Q. A quick follow-up, you said that's a false narrative. What is the right narrative of what players are actually dictating on?

JORDAN SPIETH: Well, there's a lot of committees, right, and you guys have, I'm sure, fully aware of the transaction committee at this point. So those are the people that are doing the -- I don't even like to call it negotiating, like doing the talking and the figuring out, you know, what a lot of the future product model looks like, having those conversations with the Public Investment Fund.

So there's that, there's governance committees, there's all kinds of stuff. And they're made up of a combination of players, some TOUR management. Jay's involved. SSG, independents. So you have, you want to have -- like, it's a balanced, it's a -- at the very most a balanced number of players to other investors or somebody else on each of the Committees, to where you get ideally, like I mentioned, a bunch of the right perspectives.

I think things are, unfortunately, put in a really bad light right now, and I think things are actually in a really, really good place, based on what I know, which is quite a lot in this situation. I think things are moving forward at a speed that both sides are probably frustrated at each other one different times when they're trying to get a hold of each

other. I mean, there's a lot of other things going on as well, but in general everyone on our side, I believe, are rowing the boat the right direction together, the same direction together, and I believe we're going to end up in a really good place and I'm, I just continue to kind of chuckle, because I only feel positive momentum when we're actually having these internal conversations, and then every time anything comes from the outside world it's the opposite, and it just kind of makes me chuckle a bit because it's a bit frustrating.

So I hope our fans and the fans of golf are aware that, you know, people are trying to do the right thing and the same thing together, it just, it's going to take a little bit of time to figure out exactly what that looks like.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks for your time, Jordan, we appreciate it.

JORDAN SPIETH: Thanks.

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