

PGA Championship

Saturday, May 18, 2024

Louisville, Kentucky, USA

Valhalla Golf Club

Justin Rose

Flash Quotes

THE MODERATOR: Justin Rose is with us at the 106th PGA Championship. 7-under today.

How would you summarize your round?

JUSTIN ROSE: Pretty average compared to Shane, my playing partner. No, today was a lot of fun. Felt like we got off to the dream start. The start of this golf course is definitely demanding.

You're hitting a lot of mid irons into the greens, and to get a couple under early I felt was a real momentum-starter. Actually I think Shane and I had the exact same scorecard the first seven holes. We were both 5-under through 7 and rolling, and definitely quite aware that making some progress up the leaderboard, and obviously the leaders still have plenty of opportunities to kind of make some more inroads or get further ahead.

But there was definitely that urgency to feel like you wanted to stay on track and keep up the momentum today to try to give yourself a shot going into tomorrow.

It was the classic moving day, and job well done.

Q. You're going to be in with a chance tomorrow. You've won a major before. You've had chances before. But at this stage of your career, does it feel a little different, a little bit more special to have a chance like that?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, I mean, listen, that's what I'm working towards. Still believe in myself. Still believe that I have these opportunities in me in majors for sure.

Yeah, this year has been very difficult year. I haven't seen much go my way in terms of tournament golf but seeing a ton go my way away from competitive golf. Practice sessions are awesome. I feel like I'm doing things with the golf ball that I have never done in my career in terms of speed and ball-striking, and some of the quality I think has really gone up.



Yeah, nice to sort of period it appear in the events I really want it to because that's what's motivating me to stick with it and keep working hard is to try to give myself like the Indian summer of my career. Try to still steal one or two of these to really make it a fantastic career.

Q. You actually had the same score as Shane for the first eight holes. Who had the honor?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, me. Shane was like, geez, I can't get the honor. I thought it would be nice to make bogey up 9. He was getting a bit irritated.

Yeah, obviously you spare a thought for Jason. Jason played solid. It was one of those days where obviously momentum was definitely couple of you, and Jason was hitting good shots, not getting much out of it. Would hit a good putt and spin out. Just shows you how golf can be a knife edge at times, and the delta between playing well and scoring well is not always as big as it seems.

Q. How much of this was favorable conditions out on the course, and how much of it was you and Shane playing off each other, and anything you can do I can do better?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, I mean, I haven't looked at the scoreboard closely, but it didn't appear like everybody was going low. Obviously I think there's not many over-par scores today, of course. It's a perfect day for golf. The ball is going a mile. It's warm. Greens are soft. Nice pace to make putts.

So I think that, yeah, there's big opportunity to -- if you're on top -- I've kind of seen this golf course this way all week. I think it's a demanding golf course, but the way conditions are, it's favorable, and guys that are on their game, I think you can really take it forward this week.

But you have to be playing well to get those scores, but they're out there for sure.

Q. You and Shane were feeding off each other?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, obviously we were for sure. Good



energy out there, as well. You feed off the crowd, too. Crowd were getting interested in the day. They could see me going well. They could see Shane going well.

There was a nice energy about the group, as well. There were a lot of things pushing us all forward in the right direction, and once you got a sniff of the leaderboard, the intensity kind of goes up, as well, which is good. It keeps you focused and keeps you hungry and keeps pushing you forward.

Q. I was also going to ask about the good scoring. You had two 62s now this week. Is it just as simple as it's soft and because of all the rain we had?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, I think so. I think it's that simple for sure. I thought day one the pins weren't set up too difficult. A lot of sevens from the edges and things like that.

If you were playing -- kind of maybe if you have control of your golf ball like seven from the edge, you're going at every pin. There's not much kind of like hedging towards middle of the green possibly.

Today I thought the pins were a little tighter at times, so you had to be a bit more precise. But yeah, listen, today was probably the perfect scoring day you could find, and I think that the rain prior to the warm weather; so the ball is going a long way. The ball is not running a long way, and this is a long golf course but I think we are getting the maximum out of the ball in the air, just given the conditions.

Q. Any difficulty in playing alongside someone who's about to make history and who's a friend and a Ryder Cup teammate in maintaining your own concentration while that's going on?

JUSTIN ROSE: Do you know, I had a weird feeling I was going to do seven holes shoot 61 today. Kind of felt like it was on, and then I'm still super frustrated by going 5-5 at 9 and 10. Kind of felt like I lost my momentum there a little bit.

But yeah, I kind of -- I was sort of interested in that. That's not very much playing shot for shot, is it, I know. But I thought about that myself, and then I was watching Shane. I said to Fooch, he needs two birdies in the last four holes here. So then he obviously did what he had to -- made a great birdie at 17 and unfortunately missed the fairway on 18.

But I knew exactly what I was watching, let's put it that way. I've been in the -- I think I played with Rickie Fowler. Didn't he shoot 62 at LA? Yeah, so I was in the group with Rickie there, as well. Seen it a couple of times now.

Q. With the scoring being what it is, do you go into tomorrow thinking it'll take a similar performance to win this thing?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, I think it'll take something similar for sure, which is just a great opportunity really, but it's sort of like just a free-wheel opportunity, I think. Yeah, just go out there and free it up and be on the front foot and see if you can get the momentum going, yeah, absolutely.

Q. How enjoyable was it out there today for you, and compare and contrast that to the tough times, the challenges that you've had or any golfer has over the years of how ultimately you've managed to prevail when it matters most?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, I think I've always been good at sort of elevating my game to the situation. This week was in a big group with Rory and DJ, haven't been playing well, so that was the first time I've been able to feed off big crowds for a while and kind of enjoyed it, and I think it was a catalyst to what I needed this week to sort of get my focus back, and yeah, start to see good shots and just start to feel like you're back in the realm of playing big championship golf.

Last time I felt that was Ryder Cup and felt like I performed pretty well there. The big situation is what I'm interested in. It's what I'm practicing for, it's what I enjoy. It's what we all enjoy. But it's been a little too few and far between of late. But yeah, certainly enjoy it.

Q. Your experience of winning a major in the past before that, that's significant. That's going to count for something going into tomorrow, right?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, I mean, it's a decade ago now, unfortunately, but so I feel like you always have new challenges, and winning is a habit, no doubt and so obviously the more you do it, the easier it feels.

It's just how you frame it, exactly. Like if I hadn't won one, then yeah, it's like a bar of soap. You're trying to squeeze it and it becomes more and more loose at times.

Yeah, absolutely, if I choose to go into tomorrow and say, listen, nothing to lose, already got one of these things, let's give it a run, that's a good mindset for sure.

Q. I think when a lot of us see conditions like we have seen this week, we think that that would maybe benefit some of the younger, longer hitters, but do you think in any way that experience could actually be an asset when the conditions are like this at a major?

JUSTIN ROSE: You know, I feel like I've been able to be aggressive on this golf course. I feel like obviously we played, like I said, with Rory. I didn't feel like I gave that up off the tee to him, really.

Played alongside DJ, was driving it right up and past him. I kind of feel like it's been a good weapon for me this week, actually, the driver. So I don't feel like I've given up any advantage there, which is kind of nice. The par-5s are all just about in range for me.

But yeah, listen, experience is what I have to draw on. That's probably the one thing I do have, obviously, over the rest of them. But the standard of golf is so good no you, the youngsters are playing so well. But I'm kind of pushing myself to try to get that level, as well.

But if you can kind of have both, that's obviously what you're looking for, and I think obviously Championship Sundays, yeah, you hope to lean into the experience side.

I don't think it counts for much Thursdays, Fridays, even Saturdays. But it counts right -- in the toughest moments, it can count.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports.