

Charles Schwab Challenge

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Fort Worth, Texas, USA

Colonial CC

Jordan Spieth

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Jordan, thanks for joining us at the Charles Schwab Challenge, making your 11th start this week. 9 out of 10 top 15s, three runner-up finishes, one win. Currently trajectory in the right path.

What is it about this course that fits your game?

JORDAN SPIETH: I really enjoy playing this place. It kind of requires -- it's really a course where anyone can win. You've seen bombers. You've seen shorter hitters, straighter hitters. It's kind of -- it can yield anything. You just have to hit a lot of shots.

Just because you hit the fairway doesn't mean you're in the right spot. Sometimes on the shorter holes, you've got to really position it at the right distance and the right section of the fairway. Then distance control is extremely important into the green.

So if you're not in the fairways, it's very difficult out of this Bermuda rough to get your distance control correct. You normally get a couple of pins on each green that are birdie holes that day and a couple of pins that you have to have a really good number to be able to access. A nice finishing stretch as well.

I've had some great memories here. This week feels like a home game without maybe the extra that the Byron is for me. So I'm able to stay at home, but I also kind of feel -- I feel the support without maybe the added-ness that I always kind of felt at the Byron. And it's a course that's fit my game really well over the years.

So really excited. Game's been in a really good place this year, continuing on an upward trajectory as you mentioned.

I had a little kind of halt for a couple weeks and didn't really have a lot of prep in the last week, and it certainly showed my first couple rounds and some of just the scoring stuff, some of the easier holes, some of the short game shots, and just matching line and speed. I had a lot of lip-outs, a lot of people did.



It's just that little extra when you're playing a lot and maybe preparing a little bit better. I had some short, long, high, low, but I was very surprised at how well I struck the ball last week. So continuing that with some improvement on and around the greens would be the goal this week.

THE MODERATOR: What are your thoughts on this course about to undergo a huge renovation? What do you think that means for this club, for the TOUR? It's currently the longest standing non-major on TOUR. So just what this course means to the TOUR.

JORDAN SPIETH: Gil Hanse was kind enough through my manager to send -- what was it, a year and a half ago -- the plans. I'm not sure how they've been updated since, but I always thought courses like this, Hilton Head, these classic courses that stand the test of time, it's like what are you going to do to these places? I think that's kind of everyone's first response.

Then I saw them, and I was like, wow, this looks really, really cool. It looks like it maintains the character of what Colonial is while creating some excitement on some holes that maybe could use a little bit of adjusting.

So changing a few of the tee lines where, instead of as much of a straight shot, you kind of see more of working the ball into a fairway. I'm not sure how much is public, but I know the idea of flipping the nines and making the 8th hole into the 17th, I think that might be the biggest change on the course from what I've seen. It looks like it might be a great par-3 to bring more of the creek and the river into play. So I'm always a proponent of that.

Last week at Oak Hill you saw a renovation that was done extremely well and very highly regarded by, it seems, critics and players alike. Change is sometimes better, sometimes not necessary. I think here Gil will do a really good job of maintaining the integrity while adding even some more character and modernization to it.

THE MODERATOR: You mentioned Oak Hill. A lot of excitement around that. A lot of excitement building into this week with Michael Block. Just what was that like seeing him play last week and then getting the exemption this week?

JORDAN SPIETH: That's one of the beauties of the PGA



Championship. You don't really see it to that extent but every 20 or 30 years, but how cool. He's extremely accomplished in his own right. I know we have some mutual friends. I met him yesterday on the 10th tee. He was turning, and I played the back nine behind him.

We were actually watching it while flying home, and when that happened, it had frozen before they'd hit, and my phone was blowing up with my friends like you've got to be kidding me. No way. No way. I'm like what happened? They're like, he just dunked it on 15. Just insane. Absolutely insane.

I think what was so cool about that, as a player that can get caught into a decade out here and think of it as work more than play, is you saw how he embraced that entire week, and he's talked about it after as like, you'll look back and think of a couple of weeks in your life, and this may be one of the best ones I've had. It's like, man, we get to do that every week.

I think if you can kind of help keep that perspective and be a little more like Michael Block week to week, it would be a good thing for all of us.

Q. Jordan, wanted to ask, with your wrist setback, did that happen during the Wells Fargo or after you got home?

JORDAN SPIETH: No, it was after I got home. I was just playing with my son. I wasn't even holding him or anything. I was just pushing myself off the ground while he was like laughing and going side to side. Something just popped and jammed, and then all of a sudden, I couldn't move it and got on it right away.

Ended up with an MRI the next morning and went through a few specialists and tried to figure out the right plan for it. I was very shocked I was able to -- I was pretty surprised I was able to play last week. I talked to Cameron about it on Sunday before the tournament, and I said, hey, I might be up to 50/50. He said, I'll still call you 25 percent yes, 75 percent no, to be honest, but we'll get there and see.

So I thought, if I could -- if I get through four rounds and I was not going to make anything worse or jeopardize anything going forward, then I thought it would be worth it and you just never know. Turns out you can't really kind of fake it into a major. You kind of really need to be as prepared as possible.

But I got better each day, and hand held up, wrist held up really well. At this point, I don't feel like I'm rushing things. I think I'm on par with following the docs I've talked to, and it's kind of a week-to-week thing because it's something

that can get worse, and if it does, I need to cut it off immediately.

Ideally, I make it through this stretch, then have a little break in the summer prior to the Scottish, and that rest will probably help a lot. But I'm doing a lot of recovery stuff day to day that I'm not used to doing, but it's been helping.

Q. Jordan, what is the nature of the injury?

JORDAN SPIETH: It was diagnosed a moderate grade tendon sheath tear. There's a lot of other words that I do not have any idea what they mean that I had to get told to me like I was a 12-year-old trying to figure out what's going on. It's a pretty vague thing because it can be pretty significant and it can be very insignificant.

The tendon itself is in a really good spot, which is most important. Then there's some damage there, but not enough to be massively concerning as long as I'm listening to it. I decided I didn't want to -- I've done a shot. I have a bone spur in the same hand. This hand has caused me issues over the last five years or so. But I have another issue that can't get worse, it's just pain management. So you can shoot that up to help with pain management at times.

This is one I didn't want to do because it can get worse and I need to listen to it. So I've done nothing but Advil as far as anything to take for it, and then just a ton of manual therapy to ice, laser, stim, because it can heal itself but there's not a lot of blood flow in the area so sometimes it takes a little longer.

Again, I just keep on staying in touch with specialists. They would err on the side of caution, and if they're pretty comfortable and I feel good about it, then I say why not play?

Q. Jordan, what are some of the challenges playing the week right after a major or maybe some of the benefits of doing that?

JORDAN SPIETH: Well, I think one of the challenges is just kind of getting back up. If we had to start today, I think it would be a little harder. You just wouldn't feel like -- but one of the things I've recognized playing the week after the majors, if you take it a little casually that Monday, Tuesday, and you only give yourself Wednesday, I don't feel like I'm ready to go in an event that, if I'm going to play a PGA TOUR event, I want to be as sharp as possible because there's guys that were here on Sunday and Monday preparing, and you've got to think about that.

I came over -- I was not planning on coming over

yesterday. I worked with my coach until about 11:45. I was like, well, I think I'm going to go over there and play nine and get on the course. I'm glad I did because they changed to oversee around the greens. It's an adjustment from, even though I've played this tournament ten times and played the course a number of times, even when the tournament's not being played, that changes things on where you want to layup, where you want to go for it. So I'm glad I came over.

I think the biggest challenge is getting yourself to -- you just put so much effort to try and peak for four weeks, you don't want the letdown of taking it too easy the next week. But the biggest benefit is I feel -- typically after a major, you feel as sharp as you can feel.

This case specifically, going in and feeling like I got better each round last week makes me pretty confident about continuing that trend this week. I would have loved for the PGA to be this week and Colonial the next week just so I had that extra time to feel this way about last week. But it's in the past.

Coming to a place where I can hopefully press on the gas pedal and kind of get back to where I felt like I was three or four weeks ago, which was on a really, really nice trend upwards as we head into a couple more majors.

Q. You talked about Michael Block and just being able to watch that ace and kind of being, I don't know, introduced to his story and his rise that he's on. I'm just curious, how valuable do you think his story is as a reminder to viewers, players, and the current landscape of golf?

JORDAN SPIETH: A reminder for what exactly?

Q. Just the love of the game, just playing golf.

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I guess that's what I meant when I was answering it before. You just get kind of caught up in the week to week, and sometimes -- I've always talked about the most important thing for me is trying to remember that it's a game and I want to be who I was when I was 14, 15 years old, getting better and falling in love with the game by shooting low scores, wanting to go out and practice, and having fun attacking pins.

If I'm 80 years old, I'm not going to remember when I laid it 30 feet left of the hole, which at times may be a better decision, but also if I played that way, I may have won another event or two, but I probably wouldn't have won three or four of them that I did.

I guess what I'm saying is he has no reason to play other

than play the way he always has known, and I think there's something to be taken from that. More importantly, it's just the way his demeanor was on and off the course, the way he talked about it. That's what I meant in we could all use a little Michael Block. Those of us that have been out here a long time and get caught up in the complaining route.

I was told that happened the first few years, and I never thought it would be me, and then I catch myself sometimes. Just we got it pretty good.

Q. He said one of the coolest things was Michael Jordan reaching out to him and him not really realizing it and having to scroll through his contacts, but that's when he said it's surreal and a dream. You've been at this for a while. Is there anyone who reached out to you pretty early on in your career and you're like, oh, this is real.

JORDAN SPIETH: Sure. I guess after the Masters in '15, but I couldn't necessarily give you specifics. My dad told Michael Jordan on the 1st tee of the Ryder Cup in '14 that he named me after him because he was his hero, so that was kind of cool.

It's pretty neat. He's obviously a massive golf lover, built his own playground there at Grove 23, and I've been fortunate to play a couple rounds with him. It's not surprising that he would do something like that, the little time I've spent around him, to reach out to Michael Block and tell him how much he enjoyed it.

Q. Welcome back to Texas. Hope you thawed out by now. Other than the four weeks that y'all are all together, do you pay any attention to what's going on on the LIV Golf tour?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, here and there. I asked D.J. on Sunday when they're playing next, so I guess not that close of attention because I think they play this week. I'm aware of who wins the tournament, but I don't know the team stuff. I don't necessarily know who's on whose team other than a couple different guys.

I guess yes and no, like I've got a decent idea of who wins the tournament because it's around, but I don't know a whole lot other than that, like where they're playing, when their schedule is, who's on whose team. I know how their format works and stuff, but that's about it.

Q. Other than being back in Texas and getting to sleep in your own bed or see your people, do you have a favorite TOUR stop somewhere?

JORDAN SPIETH: This is one of my favorites for the



reasons I mentioned at the very beginning, where it feels like a home game without anything added. Next week's a pretty phenomenal one. Riviera is my favorite golf course consistently on the PGA TOUR. Next week is about as good as it gets from a player experience.

Yeah, this part of the year is really, really enjoyable. You get a couple home games, and Muirfield's pretty awesome, PGA mixed in there. This is a really fun stretch to try to have your game on.

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