

# Charles Schwab Challenge

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Fort Worth, Texas, USA

Colonial CC

## Justin Thomas

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Justin Thomas to the interview room here at the 2026 Charles Schwab Challenge. Justin, your making your fourth career start at this event first since 2022. Justin, welcome back to Colonial, if we can get some thoughts on being here this week.

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, thank you, I'm excited to be here. I really like this golf course. It definitely is one of those events I think a lot of people would play if it fit the schedule more. Given the beginning of my year what it looked like and starting when I did, with the potential of adding other events and this one was definitely one that I had circled that I really wanted to add and play and it worked out nicely. So I haven't seen it since the changes, so obviously it's a lot softer and a little bit more wet than the last couple years, but yeah, happy to be here and it's a fun course and seems like it's always had a great tournament.

THE MODERATOR: You made your first start at Colonial in 2020. What a year that was. You finished tied for 10th. Any recollections of that when you started back?

JUSTIN THOMAS: For sure. I think at that point everybody just was like, I'll play, let's just play tournaments. And with how the season and everything went that year, it was definitely an event a lot of people came and played. To me this is one of those events that's been on TOUR for so long and the history of the course and the tournament that I've watched it on TV for so long that I kind of knew some of the nuances and knew of it before I got here. But then when I really played it I was like, Man, this is a great golf course and I really would love to play here more often. So, yeah, glad to be back.

THE MODERATOR: And then you closed with a 65 at the PGA Championship, finished T-4. What a Sunday that was for you. Talk a little bit about that and then also what you've done the past week in preparation and relaxing basically, probably.

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, probably wasn't quite as much



relaxing as it maybe could have gone for. But, yeah, it was obviously a great Sunday at the PGA. I was happy to give myself a chance and have a great round. It was weird to, because it didn't necessarily feel like I was quote unquote in contention, but I very much was. I think it's very different of finishing when I did versus finishing when the leaders were finishing. It's quite a different feel. But to go out there and play the round I did when I knew I needed to was great and, yeah, last week just was really a couple days off and then back to the grind.

THE MODERATOR: All right, we'll open it up to questions.

**Q. I think you had three plus hours after finishing up on Sunday at the PGA. Can you walk us through what you did? Did you watch TV? Did you pack?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, I got done and kind of was trying to figure out what to do. My rental house was very close to the course, so I just went back with my family, my parents, and aunt and uncle were in town, and we just went to the house and watched. I didn't really feel like, to be honest, sitting in the clubhouse and every person walking by and telling me what's going to happen or what do you think. I just didn't honestly didn't want to have that conversation 45 times. So just kind of went back and waited and watched and it was a lot. It was funny, I texted with a couple people, like the golf fan in me was enjoying like it was a really, really good tournament, but, I mean, I obviously was hoping people weren't making birdies, so it was kind of a strange place to be in, but it sure as hell beat being on the flight home and not having to watch or care.

**Q. Going back to last November after the surgery, do you consider yourself a patient person and if so was that patience tested at all during the process?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: Probably depends what, in what sense. I don't know, that's a good question, if I consider myself patient. Overall I would say I'm fairly patient. I think sometimes more than others. But, yeah, you had to be very, very or I had to be very, very patient after the surgery. And especially the rehab. My surgery was so minor compared to what, you know, an ACL, a labrum, Achilles, the stuff that you're out for, what, six, nine months, whatever it is. It's kind of like a pretty specific timeline. And it's so long before you can do anything. So mine compared to that, I can't imagine, because I was going



pretty stir crazy and it's just, you do so, so, so much every day to each day to wake up the next day to feel the exact same you do that for what I felt like was a long time. So that sucks, to be perfectly honest, so the patience had to be very, very high. You try to as best you can to look to like now that all the stuff that I'm doing is going to pay off, but it sure doesn't feel like that when you're going through it (laughing).

**Q. Since Bay Hill have you had sort of that epiphany moment where you felt, yes, surgery worked, the rehab worked, everything I did paid off?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: I mean, I'm definitely, you know, I'm very reassured and I feel extremely confident that I made the right decision, which is most important. But I will, I felt like I made that beforehand and I kind of, that was something I told myself is like I can't go into this if I'm not a hundred percent. If I'm, like, should I, should I not. Should I try this, should I try that. Because I could sit here right now and I could find probably hundreds of people that know more than me about it that will tell me what I did was stupid and why I shouldn't have done it. But at the end of the day I could do that regardless of what I did, right? So for me the biggest thing was talking, between talking to my team, but in myself is, I just had to know, I had confidence and belief and faith in what I was doing was the best thing for me and my career. And that's, you know, after all the information, everything that I had kind of gathered and talking, reading, whatever you want to call it, I felt like that was what it was. So it wasn't necessarily a moment after the fact, because I felt like I had already kind of committed to that. But it's also not something of like once you've hit that first driver and it feels good you're like, Okay, I'm good the rest of my life, I don't have to worry about this ever again. It's like everything, it's a process and you got to keep working on it.

**Q. So you mentioned the schedule with like the elevated events, the PGA Championship, the U.S. Open on the horizon. Do you guys ever feel obligated to play in so some of these events, or how do you choose this one instead of last week? Is it like maybe the city you're in or -- how does that work?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: Everybody's different. I would say the most, the first and foremost, most important thing that a lot of the top guys, a lot of, anybody that's in the majors, you're going to at least I would think, is what's going to prepare me the best for the major. So like I've had success in majors when I play the week before. But playing San Antonio the week before the Masters for me doesn't feel like that's getting me prepared as much as possible for the Masters. Therefore, I don't play San Antonio. I had a year where the PGA, when it was at

Southern Hills I wanted to play the week before Byron Nelson, it's easy travel, and I played the week before. So it's very situational of when you play, don't play in that regard. But I mean I really, really, really try with all my might to not do four in a row, four in a row is like I'm not fun to be around. It's very taxing. So I try to cap it at three. And, yeah, there's a lot of great tournaments, we're very fortunate to have to miss some great events, but you have to at some point. So just kind of start with the majors and fill it in here and there, I guess.

**Q. So this is your first time here since the renovation. You've been out the pro-am today, do you have any thoughts on changes that you're noticing?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, it's definitely, it's different. I feel like it plays very similar in terms of clubs you're hitting off tees, the shape of, like the overall maybe bones of the hole. I think there's just some tweaking. Obviously have you some holes like 8 or 16, 13, that are very, very different. But for the most part it is very similar to what it was. I think my, in terms of do I like it better now or before? I think there's some kind of combination of it. I think the greens are definitely lower, you have the ability to run it up on the green, which I didn't feel like you had before. But I like some of the greens feel a little smaller and the contours are very subtle, so I like it, at least what I've seen. But it's also been very, very soft and I can see when it gets firm how difficult it could play.

**Q. Since you're in the area, have you had a chance to go up to PGA Frisco or have you been there yet to check the venue out for next year?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: I have not, no. Yeah, I'll probably, you know, deal with that next year.

**Q. For me -- it was cart path only is what it means when it's wet like this. It's dreaded. But for you, what does it mean? How do you change your game?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: When it's wet like this? I mean, it's pretty impressive and obviously the amount of money that and the changes they did, a lot of it out here was for the conditions of the course to be better. So like the fairways, I was shocked at how firm they were. Outside the fairways and some of the low spots of the course seemed pretty soft and wet still, but overall I was very, very impressed. But when the greens are soft it's just more of a, it just requires less. It requires less strategy, less thinking, you can get away with more, it's easier chipping. You can get away with maybe with some poor iron shots that whether they would be landing on the green and going off or the ability to get the ball up-and-down because the greens aren't as firm. But that's always the case. The softer the greens

are, the easier it's going to play for us. But with how it's firmed up in the last day or even 12 hours, you know, if they're fortunate to not get rain the rest of the week it should be pretty good by the weekend.

**Q. Since the SEC is talking about the playoffs, college football playoffs expanding to 24. What are your thoughts on that? I know you're a big Crimson Tide guy.**

JUSTIN THOMAS: It just seems ridiculous to me. It's like what's -- everybody's always mad when they're not let in, and it doesn't matter how many you do, there's always going to be teams and people pissed off that they're not let in. I think you got to draw the line somewhere. But, yeah, everybody, no matter how many teams are let in, there's always going to be some that got robbed or got screwed, so I think that's a dangerous game to play to just keep making it bigger. But NCAA just wants to keep making that money, so they're going to do what they can.

THE MODERATOR: All right, Justin Thomas, thank you, sir appreciate it.

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