

John Deere Classic

Tuesday, July 1, 2025

TPC Deere Run

Silvis, Illinois, USA

Rickie Fowler

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Good morning, we would like to welcome Rickie Fowler to the interview room here at the 2025 John Deere Classic. This is your first appearance since 2010. Share some opening thoughts on what it's like to be back.

RICKIE FOWLER: It's great to be back. Was able to go play in Zach Johnson's program yesterday and see some faces I haven't seen in a while. Excited to be back at this tournament. You know, one that I definitely liked when I played it and I wish I would've played a little bit better. Tough part of the schedule, and it was always tough to kind of fit it in and make it work, especially leading into British.

So, yeah, I was just excited that it was able to work out this year. Decided to take next week off with the Scottish and play more here in the States.

So, yeah, looking forward to taking the family over to the Big Dig tonight. This is a great family event, so being a little different spot in my career and being able to do that stuff now.

Q. You have five top 25 finishes this season. Talk about the state of your game heading into this week.

RICKIE FOWLER: I wish it was some better finishes than that, but at least heading in the right direction. You know, feel like trending at the right time, taking last week away.

Outside of that, I feel like been seeing a lot of positives. And, yeah, like I said heading the right direction with the time of year we're in.

Yeah, just got to keep it simple: Go out and have fun and play golf.

Q. Rickie, I know you addressed the schedule a little bit last week in Detroit. One thing we've seen here, and it was Peter Malnati says the TOUR models predicted this would happen. The Signature Events have had an impact of deepening this field immensely



from 70 to 30 and it's been an interesting result. Any thoughts on how the Signature Events have worked into the advantage of the smaller tournaments?

RICKIE FOWLER: I think, I mean, such a fairly small sample size, the Signature Events have only been around for a couple years.

But I do think we've seen maybe -- with the Allyn cards that there are, there is more guys struggling to get into some events. You're seeing guys playing more, what the events mean, what points mean until everything kind of settles or there is maybe an adjustment or change in how many events and what events are worth as far as having Signature, regular, and opposite fields.

So we'll see where that goes. Yeah, the current state, you know, you are seeing -- if you're looking at event structure, there is -- I don't want to say standard, but there is elevated, normal PGA TOUR events, and then opposite fields.

The normal events seem to be getting a little bit stronger field just with guys playing maybe a little bit more and where things fit in the schedule.

And then it's tough. I think it has forced guys to maybe play some more.

So that's the current state. Like I said, kind of a small sample size. It'll be interesting to see what changes or adjustments are made going forward and where the schedule of the TOUR may look in five or ten years from now.

Q. How much does your standing in FedExCup standings have to do with your decision to play here, and how you can maybe take advantage of an opportunity?

RICKIE FOWLER: I was basically going to play here or Scottish, and one of the reasons I haven't played here in quite a while was being before the British and then it being before the Scottish. I have always played the Scottish before the British. That was just always my schedule.

This year I felt to free up the potential of the back end the British and playing potentially 3M and/or Greensboro, I



figured having Scottish off before the British and playing these three weeks in a row, Travelers, Rocket, and here at the Deere, felt like was a better flow.

Like I said, freeing up the after playoffs options for me.

So that was more of it. It wasn't really anything other than that. Just what I felt was the best flow schedule for me.

Q. Expounding on the schedule issue, next year go from 125 to 100 cards. You and your lifestyle, where you are now, father of two, a little bit different perspective, how do you see your schedule working out next year? Have you even looked at that and how that's going to play out at all?

RICKIE FOWLER: I haven't really looked at that too much just because I'm not sure where I'll exactly be at. Love to have some solid weeks here and be inside the top 50 and go play TOUR championship.

You know, top 30 be even better.

So some unknowns at this point, but I think going to 100 I think is the step in the right direction. We all want PGA TOUR to be the most elite tour there is out here, the best product.

Not saying that just the 100 is how we get there, but with guys getting, you know, maybe fewer and fewer starts towards the back end of what cards are available, guys earning cards, whether it's Q-School, through Korn Ferry, I feel like their first year is almost like is tryout.

You get a handful of starts and you better play good when you do; versus when you earn a card to feel like you actually have one. I think like that may be potentially where the TOUR might be heading. Ultimately be less cards; possibly less events.

To me, I think I mentioned it last week, but to me, I believe as far as the PGA TOUR and the product and being that elite, I don't personally being in secondary or opposite field events. That's just me personally. I'm not saying they should or shouldn't be around.

For what I believe the PGA TOUR is, that's kind of where I'm at.

Q. You said you liked the course, liked the tournament 15 years ago. So now that you're back, had a couple days, think back to what you specifically liked about this tournament and course and how do you feel like it sets up well for your game here this week?

RICKIE FOWLER: I mean, it's definitely a golf course, play well, there is a lot of offense. You can make a lot of birdies around this place. You know, I haven't been out on the course yet this week. Going to play the front nine this afternoon and hopefully get reacquainted and be on the back nine tomorrow in the pro-am.

I've always kept up with the event depending on some buddies playing or Jordan, Zach, Stricker back in the day, the guys that were in contention.

So remember the course a little bit, but it's a little different watching, whether it's on the app or TV versus actually playing.

Yeah, it's a great golf course. I'm looking forward to getting out there today and tomorrow and teeing up on Thursday.

Q. 15 years is a pretty long time. A lot is different. You get to take your toddlers to the Big Dig. How has your life changed? How are you a different person from basically the kid who came out here in 2010?

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, I mean, this is my 16th year on TOUR and I don't feel a whole lot older than I did then. Maybe a little more experienced. Married and two kids like you said; different part of my life now.

Golf is still a priority and what I love to do, but there is some other things that have moved in front of that. Obviously there is times where I need to go to work, go practice, go play, but family is family.

I'm excited that we still get to travel together week in and week out up until school really starts. At that point it'll be here and there and primarily just summers.

But, yeah, enjoying this part of life right now. Like I said, kind of enjoy it while we can. Special to be all together. Like this week you're here at the Deere, being to have something like the Big Dig, not sure if our three and a half year old, Maya, I am not sure if she fully understand it, but she'll be pretty excited there tonight.

Q. Soon as she sits down in the big escalator she'll be pretty excited.

RICKIE FOWLER: Uh-huh.

Q. Jordan was here last year and he talked about going through the same kind of changes you have. Still trying to find that kid-like joy that carried him out of bunker here in 2013. Do you need to find that? Do you find yourself searching for that sometimes on the golf course?

RICKIE FOWLER: I mean, I love to play. I think sometimes when you're out competing and when your struggling or maybe not getting the results you want, it can be tough to be out there and feel like you're having fun.

I mean, teeing it up with friends at home, that's still fun. I love to do that. It's a lot more fun when you're playing well at tournaments and in contention.

But when you look back, for me, at the few years I struggled, once you're out of those it is -- I enjoy the grind. I don't know if everyone else does. The guys that have had success and been through the ups and downs, you appreciate the tough times because they -- it kind of helped define you a bit, then appreciate the times you're playing well.

Yeah, it's all about having fun. I would say majority of us enjoy it, but there are definitely days when it's tough to have one you have fun when it's not going exactly the way you're expecting.

Q. Obviously since you've been on TOUR you've always been a fan favorite. This is a tournament that really embraces the big names, Jordan Spieth, Zach Johnson, Stricker. I fully expect you're have a lot of that support this week. In general having the fans support you the way they do, how does that drive you week in and week out?

RICKIE FOWLER: One, it's been amazing to have the support that I've had over the years, and especially the younger generation. I would say for a while it was -- there were a lot of kids.

Now being 16 years on TOUR, kids that have grown up. They're a little older than when they started following me back in the day. It's definitely been great. This tournament has always had an amazing turnout. It's amazing to look back at Travelers, it's not like you're in big city, big town areas.

But some of the smaller town areas get bigger and better kind of local turnouts. It's kind of the thing that's going on versus being around a big city. Plenty of options of other things to do.

So that's what's I think has been special about this event at the Deere. The fan support and kind of the energy and the atmosphere you go out there is pretty cool.

Q. For years you have been one of the marquee names in in PGA TOUR fields. When you come to an event like in this week where you are the name, people

want to come out and see Rickie Fowler, does that help get the juices flowing again for you?

RICKIE FOWLER: It does. I mean, it was special to be able to kind of I guess earn that early on with just kind of being different, obviously playing well and having that younger following and the kids gravitating towards me. Can't plan that, but special to be in that position where kids looked up to me and being able to be that person for them.

It is added pressure, but it kind of comes with what we do. I enjoy it. But, yeah, it's tough at times when you might be struggling out there because you want to play well for the people that are there to support you.

But it's also nice in these times where you're struggling because you can look around and see kids wearing Puma hat or dressed as me or like me. Kind of gives you a little bit of -- helps put things into perspective. It's like a game we play. It's tough.

Yeah, it would be nice to play well all the time, but that's not everything. But to have that support can help get through some of those tough days.

Q. Any added pressure when you come into an event like this where you are the banner name?

RICKIE FOWLER: Yes and no. I mean, at this point in my career, I mean, we've played quite a few events, and like I said, golf isn't necessarily what defines me.

I think more my family and friends and who I am as a person is much more what I would rather be remembered as many golf is a bonus.

You know, it's not that I don't care by any means. But I think there is a fine line of maybe trying to push too hard or put too much pressure on yourself versus sit back, relax, and enjoy.

So like I said, fine line there. Caring enough but not too much to make that a struggle versus kind of going back to earlier, just having fun and enjoy the situation that you're in.

Q. There has been some chatter about you being an assistant captain for Keegan. Interested? Something you want to do?

RICKIE FOWLER: I haven't heard anything on that. Obviously I've loved all the team events I've been on and been a part of.

We'll deal with that if it comes to that. I'm obviously happy

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

to help out, but I know Keegan is working on trying to make his own team. He's got some great guys at his side helping out. If they want me there, I would hope scheduling and everything would work out.

It would be fun to be a part of. We'll deal with that when it gets to it.

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