

John Deere Classic

Thursday, July 2, 2026

TPC Deere Run

Silvis, Illinois, USA

Zach Johnson

Quick Quotes

Q. Zach, you've been in the 60s a ton here, but is this as gratifying a round as you can identify, other than maybe 2012?

ZACH JOHNSON: You know what, I think it's gratifying. I mean, starting the week and looking at the forecast, I mean, the discussion with my wife and some of my team -- I mean, I'm not suggesting others don't struggle in heat. I struggle immensely in heat.

I mean, I have a protocol that I have to stick to before the day starts -- excuse me -- before the week starts in the evenings and obviously during the course of the round, honestly, just to survive. That sounds -- just to have the energy to compete for 18 holes was a feat for me, and I'm grateful for them, thankful for that, but I've learned a lot.

Yeah, my game has been good enough to show up. Just I haven't played much out here obviously. I would say, yeah, I don't know if it's the most gratifying. It's one day.

Obviously it's all the cliches: It's one day, one round, there's a lot more golf. However, given the wind conditions, it was trying. You know, there was a lot of John Deere weeks we don't get a whole lot of wind and it's pretty stagnant, and it was humming 10 to 15 at times.

With all that to say and the condition of this golf course, it's very gratifying.

Q. You were saying on the radio, "I've already won." Can you get into that a little bit? What do you mean by that?

ZACH JOHNSON: Meaning the outcome of my week from a golf standpoint, professionally speaking, just is irrelevant almost. I don't know if it's everything's icing on the cake, but you could maybe say it's kind of that way, as well.

I just love being here, you know, and I'm comfortable obviously, so my score card -- I know that's an ingredient this week, but it's not everything. I can't stress it enough. I'm just appreciative of having a partnership with John



JOHN DEERE
CLASSIC



Deere and feeling like a long, long distance son to this area. Technically I lived in Davenport when I was an infant.

A lot of affinity, a lot of affection, and you know what, it really starts and ends with the people. So I'm very honored and grateful.

Q. Were there any expectations this week, or is this kind of a victory lap?

ZACH JOHNSON: Again, my expectation is looking at the forecast for left foot, right foot, stay cool, let's see if we can get better this week for next week. I mean, that kind of sounds mundane, but it's the truth.

I've got another big tournament next week, but the more I focus on kind of right where my feet are, shot to shot, day to day, week to week, usually I bode pretty well. Again, it's just one day, but I feel comfortable. I feel comfortable with the process with which we're doing about each hole and each shot. You know, excited for tomorrow.

Q. Where are you next week? Are you going to Scotland and then on to the Open?

ZACH JOHNSON: No, next week is Akron, Ohio. It's our PLAYERS Championship on the Champions Tour, so I'm going to go play Firestone.

Q. Are you eligible for the Open?

ZACH JOHNSON: I am eligible for the Open. I am not going to participate this year. I can't play four weeks in a row. I've already missed -- I missed Birmingham, which was a major. When was that? March? April? I forget. We had a wedding.

I'm missing the U.S. Senior Open this week. Next week is a major, and then the Senior Open is a major, obviously the very next week after the Open, so I'm not going to play four in a row.

Q. Do you have any more tour events on your schedule?

ZACH JOHNSON: I don't know. I haven't gotten -- we plot and we plan, but I mean, I hope I can play RSM. That



... when all is said, we're done.®

would be great. That's at home and a partner, as well, so I would think that one is probably very -- I don't want to say probable, but it certainly has potential.

No, I don't have any other plans other than that, as of right now. That's not in my equation.

Q. In a tournament that historically has had a lot of low scores, is there pressure to come out and shoot low early?

ZACH JOHNSON: No, I don't think so. I mean, I played a practice round Tuesday, played one Wednesday, played the pro-am Wednesday.

I was telling my coach and my caddie, like, this is as strong as I've seen this golf course in a while. I mean, there's a couple new tees. Obviously 4 is new, new tees. 18 and 9 have been pushed back over the last, I don't know, five, six, seven years. When you have a south wind like that, those holes are -- for me, they're really long. It's just trying.

No, fortunately I was just trying to hit solid shot and let the score card reveal itself. There have been times where you are, like, man, I got to go low, and I got to go low quick.

I don't know, if the wind subsides a little bit here, I may reconsider that, but the afternoon, I'm assuming it was a little windy in the morning, maybe a little easier because the scores are showing that. Granted, the greens are a little bit better in the morning. It goes to show, that's every week, every day.

It seems like the morning wave shot some low numbers, so I don't know. Hopefully we have those kind of conditions tomorrow morning.

Q. Zach, you spoke on the changes on 4 before you really got the chance to play it on Tuesday. Now that you've gotten a couple of rounds and a tournament look today, just your thoughts on all those changes, how it changes your approach, and even the memories you associate with that hole?

ZACH JOHNSON: Well, I mean, obviously that tree was kind of an iconic tree certainly on that hole, but this golf course. The hole has gotten harder. It's harder to hit the fairway. The fairway is a lot narrower.

With the added length, it just becomes -- even some of the guys -- shoot, I'm playing with Keith this week. There ain't many guys that hit it as far as him. He hit a beautiful cut. He had to cut it into the wind just to keep it in the fairway.

It's more trying. You know, it's not like you can't get a loft

in your hand. It's just you have to execute it. I don't know if it's a beast, but it's pretty close.

That's all right. I mean, the green hasn't changed, so I think the integrity of the hole for the most part is still there. I don't know if I love trees in the middle of the fairway, but that one was pretty awesome.

Q. With that hole now, your approach shot, is that a tougher green to hold having to hit longer clubs?

ZACH JOHNSON: I'm hitting more club, so yeah, just objectively speaking, you would say it's a harder. A lot of flip -- a lot of 120 to -- 130 to 100 yard wedges previous hole. I didn't hit a very good tee shot today. Well, I was close. I held it. It was in the right bunker. It was into the wind. I hit a punch 7. I mean, I haven't hit many 7-irons into that hole. Actually, I have, but I hit the tree.

So the point is, yeah, it's definitely more trying. The bunkering -- the sand here is just tremendous, so more times than not you're going to get a pretty decent lie in there. You can at least advance it. You don't want to be in there. I'm just saying you can.

Those right bunkers, it's a blind shot. Yesterday I was almost in the 3 bunker. I managed to hit the fairway, but that 3 bunker is fine.

Q. You've done okay from bunkers out here in the past, though.

ZACH JOHNSON: Not as good as Jordan Spieth, but all right.

Q. It looks like after today's tremendous performance, you've assured yourself of a rare fourth round of golf, which is --

ZACH JOHNSON: Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa.

Q. Lately --

ZACH JOHNSON: We'll pump the brakes. I have to play tomorrow. I can appreciate your sentiment, but my concern right now is Friday.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports