

# The Memorial Tournament Presented By Nationwide

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Dublin, Ohio, USA

Muirfield Village

## Jordan Spieth

### Press Conference

DOUG MILNE: We would like to welcome Jordan Spieth. Jordan has had a couple of top-10s, just outside of the top-10 last year here, and with that said, just some thoughts on being whack back here at Muirfield Village this week.

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, this is always one of our favorite stops for a number of reasons. One, the clubhouse, the milk shakes, the food, the treatment. And then two, and more obvious probably, is the golf course itself. It's one of the kind of most fun, most difficult but purest tracks that we play all year, even with most every single hole being changed it seems like it's still that way, which is pretty remarkable in a year's time. And it's a golf course where you just can't, you can't fake anything. I mean you're either on or you're not and you can see guys shoot 6-under and you see guys shoot 6-over in the same round and there's just very few golf courses that yield that kind of disparity in scores throughout a season. So it's always kind of a fun one to not only test your game around one of the coolest tracks, but with a couple weeks before the U.S. Open it really brings out kind of the flaws in where you're at and what you need to kind of work on heading into a major.

DOUG MILNE: One more question from me and we'll open it up to questions. Last week's runner-up finish was your sixth top-5 finish just going back to the Waste Management. How comfortable or confident and comfortable are you with feeling like you're back to Jordan Spieth golf?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, it was just a -- to have the consistency I've had is very nice. I mean, I had a month off and was able to come back and play pretty solid golf the last three weeks. Over the weekend I got a little bit off and I kind of had to, I guess, carve around with what I could, which is kind of a tough position to be in when you're leading, but still almost pulled through last week. Yeah, again, just back to kind of just being playing consistent golf and golf freely, hitting shots and seeing them go where I want them to go and then feeling like I'm progressing week-in and week-out has been the No. 1 goal for a long

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time. And to kind of see that take shape this season has been nice. And it, I guess feels a little bit like house money, having won, so you're in kind of Kapalua and then being up there in the FedExCup ranking, with sights on East Lake, all those kind of things, those goals that you set at the beginning of the year, being in a really good position at this point in the season makes me feel like I'm not behind the 8-ball and have to force things, but can instead let them kind of take shape. And that's kind of been kind of the No. 1 kind of biggest help in continuing to progress.

DOUG MILNE: Okay, we'll open it up to questions.

#### **Q. Just how different is the course? How different do you think you have to play it?**

JORDAN SPIETH: I only, I've only played four holes, so I'm not the person to ask, unfortunately. But No. 1 and No. 4 were the biggest changes on those first four and I just, I'm obviously very aware of the changes and I've talked to a number of guys now over the last two days and I think visually off the tee the only real change is 15. The only major kind of, maybe you play a different shot or it's a very different look is 15 off the tee.

Then there will be, obviously, a bit of learning to do on the new green surfaces on where some of the misses are and so I think the majority of it is on and around the greens, especially on the par-5s that have changed. I think it's, with all four par-5s essentially changing, the approach shot and the green complex, that's going to be probably the most important work to recognize where the pins are going to be and where you can miss when you're laying up or going for it in two to leave yourself the best chance to get in in 4. Because on a difficult golf course like this, taking advantage of four par-5s is what us pros are really trying to -- they say they're the hardest handicap -- but for us those are our best opportunities to get a birdie. So that's probably where the biggest learning curve is.

#### **Q. Is it tricky when you are playing the same course but it's been changed, it's kind of, you know, the muscle memory or the mental memory, to have that go, wait a minute, that's maybe not what I need to play this time around?**

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I mean, again, I think, I don't think you've seen holes change -- like the harder holes are

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

still harder and the easier holes are still easier and with only one tee shot really changing dramatically, other than you might hit more drivers than 3-woods, but visually most of the tee shots are the same except 15, I don't think it plays that much of a role there. I think the mentality of the way you look at each hole is pretty similar and it's just going to be that approach shot, maybe a couple approach shots where you're like, Okay, well maybe on No. 4 where that front right used to, front right pin on the old No. 4 used to be have to miss left, now you actually can be more aggressive to it or vice versa on a different part of a different green. So I think more on approach shots than tee balls.

**Q. Xander was in here this morning talking about he didn't, Kiawah Island didn't fit his eye and he feels like he almost talked himself out of being able to play well there. Have you ever been in a position where you just didn't like the golf course and there for you didn't play well?**

JORDAN SPIETH: I think I had a little bit of that with Doral. I went into like 39 bunkers one year and I walked off of that saying, I'm not really sure what I'm supposed to do around this place. But very few. You normally can be -- to start to get obsessed in how you're going to attack a place -- I like the setup of Kiawah and I could see how like if I were playing Kiawah two years ago I would have maybe thrown myself out with some of those tee balls. But just having a little bit more confidence in where I could peel it off of the sides into fairways and stuff like that, to answer your question, yeah, it wasn't specific to Kiawah, but I would say very few but, yeah, here and there I've come across where I'm like, Man, I don't really love kind of the way that sets up or I don't really or you get done with a round and you think you played pretty well to shoot 3-under and you're in like 25th, where you thought you would be in the top-10.

So it's more like, it's more after the fact that you kind of realize the comfort level on courses and some that just doesn't really suit your games.

**Q. And I guess the flip of that would be, have you ever been in a position where you didn't really feel like the golf course fit your eye and yet you still found a way to play it well? Is there an example of that?**

JORDAN SPIETH: I would say most of the courses that I've historically played very consistently in the top-10, like at Kapalua, Augusta, those kind of things, they're very different from like Colonial and I've had a lot of success at Colonial even though it's more of a kind of fit your tee ball into really tight windows and then kind of pick apart a golf course that's an old school classic course and for whatever

reason it's visually -- like I wouldn't necessarily think that that would be great for me when you compare it to a wide open, big slopey, big Augusta or Kapalua. But I would say that the difference in those kind of courses but still loving them both might answer that. Where I'm like, man, I don't really know if that's great for me and then all of a sudden I find a way to play it well.

**Q. Can what happened on Sunday, when you didn't know where the freaking ball was going to go off the club, and yet you still had a chance to win on Sunday, can that help you going forward in any way?**

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, well I need to get back on track, just tighten things up. I just got a little loose. And it was kind of on Friday afternoon, after the delay, I came out and I told Michael within the first couple holes after that I was like, man, I'm moving different, I'm swinging different. And just got really, really loose in my action and was able to kind of make it work for the remainder of the tournament. But obviously -- I mean it was just a different feeling on, going into Sunday than other ones that I had played well or played poorly in throughout this year, I just knew that I was a little off and I was going to have to try and make it work and that's just a tough thing to do around a tricky course. But, yeah, I mean it's -- yeah, I, it could be looked at both ways I guess. I mean I was setup to easily win that golf tournament and so it's really frustrating when I play that poorly and it was didn't matter that it was Sunday, it wasn't the situation or the day that had anything to do with it, it was the fact that I was kind of going a little bit this way as the weekend went on and I couldn't quite flip it around and that was kind of the goal coming in to today and tomorrow was to kind of hit the reset button, tighten things back up, see if I can go back kind of on the upward trend on a course that demands it.

**Q. Can you recall some of the better and more entertaining and enjoyable conversations you've had with Jack over the years? What stands out?**

JORDAN SPIETH: I want to say the one that stands out was the 2014 Masters, the Wednesday evening before it started, and that was my first Masters and I remember standing with he and up an outside the back of the clubhouse, which is pretty unique at 20 years old to be able to do that. And Jack saying, essentially giving a lot of advice on how to play Augusta National that I tried to just take to heart throughout that week and it really helped and played it really well.

And I've kind of always thought about that, if I get in a little bit of trouble, I kind of think about what he said to me there and it was really nice of him to offer that up.

And then he's always been a, always been supportive when you kind of feel like he needs to be, when you would like him to be and then he's been a critic when you should be able to handle him being a critic. I mean, he loves following golf, loves watching it, and has his opinions on what guys need to work on or differences from when they're playing well, he can see those little things and if you ask him he's willing to help. I think that that's pretty cool.

**Q. But he's never offered without you asking, I take it.**

JORDAN SPIETH: Oh, we just don't see him a ton. So typically when we run into him, yeah, he'll kind of feel you out and then if you're kind of searching, then he'll offer some advice.

**Q. Now, the one question I wanted to ask that's horrific and you have to blame Jack for it because he talked about this as well. If you look back at your career, what is the ratio of memory on your great shots or your bad ones? Which ones are you more likely to remember more clearer or however I would phrase that?**

JORDAN SPIETH: I would say somewhat equal. I would say probably the ones where I would like a mulligan are probably hit you a little harder because you work hard to essentially expect yourself to hit the good ones in that position, that's why we do it all day, every day. And the ones you want a mulligan on are the ones that kind of, if you think back -- but like, I mean you could -- you really, it really just kind of depends. If I felt like I should have won a tournament and there was a swing that cost me a tournament, then I'll remember that if you mention that.

But then if you talk about, if you just say Colonial in general, I'm going to remember good shots over bad ones, but if you talk about a specific year of a tournament, then it will just kind of depend on the how I felt the outcome should have been versus how it was.

**Q. That's exactly how he answered it. So you guys have that in common. Except he's got 15 more majors.**

JORDAN SPIETH: He's got a lot more years, too. (Laughing).

**Q. I wanted to ask you about U.S. Open sectional qualifying. Can you talk about and explain your feelings going through the process and what it was like for you to get through?**

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, let's see. I tried sectionals 2010. I don't know if I tried it in 2011. I got through in 2012 as an alternate and then made it through in 2013 in qualifying.

And I would say you don't want to go in expecting the number to be higher than you think, but it just always is. I mean, it's just, it seems to be -- if you think it's going to take 10-under, it's going to take 7. It's just one of those like if you just play consistent golf, patiently take advantage of the holes, it's just, it's a difficult day because you just don't know and you normally don't have live score boards and you don't then get to situationally play the back nine of that second round when you may want to not take on a hole that, a drivable hole, when you can hit a wedge in and protect par.

So it's just kind of, I think the unknowns are the most difficult part, but if you just stay as patient as you can and limit the number of bogeys, typically you make enough birdies to get through. That's, I guess, what I can take away from my experiences with it.

**Q. Are you able to say where you are now compared to say 2015, 2016 and maybe where now compares to 2019 and 2020? Maybe where you lie in that realm.**

JORDAN SPIETH: Probably right in between. Hopefully continuing to work towards the obviously the earlier years, but I'm trying to match up things to even before that timeframe with the kind of better mobility, speed and I guess knowledge that I have now to become a better striker, but in a, swinging in a way that's kind of the easiest way to be as consistent as possible.

So I know what I need to do, it's just reversing tens of thousands of swings the wrong way and there's a few different pieces to it and, unfortunately, sometimes in tournaments right now I still revert back to what's been knocked in versus what I'm trying to work on, on the range and that's kind of the battle that I'm going through.

But I would say certainly way better off than in a lot of ways than say the last couple years and then not quite in the level of freedom as when I was just really on. But I believe that it will get there and be able to stay there more consistently for a longer period of time.

**Q. Is it fair to say you're closer to where you were four, five years ago than -- and you're farther away from your worse the last couple years?**

JORDAN SPIETH: I mean, it's weird because I'm doing my best in not -- the only thing that I care about looking backwards is mechanically matching up to what I was doing. As far as any kind of comparisons to years or results, is literally the last thing that's on my mind. I mean I'm -- I hate the word "back," I hate that, "He's back." I never went anywhere. This is all part of what happens in a career. There's ups and downs. And I like looking forward

and to what are the pieces that I need to put together for this kind of this jump start, this new kind of way that I want to be playing golf week-in and week-out.

And so it's hard for me to answer that question because I'm trying to do my best not to answer that question day-in and day-out. Instead, focus forward with picking apart things in my DNA that have made me successful.

DOUG MILNE: All right, Jordan, that's it. Thank you for your time. We appreciate it.

JORDAN SPIETH: You got it.

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