

# BMW Championship

Tuesday, August 25, 2020

Olympia Fields, Illinois, USA

Olympia Fields Country Club

## Dustin Johnson

### Press Conference

AMANDA HERRINGTON: We'd like to welcome Dustin Johnson to the virtual interview room here at the BMW Championship. A two-time winner of the BMW Championship, Dustin recently reached his 22nd career PGA TOUR win on Sunday at the Northern Trust. Dustin, on the way to that 22nd win you tied several TOUR records. Have you had a chance yet to reflect just on how impactful that win was?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: A little bit, not too much, though, because obviously we move right into another playoff event here at the BMW. It's a golf course that I haven't played, too, so focus has been a lot more on this week and getting ready for this week just being a new golf course. Obviously still the Playoffs, still a big tournament, so I haven't had much time to reflect on the win last week, but it was really good. Obviously I played very well, and everything went very well last week.

This week I'm still just focused on getting ready for this tournament and this golf course.

AMANDA HERRINGTON: You've won the BMW Championship twice at two different golf courses. What are your first impressions of Olympia Fields?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Oh, Olympia Fields, it's a great golf course. It's in really good condition, a little bit tougher than last week I would say. But you know, it's kind of right in front of you, and you've just got to golf it around here. Obviously they hosted a U.S. Open, a PGA Championship. I mean, it's a real golf course. It's tough, not a lot of -- not going to make a ton of birdies, but yeah, I like it so far. I've seen pretty much all the holes except for 4, 5 and 6. Definitely you need to drive it in the fairway this week.

AMANDA HERRINGTON: With your victory you went to five wins in the FedExCup Playoffs, tied for the most by any player. How important is it for you to win the FedExCup now that you're going into this week as No. 1 in the standings?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, for me it's something that's a



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goal of mine is to be a FedExCup champion. It's something that I really would like to be that I haven't done yet. I've been close a couple times, but obviously this week is another week for me to go out and play well and hopefully hold that No. 1 position going into East Lake because that's where you want to be starting next week is No. 1.

But being No. 1 is a bonus, but you're still going to have to play really good golf if you want to win the FedExCup Championship.

**Q. Could you tell me what was the highlight of your celebration, if you did celebrate?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, I didn't do much celebrating. When we finished obviously did some media stuff, and then I drove up to Boston to the airport and flew over here. Didn't really have time to really celebrate. But got to enjoy it with my brother A.J. and then Claude and Joey D and my chef. It was very nice.

**Q. When somebody has got everything going for them, every facet of your game is on point, what do you concentrate on when you're hitting range balls and what are you concentrating on besides getting a feel for the golf course when you're playing the golf course?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I mean, still working on exactly the same things as I was doing last week, just making sure everything is staying consistent, got the same feels. The ball is just starting on my lines and I'm hitting the same shots. That's what I've been working on this week is just kind of going through the same routines I did last week just to keep the swing in check.

For me it's all about consistency. Last week I did a really good job of controlling my distance with my irons, and if you're controlling your distance well, you can be a little left and a little right and still have a nice putt at it. That's what I did a good job of.

Obviously this week is going to be more of the same. The greens have a lot of slope and they're firm, so if you can control the distance with irons, then you can give yourself a lot of good looks. That's all I'm working on, same thing as I was working on last week.



**Q. The eagle on No. 2 last week, and I realize this is old hat now, you hit the little eight-footer and except for you bending over to take it out of the Cup, you would have thought you made a bogey. With nothing out there, what's that been like? I guess what I'm getting at is you get the same reaction whether you make a 3 or a 7; are you used to that by now? Do you think it helps you or hurts you or neither?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: For me, because obviously I've been out on TOUR for a while now, so playing in front of all the people and with big crowds on Sundays, whether it's a major or just a regular TOUR event, always on Sunday if you're around the lead there's huge crowds. So I'm used to that.

I still go into a round now even without all the fans with kind of the same mindset as I would if there was a bunch of fans out. Either way it doesn't really affect me because I'm used to play with them. But I still get -- I get the same feelings whether there's people out there watching or not just because I'm so used to it, and obviously you know a lot of people at home are watching.

Yeah, I do miss the crowds. I mean, obviously there's a lot more electricity in the air. But it doesn't affect me one way or the other.

**Q. This is probably a bad question, but does your heart race a little bit more when it's noisier?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: No, it's the same. I do feel it. Like I get nervous coming down the stretch. Obviously last week I wasn't nervous coming down the stretch. (Laughter.) But most of the time I am. I could have finished off last week -- there wasn't really anything to be nervous about.

**Q. Nervous about finishing on Monday?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, that was. I was -- but I'd made peace with it when we were sitting in there during the delay. I didn't think there was any chance we were going back out to finish, but I'd have been happy to come back on Monday to finish it off.

**Q. I'm wondering why you like to hit a fade and what it is specifically that you like about the fade.**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Well, why I like to -- it works. So I played a draw for a lot of my career out here, and then I just remember, I don't know, it was '15 -- like the end of the '15 year I think going into '16, I was at Sherwood and me and Butch had been working on hitting a fade, like all the time we were working on it, and I would hit it occasionally

when I needed to and didn't mind it. But I know I was working with a new driver, I can't remember exactly which one it was but it was in '15, and playing Sherwood you've got to drive it really straight, and I was really struggling. I just wasn't happy with the way I was hitting the ball.

So I went out, I said, today I'm going to cut every shot, and I think I shot 61 or something.

The next day I went out and hit -- I'm going to fade every shot today, as well, and I think I shot 62. After that I think I said, okay, I'm going to fade it from now on. Pretty simple.

**Q. How often do you now decide you're going to hit a draw?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Just if the shot calls for it, I'll hit a draw. I don't mind irons -- pretty much throughout the bag except for the driver is the only club that I do not want to hit a draw with, just the way I have it set up, the way I like to swing it just to be able to control it. It just doesn't like to turn right to left. I can draw it if I need to. I worked on it a lot at the PGA Championship just for the tee shot on No. 12. I mean, you had to draw it there and I didn't like hitting 3-wood just because it left me too far in. So I worked on it there. Actually hit it a couple times last week. So I don't mind hitting it -- I'm not making a big swing at it. It's more a really controlled swing, but I can turn it over a hair if I need to.

**Q. I have a question about your strategy off the tee. You mentioned hitting fairways but a lot of landing zones in the fairways are guarded by bunkers providing a challenge off the tee. I'm wondering what's your strategy to avoid a difficult approach in and attack these greens?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Here at Olympia Fields? Yeah, I mean, I'm going to hit a lot of different clubs off the tees here this week. I'm getting to hit quite a few drivers, but there's a couple 3-woods, I've got a 7-wood that I'll hit off a couple tees, even a couple irons. You hit a variety of shots or clubs off the tees. Most important thing is just get it in the fairway. It doesn't really matter what you hit off the tee. You've just got to make sure you're comfortable with what you're hitting and you're going to hit the fairway because the only way to attack this golf course is out of the fairway. The greens are firm and fast, got a lot of slope on them, so you really need to be able to control the golf ball coming into them.

**Q. I'm just curious after what you did on Sunday, what goes through your mind and what are you thinking about as you flew to Chicago?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: The game is feeling pretty good. (Laughter.) I mean, yeah, I don't know. I was actually -- honestly on the plane on the way here I had some food, I was watching my iPad, and then I was looking at the book for this week.

**Q. What were you watching on the iPad?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I caught up on an episode of "Yellowstone" and then I think I watched an episode of "Deadliest Catch."

**Q. Have you kind of accepted the fact that really no matter what you do this week or frankly the first couple days at East Lake that this whole season-long race for you, this whole goal to win the FedExCup frankly comes down to probably the last day or the last two days at East Lake? What I mean by in terms of getting your game right and peaking and all that stuff.**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, obviously this week still is a big week, big tournament. I like this golf course. You definitely want to be on your game around here for sure.

But then East Lake is the same thing. East Lake is a tough golf course. You've got to drive it straight, got to hit quality iron shots. And then I've had kind of a mixed bag of tournaments at East Lake. I've played there a lot. I like the golf course. I either play it really well or I play it horribly. But it's a tough golf course.

I feel like the more I play it, the more comfortable I get. Obviously with my game feeling as good as it is right now, I'm really looking forward to going to East Lake because it's a golf course where if you drive it straight there, you can shoot good scores, and right now obviously I'm driving it pretty straight. Hopefully I can continue doing that for the next couple weeks, and I think we'll be in good shape.

**Q. What are you going to do about Winged Foot in terms of getting to know it ahead of the U.S. Open? What have you heard? There was a media day if you could have gone. You could have skipped this and gone and done the media day.**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Sure. I'm going to go up probably Wednesday after TOUR Championship. I'm going to go up and play Wednesday and Thursday morning and then come back home, I think.

**Q. Have you heard anything about it?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: It's good. Hard. Those are the courses that I like. The harder the better. All my wins come on the hardest golf course I've ever played.

**Q. Maybe this is the second hardest.**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, hopefully.

**Q. I'm just wondering, that four-round performance, where would you rank that compared to any other four-round performances you've had during your career? And what part of your game were you most pleased with last week?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Well, for four rounds it's the best I've ever hit it for sure. All four days I drove it well. I really hit my irons well for four straight days, which is -- obviously it's hard to do that. That was by far the best ball-striking performance I've put on.

And then obviously I putted very nicely the last three rounds, not the first round, but that's all right, it still worked out for me.

AMANDA HERRINGTON: Dustin, thank you so much for your time and good luck this week.

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