

Sentry Tournament of Champions

Thursday, January 7, 2021

Kapalua, Maui, Hawaii, USA

Plantation Course at Kapalua

Justin Thomas

Quick Quotes

Q. How would you assess your play today?

JUSTIN THOMAS: It was a good day. It was a good opening round. It was solid. I didn't do anything great, didn't do anything bad, just kind of made my way around the course.

I mean, the conditions were about as good as you could get them. I mean, not much wind and soft greens, so I was glad to take advantage.

Q. On 18 I kind of saw you kind of rehearsing a follow-through. Is that shot kind of tough with the downhill lie that you had?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, it's always tough and I've had difficulty with it in the past. I mean, I've chunked it a lot. I think, it's very easy for me to want to try to hit it in the air because you want to try to hit kind of a high cut to hold against the left-to-right wind and that's pretty difficult when your body is at a 30, 40 percent incline.

So we actually addressed that in the practice round with my dad and Jimmy, trying to figure out how I could be a little bit better at that, and I was glad to successfully hit it on the green this time.

Q. You said that you kind of feel like the momentum kind of carried a little bit from your fall, kind of, as you said, you didn't kind of waste December. Did that show today?

JUSTIN THOMAS: I think so. There's some areas when you take, at least for me, when I take time off, my pitching, my wedges, and my putting are rusty. It's been, it's just like that time of year in Florida. I mean, it's really, really windy every day, so it's difficult to go out and work on your yardages or get a lot of putting work done, but I've still been playing a lot just trying to be able to hit different shots and get in different situations, so I think that's something that definitely could have benefited me today.



Q. Biggest thing that you would want to improve upon going into the second round?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Hit it a little closer to the hole. If you told me right now I would play the same way and shoot 8-under the next three days, I would gladly sign for that and I'll see you guys on Sunday.

Q. Very nice scorecard in this opening round. 8 birdies and no bogeys. How would you rate your performance out there?

JUSTIN THOMAS: It was a good day. It wasn't anything crazy. I didn't do anything great. I didn't do anything bad. It's just, we didn't have very much wind, and soft greens makes this course very scorable. I think the scores show that.

But made a couple putts when I felt like I needed to. But it was just a solid opening round.

Q. Considering there wasn't as much wind out there, was your strategy to attack maybe more than normal?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Not really. I mean, it seems like, even last year it blew so much and it took low scores. So I think the fairways are big enough and the greens are kind of bowl-like enough to where you can still get it close to the hole even when it is blowing pretty hard. So you really just have to go out and execute.

Q. You played quite a bit in the fall. Of course the major championships, but you also played Mexico, you played the PNC championship with your dad. Did that keep the rust away heading into this first round do you think?

JUSTIN THOMAS: It could have, yeah. That was kind of the thinking in Mexico a little bit. And obviously the Father-Son was many things, but fun was the main thing. But yeah, I think, I just remember from previous year playing the Presidents Cup in December it was nice because I felt like I didn't waste the month of December like I have in the past. I mean, there's obviously time to



enjoy the time off, be with your family, maybe not eat quite as well and all that, but it's not what the entire month is for and I made that mistake in the past and hopefully I'll never do it again.

Q. You have plenty of highlights from your round today from a birdie perspective. But I want to go to 13. How important was that par save after that wayward tee shot to keep the momentum going?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, I think I owe a big thank you to AJ for stepping on my ball and finding that one for me. Yeah, it was a bad tee shot, I tried to hit it low and I just leaned on it a little bit and that's what kind of caused it to squirt right. But those par saves can definitely be a little bit more momentum boost than a birdie sometimes. I'm a big fan of bogey-free rounds so that putt was nice to keep it that way.

Q. Final thing, as we know, we don't hand out trophies on Thursday, but you come out and you get that opening round score you did, that 65, how much more optimism does that give you and freedom now heading into at least tomorrow?

JUSTIN THOMAS: I guess a little bit. I mean, it's the thing about this course is you need to have a solid first round, I mean, that's for sure. I think this is a tough place to play way from behind, if you go shoot even or 1-under on the first round it's hard to post consecutive rounds of 7-, 8-, 9-under, no matter where you play. But it is nice to do that, I understand that there's a lot of golf and a lot of really good players within four, five of the lead and 54 holes left. So I just need to go out and do a little bit more of what I did today and hopefully a little bit better in some areas.

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