

Sentry Tournament of Champions

Tuesday, January 4, 2022
Kapalua, Maui, Hawaii, USA
Plantation Course at Kapalua

Jordan Spieth

Press Conference

JOHN BUSH: We would like to welcome Jordan Spieth to the interview room here at the Sentry Tournament of Champions. His fifth start here and his first since 2018. I know that's been a long gap for you, Jordan, with how much this tournament means to you. Just talk a little bit about being back at Kapalua.

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, this is, qualifying for this tournament is obviously a number one goal on the year you want to win on the PGA TOUR and in order to get here you have to do that.

So I've always embraced the opportunity to come down here to Hawaii and I've had solid success at Kapalua as well, so not only does it turn into a really fun and easy week, given the size of the field and the weather compared to mainland, but it's also an opportunity to get off to a good start to the season and it's done a lot for me in the past to when I've played well at this event to feel like you -- you move up in the FedExCup. You start to get into a rhythm as you go and hit the West Coast.

JOHN BUSH: Was there a time when you won, or how soon after you won at Valero did it hit you that you would be coming back to Maui?

JORDAN SPIETH: It was something I thought about during the final round, to be honest, and I had to kind of throw it out of my head because I had thought about it a couple other times during previous events in the season when I had leads on Sunday and it just adds a little extra to it when you're not, when you take your focus off of just closing out a tournament.

So I was, it was something I mentioned, I want to say within minutes of winning at Valero.

JOHN BUSH: You mentioned your success here. You won in 2016. What is it about this golf course that you love so much and talk a little bit about your preparations for the week.



JORDAN SPIETH: Well, it's obviously a fun course to play. I mean, every hole you either look forward or you turn around and you get some of the most amazing views we get all year.

And then a lot of slope, Bermuda grass, a lot of wind, kind of got to shot-make a little bit.

Then you got to hit putts aggressively and play a significant amount of break a lot of time and I kind of like when that's the case. I think I've finished runner-up before. I finished third. I think I finished ninth in the times I've played here.

So certainly looking to have a chance come the weekend and it's a course that when I look back on the times I've played here if you kind of really take advantage of the off-season as building up and trying to be sharp for January 1st, you can take advantage here with maybe some guys who were taking more of a break.

JOHN BUSH: We'll open it up to questions.

Q. Since I last talked to you, how has fatherhood been and everything at home? How was everything at home kind of through the holidays?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, great. It was kind of fortunate, the timing, where I was able to be home and not really miss too many events I normally play or anything like that. The holidays were great. Just staying at home and trying to get actually quite a bit of work done when I could to really capitalize on some momentum from last year. Really, kind of tilt the ax and sharpen it a little bit and get a little bit cleaner in the moves that I've been trying to work on for almost a year now.

So I took it pretty seriously, but also there's a lot of down time when you're only going out and playing a round quickly during the day. So felt like I was able to accomplish everything, be at home, but also get good work in.

Q. I know you haven't obviously been a father for very long, but has it helped maybe like focus the time you



have to work on your game but also to be at home and being a dad? Does it, some guys have said that becoming a father helps them focus their practice time a little bit better when they're at home.

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I think that will be something as people have multiple kids and they're in school and then you got to balance a lot more.

Right now it's so early that there's not a whole lot I can provide as far as, Annie keeps the kid alive, essentially, so I help when I can, and for the most part, he's still sleeping most of the days.

But it's going really well. It's been a lot of fun just in how much things have changed over the last couple months. So I'm excited to see what this year entails and we plan on traveling together and it should be a fun journey.

Q. You talked about the changes you're trying to make in your swing and what you and Cameron are working on. Where do you feel like you are in your journey with your work with that?

JORDAN SPIETH: I feel really good. I feel like this is the first off-season in quite a few years where it felt like I was very confident each day going out, that what I was doing was pushing me to the better. Instead of going out, getting frustrated over a couple days, and trying something new, I stuck with the exact same game plan and just tried to continue to sharpen it, like I mentioned.

If I could get 1 percent better each day, I went out with the idea that that was very feasible, given I wouldn't be second-guessing anything and instead felt very confident in what I was working on and what the final product is.

So it's getting there. It feels better than it has all year, all last year, and it will just be about kind of getting out and playing and making adjustments from there because when you're on the range or playing at home, it's a little different than when you get the pins that we get tucked and just shots you got to trust and stuff like that. And then scoring, just getting out and scoring.

So I'm excited to kind of get into this season and see if I can improve on last year.

Q. What's the biggest thing that you are working on in your swing, like, what would you say is the biggest key in trying to make these transitions?

JORDAN SPIETH: I'm honestly just trying to get back to my DNA. I got away from that and I was swinging in front of my body and just, there's a lot of specifics, I guess, but

I'm really just kind of looking back to my DNA from high school, college, into the first few years on TOUR, and really just trying to map stuff to there, recognizing that your body changes and not everything's going overlap.

But as far as the big components, really being able to get through the ball, committed threw the ball, get kind of my body working better where your body's hitting it and you're not relying as much on your hands. It's really hard to play on the PGA TOUR trying to rely on timing and it's very hard to stay consistent for four rounds.

So last year I saw myself play a lot of tournaments where I was very consistent for four rounds and to me that meant that -- and a lot of times it wasn't with great putting. Sometimes it was. I think that those were steps in the right direction that just continued to build confidence.

Q. If you were to sit here a year ago, where would you have said like your confidence level was in your game to where you say it's at now?

JORDAN SPIETH: Quite a bit different from a year ago at this time when I was waiting to watch this tournament again. Very different.

Q. Do you see the Saudi threat as a disruption or something that ultimately will benefit golf?

JORDAN SPIETH: Well, I think certainly it's a threat to the PGA TOUR. I think as a player overall it will benefit in that I think that the changes that have come from the PGA TOUR have been modernized in a way to, that may or may not have come about if it weren't there.

So I think for us players on the PGA TOUR, I think that so far it's been something that has kind of helped the PGA TOUR sit and say, hey, where can we look to satisfy our membership and potentially make some changes going forward that, where there's some similarities potentially to a league like that, but while maintaining kind of the integrity, the 501(C)(6) category that the PGA TOUR has.

And I think that going forward, I mean, I guess we'll have to see. But for me to sit here and -- I mean, I can only say from my point of view I think that it's been beneficial to the players to have competition, and I think the TOUR would say that they probably feel that they're in a better position going forward by having to sit back and kind of take a look at things and make some changes.

Q. Do you think there's any chance they will use the 9 tee for No. 3 and the 3 tee for No. 9?

JORDAN SPIETH: (Laughing.) You know, the 3 tee,



actually they're both new from the last time I played here, and so today I pulled up to the 9th tee and it just, I think it's highly likely that I'll tee off on the correct tee boxes this week, but I'll be sure to look up at the tee marker just to make sure.

Q. What's been your favorite memory in six weeks as a father?

JORDAN SPIETH: Well, I mean, obviously right when he was born is, I mean, I don't think anyone really forgets that moment.

And then since then, the last couple weeks, just starting to see a little bit of opening his eyes and smiling here and there, just a little more personality, and that's probably, that's been the most fun for me. The first couple weeks were like, ooh, you know?

Q. What did your wife get you for Christmas?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think we just did -- we've just done stockings in previous years. We're like what are we, you know, going to get each other? What did I get? I did get some sleep headphones, like, some ear headphones that are super thin, that you don't even feel when you lay down, and you hook it up to an app and it plays whatever sounds you want and stuff. So I've been getting uninterrupted sleep and I think that's been a really nice gift.

Q. Can you look back at the start of the last few new years and see any confusion about your direction or did you feel it or sense it at the time?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I could actually pinpoint an exact timeframe where I thought, wow, things seem to be getting off and I'm not really sure how to fix it. And then there was just years of a couple years of just misdirection, I think.

And then I can also pinpoint the exact timeframe where I really felt like I started to turn around and go the right direction.

So it's interesting and I hope that I can just continue on the trend I'm on. I really thought last year was a, if I, if you told me what last year was going to be at this time last year I would have said I'm obviously very pleased, but I can also look back and say, I really wish I had won three or four events, given the amount of times I had a chance on Sunday.

So that's -- and it was just trying to be a little bit sharper, scoring clubs and just misses being a little tighter and just making a few more putts on Sunday and stuff I've done in the past, just trying to get back to where when in those

positions I can capitalize more often this year.

JOHN BUSH: Last question, where are you in the process of not having the greens reading book this season?

JORDAN SPIETH: We don't, we've never had them at Augusta, and I seem to find myself in a really good space on the greens there, really feeling putts. I'm one that's used it because why wouldn't you use 'em? More for a reference point and a lot of times more for speed than trying to dial in an AimPoint situation or a line, so I'm perfectly fine with the changes.

I think that to me, putting you have to read it right, you have to put a stroke on it and you have to hit it with the right speed. I thought with the green reading materials it took one of those three skills away from it and I think that it's a skill that I would say is an advantage of mine and so I'm excited to see what it can mean as far as strokes gained compared to the field on the greens.

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