

# The American Express

Friday, January 21, 2022

La Quinta, California, USA

PGA WEST Pete Dye Stadium Course

## Zach Johnson

### Quick Quotes

**Q. 66 today on the Nicklaus Tournament course. I thought you had that birdie putt, that was not an easy putt by the way, but I thought you had that.**

ZACH JOHNSON: Yeah, I thought I had a really good chance, it was on the line I anticipated or wanted and thought if it got there it was going in, but I hit, shoot, it was all of 35, 40 feet, I'm not complaining to have a tap-in, with a new pin placement that we haven't seen. We had some nice ones out there today, pins that we're not totally accustomed to for just one day on one track.

So setup was nice, it was certainly challenging, the winds weren't that substantial until the last maybe few holes, but, yeah, solid couple days.

**Q. You've been playing in this event quite a number of years. What's the key for you? Obviously the most cases the weather's going to be nice, what's the key for you when you come in here, what have you learned over the years about your ability to play here?**

ZACH JOHNSON: Well, you know, it seems like I would say 80 percent to 90 percent of the days here it's almost like you're playing in a dome, right? I feel like this is, these golf courses are ones where before you tee it up it's almost like you can have the mind frame of, Oh my gosh, I have got to go low. But you got a lot of company.

So if you get off to a slow start which I kind of did both days you just got to remain patient because every hole is an opportunity to make a birdie. Yeah, certainly there's a couple holes you got to grind it out and accept a par, but for the most part, especially in La Quinta, I would say at the Nicklaus too, you feel like you tee it up and if you're hitting it somewhat decent you're going to have an opportunity or a look.

So you just got to remain patient. I think that's number one. Obviously getting your feet on the grounds and familiarity with any sort of golf course or tournament is key and, yeah, I've got, shoot, I played Q-School here 20 some odd years ago, so very familiar with the area.



**Q. As you continue to catch up to me in age what motivates you to keep playing and keep putting the work in?**

ZACH JOHNSON: Yeah, motivation's not difficult. I really never struggled in that realm. I've had days or stretches where I, the body hurts and that's all the time, but I mean it really hurts and I don't want to go practice and things of that nature.

But when it comes to working, grinding, trying to get better at my craft, I don't struggle, never really have in that department, fortunately. The problem is that's probably the barometer. If and when that does happen I might have to consider what I'm doing or the approach in which I'm doing it.

But I would also say the motivation comes from the support structure I have, whether it's my sponsors, certainly my team of coaches and certainly my family. I mean, you know, any endeavor, any industry you probably want to go into it with freedom, right, and when I've got support at home and outside the ropes to go compete, there's freedom involved and I feel like I can tee it up and let it loose. And that's always nice, good or bad, I'm grateful for that, I don't take that for granted.

It's hard to play this game when there's other outside forces that don't allow you to be playing free golf.

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