

THE PLAYERS Championship

Saturday, March 12, 2022
Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, USA
TPC Sawgrass

Jeff Plotts

Quick Quotes

Q. Let's start with your first and last name.

JEFF PLOTTS: I'm Jeff Plotts, J-e-f-f P-l-o-t-t-s, and I'm director of agronomy here at TPC Sawgrass.

Q. You guys have been given the task of the century this year at THE PLAYERS Championship. Walk us through the day and the preparation of making sure that this course is ready to play after hurricane, tornado watches and warnings. You've been hit with everything.

JEFF PLOTTS: Yeah, we're going to see all four seasons here this week, no question. But we have a great team, and the team was able to answer their gold standard in everything that they do. We've had nearly five inches of rain in two days, so it's just saturated ground out there. To go out there and prepare the golf course to get washed out and to have to go back out and do it again, it's a tough task for anyone.

But our team was able to answer that challenge.

Q. What time do you get here? What time do you guys leave? Walk us through the day, what these guys have been faced with, especially five inches of rain you said.

JEFF PLOTTS: Yeah, so they're running pumps a lot and running squeegees a lot. They're not mowing as much as they are accustomed to. We start our day right at 4:30 for the staff. Most of the managers are in between 4:00 and 4:15. So got here early this morning, go out and take a look at the course, see how bad the damage is or if there is damage and put together a good plan to go out and attack it.

Obviously play didn't start today. We had initially started at -- 11:00 we were going to start, and then it got pushed back to 12:00 with the squalls that were coming in.

It's just been a long day, so we set the golf course twice before we got started at 12:00.



Q. You didn't double cut greens at all; when is the last time you did double cutting this week?

JEFF PLOTTS: We did them -- I've got to remember what day it is, but it's Saturday, so we double mowed them on Thursday. We did not double mow today. We just did a single pass.

Q. Because you knew the wind was going to --

JEFF PLOTTS: That's right, and we did nothing last night. Usually we'll mow or put a single roll on the greens in the evening. We didn't do anything, we just put a single pass on them this morning, no roll.

We knew the wind was going to be up. We had a great forecast that we could kind of bank on, and we just didn't want balls moving around on greens. We intentionally tried to get the greens -- the request was to try to get the greens a touch slower than what they had been, so we were able to achieve that.

Q. You haven't touched the rough, have you?

JEFF PLOTTS: No. I think the last time we hit the rough was -- we did Saturday, Sunday before.

Q. Are you going to do any at all between now and Monday?

JEFF PLOTTS: That's not the plan.

Q. The cold and wind overnight tonight, how firm and fast will it get for Sunday and Monday?

JEFF PLOTTS: Well, firmness is all relative right now with the amount of moisture that we have in the surface. We're not going to try to do anything to get things firmer. It's just going to happen naturally and obviously it's happening much quicker right now with the wind and the sun that we're having.

Speed will be a little faster today obviously as the winds go down, but right now we're just working with the committee to figure out where we want to be, and we'll try to get our team a well-laid plan to get to that goal.



Q. How many people do you have working with you overnight and this morning? Obviously you've got about 90 guys, about 90 volunteers.

JEFF PLOTTS: That's right, so we have about 180 that we were able to get out on the golf course to kind of help us get things rolling. So 90 of our staff, which includes our landscape and the Valley Course team and the Stadium Course team.

Q. How many people came from other TPC courses?

JEFF PLOTTS: We had a couple of those come from other TPCs. Primarily we have students from Penn State, Michigan State, we have somebody here from UConn, so we're having some students but then other superintendents from some here in Florida but really from all over the country that are here.

Q. Did you need every person you had?

JEFF PLOTTS: This year we absolutely did. I mean, there's times you feel bad, there's times that we're not fully utilizing some of the skill that we have, but when we need them in these emergency situations, it's certainly beneficial for us to have them.

Q. Speaking of benefits, this course drains itself in a matter of a couple hours. How big of a deal is that when you come out here and you have five inches of rain?

JEFF PLOTTS: It's pretty impressive for a swamp, isn't it? The golf course does drain fairly well.

We've done a lot of work through that. We've had a lot of support from our leadership here at the PGA TOUR to be able to achieve that. We have good drainage. We've been able to do a lot of cultural practices to improve that drainage. Yeah, it is impressive. There were actually surfaces that were completely under water first thing this morning, and within a matter of an hour and a half they were ready for play, so that's pretty good.

Q. Are there any spots around the course, wet spots you have to concentrate on tonight, or is everything just drying up real nice?

JEFF PLOTTS: It's drying up. Obviously inside the ropes everything is kind of going as what we would plan. Outside the ropes it's kind of messy. It's wet. You've got a lot of traffic out there and vehicles and those types of things. That's always a challenge, but that's something that we can repair once we're over with the event.

Inside the ropes it's really pretty good. The fairways are nice, they're getting firmed up a little bit, the greens are bouncing a little bit more this afternoon. I saw on TV for a little while, so it was nice to see that.

Q. Were you ever concerned early after they got back out there today that there might have to be a pause while the wind was up like that? How close do you think we came?

JEFF PLOTTS: Yeah, I don't know. It's really difficult for me to be able to comment on that. That's just not my area. But we certainly are always in touch with the competitions team and the committee on any kind of changes that may develop, and it was something they were invariably keeping a close eye on, but I don't believe we were there.

Q. Any debris issues this morning?

JEFF PLOTTS: Just small stuff, just small stuff that was done. We did have a tree that we lost behind 8 green. Thankfully there were no spectators around. The scramble was to try to get it up before everybody came in.

Q. We've been joking around all week, not so much joking, but your people are being called the MVPs of THE PLAYERS Championship. What's your thought on that?

JEFF PLOTTS: Well, I think anytime that you're talking to me on a Saturday, it's not usually a good thing. It's usually before the event and it's all about the players afterwards.

It's obvious because we've had weather. Our team is great. They do great when it's good. We want to be the unsung heroes that you don't see. That's our job. Unfortunately because of weather you're going to see us a little bit more as we're trying to get things ready.

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