

# WM Phoenix Open

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Scottsdale, Arizona, USA

TPC Scottsdale

## Justin Thomas

## Chris McDonald

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome Justin Thomas to the interview room here at the WM Phoenix Open. Making your 11th start here in this tournament, four top 10s in your last six starts. What do you like about competing here at TPC Scottsdale?

JUSTIN THOMAS: I can't believe this is the 11th time I've played in the tournament. I didn't know that was possible. This has always been an event since I first was fortunate enough to get an exemption here that I really enjoyed coming to and playing. I like the golf course, and obviously the atmosphere is one of a kind and one that we all know coming into it and from watching it on TV as a fan of golf as a kid.

It's fun, the couple times being able to get myself in contention on Sunday and play in those last couple groups. The energy is very high. Yeah, it's a place that I look forward to coming every year.

**Q. Finished runner-up at the American Express. What do you like about how your game is trending right now?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, playing solid. I didn't have the result I necessarily wanted last week or even at Kapalua. I felt like last week I played a little better than some of the scores showed. I kind of struggled with -- the poa annua greens got to me a little bit.

But it's just kind of trying to continue to build on stuff I've been working on and progress I've been making and not trying to reinvent the wheel by any means. Yeah, built a lot off of Palm Springs and Amex because that was a lot of really, really good golf that week.

**Q. It's been a couple of weeks since you sent the player memo to the membership. How would you characterize some of the feedback you've gotten since then?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: It's been good, at least I think. I've heard some good things from peers and others.

Yeah, I don't know. I feel like it's gone well, at least on my end, and hopefully it'll kind of start -- obviously this isn't something that changes overnight and you see something completely different. It's a big-picture, broad-scale, down-the-road type thing of what do we want to see golf look like in 5, 10, 15 years, and I think all of us hope it's in the best place possible and thriving.

Who knows, maybe some of those things will do so.

**Q. You used to follow Josh Teater a lot back in high school, and him getting his win on the Korn Ferry TOUR down in Panama, talk about your relationship with him and how excited you were to see him get that after 15 years.**

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, I love Josh. He's such a good dude. He's so nice. I actually played a practice round with him here when I got an exemption in 2014 -- is that right? Or 2015, I guess. So yeah, he's just always been so nice to me. He's just a good old Kentucky boy, and he speaks very quietly and he's just kind of been a grinder. He's been trying at it for a very long time.

I think that's the fun and cool thing about golf is that the golf ball doesn't know how old you are or how long you've been working at it, it just rewards whoever played the best that week. I was so pumped to see him play well, and hopefully continue to do so the rest of this year and make his way on back out.

**Q. We've heard that you've tried some acting this past year in "Happy Gilmore 2." Can you tell us about that?**

CHRIS McDONALD: Hold on. I've seen this guy act, seen JT act. His game is good. His golf game is good. His acting is good. Just not as good as the Shooter. Just sayin'.

JUSTIN THOMAS: Not many are, right?

CHRIS McDONALD: No, that's true. It's just across the



Bear. I do all right with it.

THE MODERATOR: Obviously we've been joined by Chris McDonald who's going to be returning as Shooter McGavin in "Happy Gilmore 2." Shooter or Chris, I know golf fans around the world are eagerly anticipating the arrival of "Happy Gilmore 2." What can fans expect from this second chapter?

CHRIS McDONALD: Good question. I can't really talk too much about it because it's under wraps, but it's going to be awesome. So much fun to shoot with new faces. Travis Kelce was in it. But that said, it's got the quintessential Adam Sandler touch.

He's back; of course, Julie Bowen is back; yours truly, Chris McDonald and a lot of new faces. But it's got so much heart and so much humor that it's going to -- I think new generations are going to eat it up because it's a rare and beautiful thing, and Netflix went above and beyond at making it the best. It's going to be very surprisingly funny.

**Q. For you personally, how honored are you to be a part of something that's cherished by so many golf fans and PGA TOUR players?**

CHRIS McDONALD: I got to hang out with some really cool people so I felt very, very blessed indeed.

JUSTIN THOMAS: He barged his way right into my -- what is it, I'm not familiar with -- my bus? Is that what it is, my bus? He just helped himself right in.

CHRIS McDONALD: It was bigger than mine. I didn't like that, so yeah, it happens.

JUSTIN THOMAS: I was only there a couple days.

CHRIS McDONALD: We had a lot of fun with great people and it's a great honor to be back.

I've been an ambassador for this movie for so many years, and I'm so glad it's finally come to fruition. It's going to be off the hook. Everyone is going to be really, really happy with it.

**Q. Who do you think would win? Are we talking JT or Shooter in his prime? How would that matchup go?**

CHRIS McDONALD: Hmm, he played pretty well the last couple weeks. What happened to Scheffler? Scheffler fell back T8 in the last day?

I've just got to say, mano-a-mano, in the game I know I've got him because I've been playing with the sticks quite a

while, and the game is awesome. When you see the PGA TOUR 2K25 game is sick, but I would challenge you there and we'd play head-to-head and I'm pretty sure I would beat you.

JUSTIN THOMAS: I think you would get in my head. You might be one of the few that would be living rent-free in there. I like my chances on the golf physical side --

CHRIS McDONALD: Yeah, you're playing really well right now. You've got that. I've got to go out and play 16 today. I won't even be warmed up but I'll do my best.

**Q. Justin knows more about "Happy Gilmore 2" than most, having spent some time on the set. We actually have a behind-the-scenes clip from "Happy Gilmore 2" that can be seen in Season 3 of "Full Swing" on Netflix. Take a look real quick.**

(Video shown.)

**Q. Justin, real quick from you as somebody who's probably seen the original too many times to count, how surreal is it to be associated with "Happy Gilmore 2"?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: It really is. It was a pretty easy thing for me to be able to just play -- obsessed with Happy Gilmore. It was so cool to be around everybody and be around Chris and just all of it.

I mean, that movie, that generation of movies is literally what we grew up on, and I realized how many Adam Sandler quotes I use in my daily life when I'm around him because I obviously felt uncomfortable saying them around him, and that's when I realized that he's a part of my childhood and growing up more than I realized.

It was a very cool experience.

**Q. Lastly, Shooter obviously mentioned the game, but you guys are in the 2K25 game together coming out this month. What was the experience like being in 2K together?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, it's very cool. I think, again, when you're a kid and growing up and playing video games, it's kind of like a -- it's almost like not even a real dream to be like, oh, it would be cool to be myself in a video game or be in a video game one day. It's great.

We don't think probably as much of it now that we're out here because this is our job and we're just kind of about playing golf, but it's cool to have -- I'm sure the same for Emmitt, just to have people come up and say they enjoy



the game, and whether it's playing against us or being us, whatever it may be, and whatever just brings more eyeballs and positivity to golf --

CHRIS McDONALD: I think it has to help your golf game, too. I'm getting so much better on it. I've been playing it for the last couple of days here hours on end, and it is so much fun.

The thing where it's so, so advanced now because we did a commercial like three years ago for 2K21 and now we're in 25, and man, the artwork, the graphics are off the hook. So, so interesting to see that.

The really big news is there's a new player in town and his name is Chris McDonald, so I get to join these awesome, awesome, awesome golf pros, and that's a big thrill for me and I think that drops the 21st of this month.

A lot of people will be playing the Shooter, which is cool. I can't say anything else about it. Just that I'm over-the-moon happy.

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