

Chubb Classic presented by SERVPRO

Thursday, February 12, 2026
Naples, Florida, USA
Tiburón Golf Club



Justin Leonard

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Okay, welcome Justin Leonard. So you're the 2025 Chubb Classic defending champion. As defending champion, what worked for you last year and are you leaning on that or coming in with a new approach for this week?

JUSTIN LEONARD: It's a new year. My game was in really good shape coming in. I played well in Morocco the week prior. Really was trying to get used to the time change and all that.

But, you know, coming in this year it's a little different; two weeks off. I did some good things in Hualalai, but wasn't great, so worked a lot of the last couple weeks, and, you know, hopefully it'll pay off again this weekend.

Q. Now, since making your Champion's Tour debut back in 2022, what's the biggest difference in how you approach competition now going into this new season compared to how you did when you first joined this tour?

JUSTIN LEONARD: I have a little more -- I know more what to expect. You know, the golf courses that I'm playing are familiar, which certainly makes the early part of the week much easier. And, you know, better sense of how to manage my time at home and those kind of things.

Yeah, it's just constantly evolving. When you start trying to do the same things over and over it can lead to some complacency. So keep working hard in different ways and, you know, just try and get better each day.

Q. We talked on the phone in the Zoom thing a while back. Your life is in a nice spot now: Kids, family, TV background in the mix, Champions TOUR in the mix. What drives you? What motivates you most these days?

JUSTIN LEONARD: You know, I like putting in the work, and I enjoy when I'm at home and the stuff I do at the golf

course, away from the golf course.

I enjoy spending time with my wife and our kids. Three in college, so I don't get to see the college kids as often, but when we do it's a lot of fun going to whether it's parents' weekends or a couple sorority formals, and now with Luke playing golf at Villanova, going to a golf tournament to watch him next weekend.

Sky is at home and just started his high school lacrosse, so he's playing pretty much year round. So that's fun to get to watch him. They had their first game Tuesday night of the high school season, so fun to be able to watch that and drive over here yesterday.

So, you know, it is, it's in a fun spot. You know, our calendar, family calendar, there is a lot of stuff on it. It's pretty busy, you know, but I think we find a balance of doing things together as a family, and then sometimes I got to break away and do some work.

So, yeah, but it's been fun finding that balance.

Q. How has the relationship with Luke not necessarily changed, but grown and developed with him going down the road, following dad's footsteps with golf? Is he like oh, dad, blah, blah, blah, or does he hold on to your advice and recommendations?

JUSTIN LEONARD: He's a pretty good listener. I think it helps that he works some with Randy Smith when he can, Mike Thomas, Brad Faxon a little bit. So it's not just my voice he's hearing, it's others.

The good thing is that I got a good relationship with those guys and work with them myself, so I can still help here and there. But it's fun, you know, him finding his own balance between college and doing his school work, social life, and the golf team on top of that.

So he's busy. It's fun when I can get him on the phone and catch up. It's short stints here and there, but I'm certainly happy for him. He's over the moon. He loves being at Villanova, and getting to play college golf is just a bonus to that.

... when all is said, we're done.®



Q. Finally, you're still relatively new out here. Enough to know the drill. You get excited when you see things like George McNeill this week, Zach Johnson next week or in two weeks coming out here to the Champions TOUR? It's really been kind of growing the personality of the Champions TOUR getting some of those guys out now.

JUSTIN LEONARD: Yeah, it's fun. It's fun seeing -- those are guys that I've been friends with for a long time and don't get to see them very often unless they're playing out here. Now I'll get the chance to see Zach more often, which will be great. Some other guys. Ben Crane is a turning later this year; George as you mentioned.

So it's fun to get some new guys in here and see how they do out here against us.

Q. Justin, good to see you again. Is there a place in your house where you go into and look at what you achieved, trophies and that sort of stuff?

JUSTIN LEONARD: I got a shelf in my office with a few things, and then upstairs a little area where we work out and there is a few things hanging in there.

Yeah, those are fun spots. I don't catch myself just staring up and reminiscing very often, but I feel their presence, if you will.

Q. One being the Claret Jug?

JUSTIN LEONARD: Yeah. It's in the office.

Q. The other one being the PLAYERS Championship.

JUSTIN LEONARD: Yeah. Yeah.

Q. Which leads me to the question about the PLAYERS. There is talk about -- talk at the moment -- about the PLAYERS becoming a major. Wondering your thoughts on hearing that news.

JUSTIN LEONARD: I don't know if there needs to be a fifth major. You know, four majors is a lot. The PLAYERS stands alone among all the tournaments. I don't think it needs a designation as a major championship to hold the prestige it already holds.

So I'm a bit of a traditionalist. I don't think it should be designated as a major. I'm fine with having won one major and a PLAYERS Championship. That's usually -- that's good by me. I wish I won more, but it is what it is.

I think it stands on its own. I don't think it needs any label of being a major championship.

Q. Final question: Thoughts on the state of the men's game at the moment?

JUSTIN LEONARD: Interesting would be my word. You know, yeah, with Brooks coming back, looks like Patrick Reed is heading in that direction. I don't follow the other tours very much.

Now that I'm not doing TV I don't watch a lot of PGA TOUR golf. I do on occasion, but that was part of my job for six years so I consumed my share of it.

Now I catch a little bit here and there. But I think with Rory winning the Grand Slam last year, three or four players that still have the opportunity to, Scottie kind of being the most obvious this summer at Shinnecock; I would say the men's game and the game of golf in general is in very good shape.

But, yeah, seemed like there for a while there was a lot of news that wasn't necessarily made on the golf course. It was off to the side, and, you know, some transition going on certainly. Certainly then you factor in what the TOUR, sounds like they're going to do with the schedule and things like that.

So it's great. It's in good shape. But it is changing.

Q. Next year the Chubb Classic celebrates its 40th anniversary. Just what does it mean generally speaking when sponsors like Chubb and others are willing to make long-term commitments to the PGA TOUR and Champions TOUR, et cetera?

JUSTIN LEONARD: It's fantastic. I think we got a unique opportunity for sponsors to entertain clients, showcase their company, and golf is a thing that brings a lot of the people together from all walks of life.

And to be out here and play the Champions TOUR with the great sponsors that we have, it's nice to see obviously when new ones come along, but also nice to see the ones that have been here for a long time keep enjoying our product.

Q. You've spent many of your years on the PGA TOUR playing against Tiger. What sort of reaction would it be to see him playing on the Champions TOUR?

JUSTIN LEONARD: Yeah, I mean, I certainly hope it happens. I think everybody out here does. It would bring us a lot of eyeballs, that's for sure.

... when all is said, we're done.®



You know, I feel like, again, we've got a great product. It would only be made better if Tiger is able to and wants to compete out here.

I don't think any of us are thinking it would be a lot of tournaments, but if he could come out here and play some, even if it's to keep his game kind of ready and all that for the major championships and whatever else he chooses to play.

So yeah, we're all hopeful he'll make a few appearances at least.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports