

FedEx St. Jude Championship

Thursday, August 10, 2023
Memphis, Tennessee, USA
TPC Southwind

Eric Cole

Quick Quotes

Q. Solid first round. Characterize what went well for you.

ERIC COLE: Thanks. It was a good day. I started off with a couple longer putts and then started hitting it a little better through the middle of the round. Left a few out there at the end with the putter, but overall it was a very good day.

Q. Make the Playoffs in your rookie season; would that have surprised you at all at the beginning of the year if you saw yourself at this spot?

ERIC COLE: I'm not sure about surprised, but I'm very happy to be here. It's a spot you want to be, and it's a tournament you want to be playing this time of year.

I'd say I'm really just happy to be here.

Q. What does surprise you in golf?

ERIC COLE: I don't know. It's a good question. Seems like a big question. I don't know.

I'm not sure.

Q. A shank?

ERIC COLE: Yeah, that would surprise me. Hopefully none of those for the rest of this tournament and the rest of these Playoffs.

Q. Do you give any thought to next year, the way you played this year and basically what the payoff is going to be?

ERIC COLE: Not really, no. I'm really more focused on this week and playing well and hopefully play next week and play well there and see how far in these Playoffs I can go. That's kind of where my focus is. Then when next year rolls around I'll start focusing on that.



Q. Are you 35?

ERIC COLE: 35, yep.

Q. Have you bothered just asking the TOUR any mathematical possibilities?

ERIC COLE: For?

Q. Like what's guaranteed for BMW?

ERIC COLE: No, I don't, really know. I think my caddie knows more about that than I do. I just was like, are we 100 percent in or not was something that I wanted to know before the start of this week.

Where it falls is kind of just -- there's a lot of variables at play, so it's almost better to just focus on what you're doing.

Q. Did you get an answer?

ERIC COLE: He said that I think we're right on the edge, so no, I didn't really get a straight answer, to answer your question.

Q. When you weren't on TOUR, and let's go back seven years ago, did you ever pay attention to these Playoffs, and do you remember having an opinion about how the whole system worked?

ERIC COLE: Yeah, sure. I still liked watching golf and watching golf played at the highest level, so I definitely watched these.

I think the Playoffs are pretty cool. Like when I was young, I remember before the FedExCup, and it's kind of nice to have like a big culmination and a big reward for the guys that have had good years, so I think it's awesome.

Q. Do you have any favorite FedExCup memories? If you don't, can you make one up?

ERIC COLE: I just remember Bill Haas hitting that shot out of the water. That was like at the beginning of the FedExCup, first couple years or something. I remember



that one kind of sticks out.

I think that was before they flipped the nines for the TOUR Championship. That one probably sticks out the most.

Q. Did you feel like this golf was always in you, and it was just a matter of getting out here, or was there something that preceded this year that brought out another level of golf?

ERIC COLE: I think my game hasn't really changed a whole lot. Having access and playing the PGA TOUR and getting starts is definitely a huge factor, but I think I'm also playing a little bit more consistently just tee to green. I don't have quite as many bad days as I used to, and I think that was a catalyst in getting me out here and then having the year I've had to this point.

Q. Have your expectations at all changed as the year has gone on?

ERIC COLE: Not really. You know, I try and focus on the little stuff and the execution type, like that side of it. If you do a lot of those little tiny things right, then the results kind of come with it.

But expectations, I obviously want to play well, and I'm trying to play well in every tournament, and my expectation is to kind of hold myself to that standard.

Q. What's the tiniest big thing that you concentrate on?

ERIC COLE: Yeah, I don't know. I just make sure that I'm focusing on the same stuff week to week, so not that much changes. You just go from one tournament to the next. I like to play a lot, too, so that kind of helps with that to where I'm just focused on the next shot and trying to hit it the right distance at the right target.

Q. Are you someone who writes down goals?

ERIC COLE: Yeah. Yeah, I do.

Q. Are you someone who shares what they are?

ERIC COLE: I'd have to think about them. I'm not sure exactly what they were. But getting to the Playoffs, it was definitely a goal of mine. It was definitely on that list.

Now that you're here, you want to see how far you can go.

Q. What would be one of the not smaller but detailed goal that you've kind of set out for yourself?

ERIC COLE: I mean, I have a lot of them. Making sure that I get to the course at the same time every day and kind of go through the same type of prep for each round, so that way for me the rounds feel -- they're all important rounds, but that way they all feel a little bit more routine. When you get to the first tee, it doesn't seem as big of a shot or as tough of a shot if you're just kind of going through the motions that you do on a week-to-week basis.

I'd say routine is probably a big part of my little goals, I guess.

Q. Have you been late this year?

ERIC COLE: Not really, no. I'm pretty -- I don't sleep in much, and I tend to be on time.

Q. When you started at the beginning of this season, go back to the fall, I think you just said that you look forward to the Playoffs. That was something on your list you wanted to accomplish, and you didn't get off to a great start. What was your mindset after those first four or five events?

ERIC COLE: Well, I kind of had a weird start. I had COVID in Napa and had my clubs stolen in Vegas, and I missed a couple cuts by one, so I wasn't really playing that bad and had some weird things happen. I didn't set into full panic just yet.

It was kind of just focus on the little things and do a bunch of little things right, and eventually it'll kind of flip to the good side, hopefully.

Q. I think this is your 31st start this year. Do you think you'll play that many next year?

ERIC COLE: I don't know. That's a good question. I hope I play at least two more coming up is my plan.

Q. So 33 is the number?

ERIC COLE: Yeah.

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