

# FedEx St. Jude Championship

Tuesday, August 13, 2024

Memphis, Tennessee, USA

TPC Southwind

## Christiaan Bezuidenhout

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome Christiaan Bezuidenhout to the media center at the FedExCup St. Jude Championship. In 2024 the PGA TOUR debuted the Aon Next 10 and the Aon Swing 5 programs that recognized better decision making and the elite performance required to earn access into Signature Events. You were able to strongly capitalize on that category. You played your way into all seven Signature Events after the Sentry, giving you a chance to climb the FedExCup leaderboard and play your way into the Playoffs for the second time in your career. If you don't mind opening with your thoughts on your performance this year and maybe a couple thoughts on the Aon Next 10 category.

CHRISTIAAN BEZUIDENHOUT: Yeah. Obviously didn't really know what to think of the Aon 5 and Aon 10 at the start of the year and if a lot of the players are going to benefit out of it, but I was a guy that benefitted a lot out of it. Obviously got off to a strong start at the beginning of the year with my run-out finish at the American Express, and that put me into a great position to play my way into all the Signature Events for the rest of the year.

It was nice to see that the system that the PGA TOUR put in place for the Aon 5 and the Next 10 worked, and yeah, luckily I benefitted out of that, and yeah, it's been a strong season so far.

**Q. You finished in the top 20 at three of those Signature Events, T20 at AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am, the Memorial you finished fourth, Wells Fargo T16, all amazing accomplishments. Can you touch on any of the tournaments, any of the Signature Events that you were pleased and proud to be able to play your way into?**

CHRISTIAAN BEZUIDENHOUT: Yeah, I think all of the Signature Events are really strong events. You have your top 70 players on the PGA TOUR playing in those events. You could just feel every time you pitched up at those



events, you can just feel -- it feels like a major. It feels like it's elevated.

It was a nice feeling to play my way into all of them, especially after an average season last year that I've had.

I really liked all of the golf courses that the Signature Events was played on.

**Q. This is your second start at the FedEx St. Jude Championship. Do you enjoy playing TPC Southwind? Just some thoughts on the golf course.**

CHRISTIAAN BEZUIDENHOUT: Yeah, the course is always in pristine condition. Nothing has changed over the last three years that I've been here. The greens are always some of the best that we putt on all year.

It's a strong course tee to green, as well.

You've seen longer hitters doing well here but also shorter hitters like myself. I'm not one of the longest hitters on TOUR, but if you can keep the ball in the fairway and you can roll your putter well, you have a good chance for the week.

**Q. Given your position now in the FedExCup standings, you've got a great chance to make East Lake but certainly be in the top 50 and play in all the Signature Events next year. Are there certain courses in those swing events that you'll not want to miss even though you won't need those necessarily to play?**

CHRISTIAAN BEZUIDENHOUT: Yeah, it's obviously nice to have secured my spot into the 50 now. I don't have to rely on next year's Aon 10 and Aon 5 and the Next 10. But I'm definitely going to play in the fall still after the Presidents Cup. I'm looking to play Sanderson Farms, Vegas and ZOZO.

Over the last couple of years I've done well at the Sanderson Farms, finishing fourth there last year. I'd like to go back there, and then Vegas is one of my favorite stops on TOUR all year, and I've always liked Japan, as well. The plan is to play those four in the fall and then spend some time at home for the Christmas break after



that.

**Q. It looks like the best season of your TOUR career. Is there anything you feel like you're doing better this season than seasons past?**

CHRISTIAAN BEZUIDENHOUT: Yeah, last year I made a few swing changes in the middle of the season that I don't really feel comfortable on the course and stuff, so actually switched coaches at the start of the year just to simplify things a little bit more, just to take one of my misses away on the golf course, and I felt like my iron play over the last six months has been my biggest improvement in my game, which is nice to see, because last year it was probably one of my weakest parts of my game.

I've always been a pretty good putter, so that was one of the parts of my game that I needed to get better at, just get the ball closer to the hole to give myself more.

**Q. What coach did you start working with?**

CHRISTIAAN BEZUIDENHOUT: I started working with Jamie Goth. He's a South African guy. He's been on the PGA TOUR and DP World Tour for 20 years. He's also working with Matthieu Pavon, Ryan Fox that plays out on the PGA TOUR, and we started in March of this year, and we just simplified things. I went from hitting a draw with my irons to focusing on a fade more, a little bit more control over the ball, and it's worked out so far.

**Q. You have East Lake to play for, the Presidents Cup. It's an important three weeks for you. How do you approach an important stretch like that?**

CHRISTIAAN BEZUIDENHOUT: Yeah, I'm not really going to do anything different than what I've been doing over the last six months. Obviously the Presidents Cup is in the back of my mind. I would love to be on Mike Weir's team in a month's time. But I'm not going to put extra pressure on myself to make that side. I'm just going to control the controllables over the next three weeks. It would be nice to make my way to East Lake in three weeks' time for the first time. It's obviously everybody's goal starting the season off.

But just to look at my progress from where I was last year this time, trying to fight for keeping my card, to play my way into the top 30 now, 22nd on the standings, having a chance to qualify for East Lake is already a big improvement for me.

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