

FedEx St. Jude Championship

Saturday, August 17, 2024

Memphis, Tennessee, USA

TPC Southwind

Will Zalatoris

Quick Quotes

Q. To put a few rounds together where, again, you're kind of in the running for it, talk about that.

WILL ZALATORIS: Yeah, it's been a pretty long year, to put it mildly. Some ups and downs with kind of the recovery with the back. But yeah, it's a special place. Even though it's kind of a really cool venue and the fact that even though, like, it's house lined, you don't even realize it because of how big the trees are along the edge of the property. You almost feel like you're in a field sometimes.

It's a special place. I've busted my tail for three or four months and haven't gotten much out of it. But hard work and a good attitude, eventually the good stuff is going to come, and it's nice to do it at a place that I really love.

Q. For everybody in the field right now with Hideki out in front, how do you tackle Sunday? Is it just go do what you do and see what happens?

WILL ZALATORIS: Yeah, I go do my business. I finished second to Hideki quite a few times, so I enjoy chasing him. He's a great dude. He's a heck of a player. He's doing it again.

I've just got to go about my business tomorrow.

Today was kind of weird. I don't think I've ever played this place with a west wind, and it was kind of bouncing around all over the place, too. Some holes that maybe would have been in off the right were playing down off the right.

It was kind of a -- even though there's some low scores, it was actually kind of a challenge to get your numbers right all day. I think it's kind of funny because I'm so used to the greens just being absolutely glass that I actually have been leaving some putts short. I won't be leaving any short tomorrow, that's for sure.

Q. You know what St. Jude means to this city, know



what it means to the TOUR. For a guy that's won here, when you walk around this course and see the signs and see the kids, can you even put into words what that means to you?

WILL ZALATORIS: Yeah, I mean, it's a foundation that my wife and I have donated -- a lot of our charitable donations have gone to St. Jude, not only with me winning but meeting some really cool kids along the way. I met a little girl, Avery, on 11 on Wednesday, and we were talking about riding horses. My wife rides horses. She was smiling, happy to be there, and you don't even though what a girl like that is going through.

Yeah, it's a special event for us, not only that FedEx is our title sponsor of the season-long race, but St. Jude is a part of the title, and every year FootJoy has always done something special with the shoes, and I've got those sitting in my office at home along with some of my trophies. Some really cute, funny things like having hippos on the back of my shoes just because a few years ago one of my little guys loved hippos and I told him that a lot of our charitable donations go to animals in general, and we've actually got a couple of hippos that we've kind of donated to. When people are asking you, man, what's the deal with the hippos and I get to tell the story with that, but not only tell the story but tell their story most importantly.

Q. After your lone bogey on 2, getting back-to-back birdies on 3 and 4, how important was that for momentum?

WILL ZALATORIS: Yeah, I didn't really hit it that -- I honestly hit five good golf shots on an easy hole. That's just the wind is bouncing around all over the place today.

I think I've only had two 5s on -- I guess three 5s on the card all week, so I know I'm not going to need -- I don't need to have a 5 on the card tomorrow if you want to have a chance.

Yeah, those are momentum boosters. Those are things I've been missing the last three months.

Q. Your first tournament back here since your win in 2022. What's been the key to your success on this



course?

WILL ZALATORIS: I just love this place. There's some courses that fit your eye and there's some that don't. This is just a place that I've had a lot of success on. A lot of really good ball strikers have won here through the years, which I think fits me to a T.

But that being said, you've still got to step up and hit golf shots. You can't mis-hit golf shots around this place, because what's Hideki, 16-under, 17-under? Yeah, he's at 17-under, so the scores are there. But one mistake on one hole and you're not making birdie.

Q. You came in sort of one of the, I guess you'd call it, bubble guys at 49. Did your history here help coming in with that? Did you have a thought in mind about how you wanted to attack the golf course?

WILL ZALATORIS: Yeah, I mean, honestly, I've played so poorly throughout the year that in reality I've really just -- this week in general, whether I made it or not, the fact that I made it this far, coming back after the surgeries, it was great to be back. It was a nice way of kind of everything coming back full circle. But by no means am I pleased with my position.

Yeah, it helps having the first playoff event on a golf course that you love, but regardless, if I were to make it or not to next week, it's more about the big picture. I've spent three to four months busting my tail, I've gotten absolutely nothing out of it. I've missed a bunch of cuts. I've played very inconsistent. It's nice to put three rounds together. I'm kind of looking at the bigger picture as opposed to next week.

Q. How would you describe the putting surfaces right now?

WILL ZALATORIS: They're pretty bumpy, but I think it's just the fact that we had the double tee. You get a little wind and a little bumpy right now, and guys are going to start missing some putts. Just had to be patient. We had a bunch of putts today that I thought were going in dead center, and they either stopped or they bounced off to the side.

But put a good roll on it, if it goes in the hole, great; if it doesn't, it is what it is.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports.

