

# RBC Canadian Open

Wednesday, June 8, 2022

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

St. George's Golf & Country Club

## Justin Thomas

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Justin Thomas to the interview room here at the RBC Canadian Open. Justin, with the tournament returning to Canada after two cancellations, how does it feel to be back in Canada?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, it feels great. This tournament and Toronto has done an unbelievable job of for some reason making me feel very special for being here. I don't feel that I deserve it, but everybody has been unbelievable.

I mean, I remember that in 2019 and then again this year, it's very welcoming and everything to be here. And it's an obviously a great event, it just has not worked in the schedule in years past, but deciding to try this year to play the weeks before the majors I felt like this was something I needed to do and it worked well to be back here.

THE MODERATOR: Played eight holes in the pro-am this morning. Obviously a venue that you had not been to before. What are your initial impressions of the golf course?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, it's a cool track. I think it's very similar to the course in Hamilton we played in terms of it's very, very old school, it's pretty right in front of you. You have a lot of slope in the fairways. The greens also have a lot of slope, very severe. It's going to be a premium on hitting the fairways, the rough is very thick.

If you do hit the fairways, being able to control your distance and control your spin into these greens is huge because there's a couple false fronts -- I've only seen eight holes -- but the holes I saw a couple of the false fronts, the ball will roll quite a bit back.

It seems like it's a place, from the holes that I saw, that you can make some birdies, but it also has some challenging aspects to it, for sure.

THE MODERATOR: Obviously coming off a great victory at the PGA Championship, how is your game feeling coming into this week?



JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, it's getting there. I obviously didn't have the week I wanted at Colonial but I would like to think I had a couple factors in there that had to do with that poor play.

Yeah, I just took kind of four, five days off, I went home, everything from the PGA kind of hit me Friday of the Colonial and I just went straight to Louisville and went and celebrated with my buddies, some of my high school friends.

So that was fun to be able to do that and actually kind of enjoy that week. Took a couple more days off and then got back to it Thursday. So I feel like every day just getting a little bit better and more comfortable and the main hope and thought this week is to try to get my game prepared and ready for the U.S. Open next week and if we can play well and have a chance to win, then that's also great.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

**Q. Your decision to play here, was it solely because of the success you had playing the week before the PGA Championship or was there any thought to maybe making this week sort of stand out considering what's going on over in England?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: This is just a weird season for me in terms of scheduling. I feel like for the most part I can tell you in December every event I'm going to play the entire year. There's still events that I don't know if I'm going to play the rest of this year.

I truly went into -- I mean I would have loved to commit to this event earlier or what I was going to do, but I truly was like, I need to see how I feel the week of the PGA to see if this is something that I want to do.

So obviously after playing well at the PGA and feeling that it was a little bit potentially better or good preparation for me to play the week prior.

Also geographically. It's not like I think if this was here and maybe the U.S. Open was at Torrey Pines I don't know that I would necessarily do it because it doesn't make sense



logistically. So being as close as it is and being in very similar conditions, grass, all that kind of stuff, it just seemed like it was a great addition for the schedule.

**Q. This being the 111th running of a National Open, a tournament that's been won by Hagan, Trevino, Tiger, Snead. Is that something that in your mind makes your TOUR special, this tournament special and separates it from any other league or something that might pop up?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, the PGA TOUR has a lot of long standing, great relationships with tournaments, courses, cities, countries and it is cool. I mean this is an event obviously, along with many others, that I've grown up and it just kind of stands the test of time or they're always on the schedule, you know they are going to be -- and RBC has been a great sponsor and willing to do that for so long.

It's cool. Like you said, you look at the history of this event, it kind of speaks for itself. The people that have been able to win this tournament, I'm sure this has changed a lot of careers and lives for guys that have maybe won for the first time or done something in the season that's kind of meant a deal breaker for them.

But, yeah, the opportunity to come to a place and a tournament that's so historic, just like a lot of events on the PGA TOUR, definitely makes it a little bit more special.

**Q. For the first two rounds you're paired with Rory and with Corey Connors, Canadian. I don't know if you see Corey very much in South Florida still but if you do, can you speak to his game a little bit and what impresses you about Corey?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, I see him a good bit. We don't play golf together at all. I see him out at Bear's Club practicing and I mean he's really impressive. I've always said that. I mean, I would think he'll do really well at a course like this.

He drives the ball on a string, he's a great ball-striker and he's obviously been a great ambassador and great for the game of golf in Canada. He just kind of goes under the radar, he's such a nice dude and just, I've played I think amateur and college golf against him. So we've been playing against him with each other for a while.

But he's just someone I feel like that goes under the radar and just kind of goes about his business and doesn't necessarily do anything that's like crazy, but it's just, he's always going to be right there and he seems like a guy that could play out on TOUR for a very long time.

**Q. Nine of the top 25 in the world are here this week, including obviously yourself. Can you speak to the strength of the field the week before a U.S. Open, guys who are near the top of their games looking to prepare nicely for next week at the U.S. Open?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: For sure. Myself, I know that it's crazy, what, this is, I don't know, this is my seventh or eighth season and I'm still trying to work out what works best for me from time to time before big events. So I'm sure other guys are doing the same.

Yeah, I think it's great. It's unfortunate a lot of tournaments don't get the fields that they deserve because a lot of tournaments are great, they have unbelievable golf course, unbelievable fan and just support in the local towns, but just where they fall in the schedule doesn't allow it to get a field like that.

So this is one of those tournaments that deserves a great field, but just doesn't get it every year because of when it falls in the schedule. So I'm glad to be here and glad to be a part of a great field this week.

**Q. Sorry for being the guy who is going to ask this question.**

JUSTIN THOMAS: I knew it was coming.

**Q. Can you give us your thoughts on what's going on with the LIV league and players who are now being announced to go over as well?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, you know, it's a bummer. I mean, I think a lot of us are -- I don't know if annoyed or tired is the right way. I mean it's just one of those things.

I mean I've thought a lot about it and it's like, look, like people are entitled to choose as they wish.

I don't dislike D.J. now. I don't think he's a bad dude. I'm not going to treat him any differently. It's like he's entitled to choose as he wishes.

And I think that the day and age that we live in now, it's just so negative that you see it in everything. Sport, politics, whatever it is, it's like if you disagree with someone you just feel that you're entitled to like hate them and talk bad about them and just bash their decision, when everybody's entitled to their own opinion, you know what I mean?

Like I said, it doesn't make him a bad person. Now I'm disappointed and I wish that he and others wouldn't have done it, but that's their decision. I've said it all along, it's like guys can do as they wish. If they want to go they can

go, if they want to stay they can stay.

Selfishly, I think and I know that the PGA TOUR is the best place to play in the world and it's just the decision is theirs and it is what it is, but I just, I wish that it would take away or I wish it wouldn't be taking away from the great story lines and things that are going on on a TOUR that's been around for a very long time and is in one of the best places it's ever been. It's just a bummer that those guys won't be a part of it.

**Q. You mentioned that Toronto's been really welcoming to you so far this week. Can you give an example of how the city has welcomed you with open arms so far?**

JUSTIN THOMAS: It's just little things like at registration. It's like all the ladies there that were checking me in were just so hospitable. They were wanting to, Do you need anything, can we do anything for you, do you want any recommendations on places to go.

I just remember that in 2019, I was, I missed the cut in Columbus the week before and I went in early and I was able to go to the NBA Finals game the year that the Raptors won, so that was obviously really cool.

I don't know, I mean Toronto's a really cool city, I would love to be here on a non-golf tournament so I could experience it and enjoy it a little bit more. But this is a work week, so it's time to get down to it.

**Q. As a follow-up, obviously this tournament hasn't been held since 2019, what are you expecting to see from the fans? They were pretty loud and vocal in 2019 and now they have had sort of three years to get pent up.**

JUSTIN THOMAS: I think it's very similar to the northeast and the States. It's passionate sports fans. Obviously you have the NHL that's so prevalent up here.

And just, there's such a difference of an obnoxious sports fan and a passionate sports fan. I think a lot of the fans that are going to be out here just are very gracious and happy that this event is going on. I mean obviously not having it for a couple years they're going to be excited, they're going to be ready and they deserve that. Everybody in Canada and Toronto deserves this.

So I'm excited to be here and a part of it and I'm sure playing with Rory and Corey we're going to have some pretty nice crowds out there, so it will be cool.

THE MODERATOR: Would you say Alabama fans are

passionate or obnoxious?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Well we got a big fan base so I would like to say we probably have a fair bit of both.

THE MODERATOR: We appreciate your time and best of luck this week.

JUSTIN THOMAS: Thank you.

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