

The Ryder Cup

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Farmingdale, New York, USA

Bethpage Black Course

Team USA

Justin Thomas

Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: Justin Thomas is with us now at the 2025 Ryder Cup. Welcome to your fourth Ryder Cup. Let's go ahead and jump right into questions.

Q. JT, obviously there's no way of preparing for the Ryder Cup, but I'm curious how you get good at playing golf while you're really nervous? How do you get good at that skill?

JUSTIN THOMAS: I think you just -- going through it as often as you can, I think it's similar to trying to win a golf tournament. The more often you're there, the more you can learn from mistakes or failures, what you maybe did wrong, what you feel like you can do right next time.

It's all the same; trying to win golf tournaments, you're very nervous, maybe some times more than others. But I think it's being put in that arena and figuring out how you're feeling and trying to cope with that the best that you can. Yeah, that's probably the best way I'd describe it.

Q. A lot of pros say when they feel that pressure they reframe it as like this is a good thing. I'm just trying to understand it a little more. Is that how you think too?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Definitely. I remember -- I don't know exactly what age it was, but I definitely remember at a young age being nervous was not cool. It was like -- it showed like a sign of weakness. At least that's what I thought when I was a little kid. It's like, if you're nervous it's because you're scared and you don't want to be there kind of thing.

But being nervous is great. I think if any of us were out here on the first tee or in position to have a putt to win a Ryder Cup or win a match and weren't nervous, that would be extremely concerning for our profession.

We would need to take a long, hard look at ourselves in the mirror because this is what we do, this is what we practice for and being in those moments. If it didn't mean



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something to you, you obviously wouldn't be nervous. Yeah, I think that's why.

Q. We talk a lot about the importance of leadership in the Ryder Cup. You obviously get that from your captain and your vice captains, but you need it from the players on the golf course as well. Do you see yourself, given your experience and personality, as one of the leaders of this team? And also, how does that tie in with playing in front of these home crowds this week?

JUSTIN THOMAS: I think I have a hard time viewing myself as that. I don't know if I'm quite ready to call myself the veteran because I think I associate the veteran with an older player and I'm just not quite ready for that yet. It's coming at me head on. It's just the reality.

But I'm going to be anything that I feel like I need to be for this team, for certain players, for the captains. Yeah, I know that I'm one of the leaders on the team, but I don't think there's necessarily one person on the team the last handful or couple times I've been on that I'm like, this is the person that when in doubt, you're looking at them like what do we do or what's going on kind of thing, and I think that's kind of what has made this group, this age group or whatever you want to call it, a little bit different and special.

Q. But in terms of using the home atmosphere as well, do you think you're going to need to do much of that, get them going?

JUSTIN THOMAS: You always can because I think it's something that will be unique about New York maybe versus other home Ryder Cups, if you will, is they expect us to play well and they want us to play well, and if we don't, they're going to be upset with us and disappointed with us and rightfully so.

I think New York is known as -- they like their championships. They want to win. It's no different for the Ryder Cup. That's what we're going to try to do for them and give them a reason to cheer even more.

But I've said it all year and all along, I'm happy to have



them on my side, that's for sure.

Q. I don't know if you heard Rory McIlroy said that the European players have had these virtual reality headsets on to simulate kind of abuse they might get from the crowd and the noise and that kind of thing. I wonder during your four previous experiences whether you've experienced anything that's been particularly bad or heard anything funny or anything like this or does this stuff get slightly overblown?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Probably a little bit of everything. I hadn't heard that. That's kind of wild. I'd be curious to see what that looked like.

There's so much noise that it's kind of hard to -- you can't hear all of it. You definitely hear some stuff. It's tough. I go back and forth because there's a part of me that's like, we're put in this arena, this is the -- it's maybe a little bit more so than it was my first couple years on Tour of being more vocal, fans being more vocal.

But like a Ryder Cup, you kind of know what you're going to get. But also if we want to be viewed a little bit more so as athletes and whatever it may be, then it's a one-off type thing. I think all the players are in the same boat, is once it ever gets to a point of being a little bit more personal of families, family members. Look, if we're not playing well and you're talking trash about us, we probably deserve it. But if you start getting into the loved ones, that's I think when everybody starts really kind of getting a little bit chippy.

I go back and forth. There's obviously never in any sport a time to get personal or disrespectful, but at the same time it is the Ryder Cup, and it's a home game for a reason. There's been plenty of good, plenty of bad on both ends, and you hope to give them reason to cheer for the good.

Q. This came up many years with Tiger, so what I'm wondering is Scottie one of 12 this week or is he looked upon differently given what he's accomplished in the game the last two or three years?

JUSTIN THOMAS: He's definitely one of 12 when it comes to the team. I think it is very cool and unique that everybody on our team is. It's not like Scottie gets more points for winning a match than I do or J.J. Spaun or Collin Morikawa or Xander, whatever it is. At the end of the day it's just all about going and winning your point.

All of us are very happy that he's on our team this week so we don't have to try to figure out how to beat him in an individual tournament. It's nice that he's on our side.

No, he's just viewed as one of the 12, and we're all one and the same I'd say.

Q. Does he have an aura? And if not, why not?

JUSTIN THOMAS: It's a good question. I don't know. He doesn't to me, but I also feel like I know him well enough that even if he did, I wouldn't give him that credit and let that get to his head because he's competitive and can get chirpy enough, that that's the last thing I need him knowing that if I did feel that way. I'm sure he does to some people, and rightfully so, right?

Q. Your captain, Keegan Bradley, is just seven years older than you. I was wondering, looking back over the course of your career when you came on to the Tour, what did you see him as? Did you see him as a senior figure? Was he someone you were looking up to? Was he part of your peer group? He's your sort of age group, not that far apart.

JUSTIN THOMAS: Keegan would be the first to tell you he's always been kind of quiet, been to himself, and I think this captaincy has been the best thing that's happened to him. It's brought out a different side of him. We keep joking you have to talk to all of us and you can't just kind of hide from us anymore. You've got to hang out with us and whatnot.

I've known Keegan since I first moved to Jupiter, which has been like 10 years now, which is wild. So we've practiced at the same places, so we've always known each other and we've definitely gotten a lot closer over the last probably four, five, six years just because I think we both respect each other's games and also work ethics.

He's out practicing a lot, and I respect a lot of the level of golf he's continued to play. And playing the best golf of his career at this age, it's awesome.

I don't necessarily -- I definitely look at him more as one of us, but I also think that's kind of the unique part of golf. You know what I mean?

Q. Is that a change to the vibe you saw at previous Ryder Cups where the captain was maybe a little bit more of a prominent distant figure that you were --

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, for sure. I think you'd be lying if you said it was the same. You have a guy who's competitive and winning the highest level golf tournaments, top 10 player in the world, to also very good players, but they're just two completely different things.

Q. As we know, the fans bring so much to this event.

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

Can you tell us from your perspective what the difference is between the European fans and the American fans, what they all bring to the table? And do you have a particularly fond memory, a song or a chant or something you experienced out on the course that you remember?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, the chants, I don't know how the Europeans do it. It's really impressive, to be honest. I don't know if there's like a group text of 10,000 people that they just come up with these things, but they're pretty awesome and impressive.

I don't know, I think obviously the history of golf, it lies deeper in the -- it's just very different. It's the same end goal, right? Obviously they're very excited. The U.S. fans are very excited to cheer for us just like the European fans are excited to cheer for Europe.

Our daughter's name is Molly, and the amount of times I had that Tommy Fleetwood chant stuck in my head and both Jill and I have caught ourselves singing Molly, right along to the Tommy song.

There's a lot of them, and I have a lot of respect for the European fans just like I do the U.S. fans. It's what makes, I'd say, weeks like this so incredibly special.

Q. Xander has obviously been through a lot the last few weeks becoming a dad, hasn't played a lot of golf. How do you guys as teammates make him feel comfortable and help him get back into this at a big time?

JUSTIN THOMAS: One thing about Xander is you don't have to make him feel comfortable. I've played a bunch of golf with him probably three or four days last week, and the first day just being back with him, he's -- it was good to have him back. He's just chirping all the time. He's excited. He's rested. Well, I guess somewhat rested with the baby situation at home.

But he's excited and ready to go. But Xander never has to try to make himself feel comfortable or we don't have to try to make him feel comfortable because you're always going to get the same Xander no matter what, and that's the one that we all know and love and sometimes hate.

Q. I have a question regarding the captains. You've been to three of these things. Can a captain make a difference Ryder Cup week? And if so, what kind of difference, for example, can Keegan make, whether it's the vibe in the room, the transparency, the pairings, that kind of thing?

JUSTIN THOMAS: I think they can. I think it's extremely important. I think it's -- I remember thinking Luke did an unbelievable job in Rome with that, having the variety of age groups, the different demographics. I think having José María there for Rahm and Sergio, obviously very close with them. And I think what Nicolai -- I think Rasmus there, his brother. I mean, something like that, I think that's something the Europeans have done a great job of utilizing that because if it's something that makes a couple rookies more comfortable -- making this week is easy and comfortable for everybody as possible I think is the main goal, and I think Keegan did an unbelievable job with that.

It is, it's just trying to get Kis and Sneds to shut up is really the only thing that you have to worry about, but those guys would do anything for any of us, and it keeps it very light, and it's always a good time.

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