

TGL Presented By SoFi: Atlanta Drive Golf Club v Boston Common Golf

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Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, USA
SoFi Center



Atlanta Drive GC Justin Thomas Chris Gotterup Press Conference

Atlanta Drive GC 5, Boston Common Golf 2

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations on the win tonight. How did it feel?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Great. A win is a win.

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah.

Q. As defending champs, how did you evaluate tonight's performance against one of the hottest teams in the league?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, as a little bit sarcastic as Chris's answer was, it's true; a win is a win. I've obviously watched a lot more this year as opposed to playing, so I've found that from watching, it seems like it's harder to make birdies. The holes may be a little longer. There's a little bit more going on, and the green is, at least from the one match I've played, is difficult to putt on. It's got a lot of break and very speedy. May not have as many birdies as last year, but that being said, someone has still got to win the match and win the holes. The fact that we were able to do that, that's all that matters.

Q. For JT, first time back hitting shots in here with the adrenaline flowing. You have the convenience of seeing some of the numbers and ball speed on the screen. Is your speed back to where you want it coming back from the injury?

JUSTIN THOMAS: It's pretty close to normal. I wouldn't say this is a normal setting or situation tonight. It's a lot of stop and starts and whatnot.

But at least when I've been hitting the last week or so, I feel

like it's been in a very similar spot to normal.

Q. Chris, I feel like you and Jacob are stealing the strokes gained best boys category from Scottie and Xan. Talk to me about his game and what you expect from him in the future.

CHRIS GOTTERUP: From Jacob's game? Yeah, he's been obviously on a tear lately. He's been playing great. I don't expect anything to change.

Q. You mentioned on the broadcast that you might be returning to play at the Arnold Palmer next week; is that true?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, it is. I'm excited to get back and play at Bay Hill next week.

Q. Both you guys, I don't know if you caught the USA hockey team, a great patriotic moment for the country. Do you connect with those guys or have you talked to them about building camaraderie maybe for future Ryder Cups or anything you can take from the team spirit and the patriotism from that win?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I mean, I watched it, and after my missed cut at Riv, I was flying home and was up at 5:00 on the West Coast so I watched it the whole way home. It was awesome. They were definitely up against it, it felt like, the whole time, and they just toughed it out and got it done. I watched the whole post match, and the whole scene was just awesome, them bringing out Johnny's jersey and whole thing. They just seemed to get it.

I haven't been involved in any of those teams, but I just think that they seem -- and Jack's interview about how he was happy to be an American and all that stuff. I think it was really just cool to watch. Obviously you can tell how much work they put into it and how much they cared about it, and obviously Canada, too. I just enjoyed watching it as a fan of the sport.

Q. Justin, what went into the decision to come back at Arnold Palmer, and what do you feel like will be the biggest challenge not having been on a course like

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that for five months?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, a course really like any is the adjustment. But I would say it'll just be a lot of little stuff. I've been able to practice pretty normal for at least a month I feel like, or maybe not quite that much, so I'm trying to play a lot more, but I'll still run into stuff here and there of just situations I haven't been in in a while.

It was my first time playing, hitting it in a fairway bunker, and I'm like, I haven't hit a fairway bunker shot in like four months or something like that. Just trying to play and get out there as often as I can. Different winds, different grasses, different lies, different scenarios.

Look, I obviously want to and would love to play well next week, but I'm also understanding that it'll be, what, almost five, six months since I've played a competitive tournament, so I'm not exactly expecting anything great. But at least everybody else will be struggling with me at Bay Hill, so that'll make me feel a little bit better hopefully.

Q. Justin, you're kind of engrained in this Palm Beach community now, past champion of the Honda Classic when it was the Honda Classic. Do you think the tournament needs to shift a spot in the schedule to draw a stronger field? What's preventing that at this point?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, I mean, there's obviously a lot of arguments or a lot of different reasons, I guess. But it is. It's a bummer. It's one of those events that it has fallen at an unfortunate time in the schedule. I think it's both a great thing and a bad thing of our schedule, how great it is and the amount of great golf courses that we go to.

It kills me that I can't play Torrey Pines every year. Like Torrey Pines South to me is such a great golf course. It fits my eye so well. I like the North Course, but I can't play in it every year. Or Colonial is an event in the past where -- I love Colonial. I think that golf course is incredible, but I can't play four or five in a row.

It's unfortunate. It's a great, great problem to have, but it is, it's just one of those things the way that guys need to play certain events or feel like they give themselves the best opportunity to win and make the most points as possible. It's just kind of where it falls kind of thing.

Q. Justin, we know your swing from before the surgery. Do you have a new swing, new biomechanics or anything changed, or lifestyle, if you can expand on this?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Not a lot. I'm still going to have a lot of

the same DNA and characteristics. I think there's maybe little things that have maybe changed over the last couple years that could have potentially caused an injury.

But a lot of it is just wear and tear for all of us. I've done a lot of reading and research and understanding that a lot of golfers have a very similar situation, but it affects everybody totally differently. Some people have no nerve pain. The fact that my dad has no nerve pain, I can't believe I got a back surgery before my dad did with how his back is. But it's one of those things that it's not nerve related for him, and it was for me. So it's just strange.

It's just I have to do the little things and stay on top of it, and playing injury-free is my main goal and always has been. It was unfortunate, but it is what it is, and I'm just going to make the best out of it and do the right things. I still have another 12, 15 years of great golf ahead of me.

There's no reason to look backward, just look forward.

The same DNA, hopefully just better.

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