

**PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW**  
**October 11, 2017**



**JUSTIN THOMAS**

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**MODERATOR:** We would like to welcome our two-time defending champion Justin Thomas to the interview room here at the CIMB Classic. Justin, a familiar spot for you here at the CIMB Classic defending. Coming off of an incredible season in which you were PGA Tour Player of the Year and FedExCup champion. Maybe let's start with some overall thoughts. You had a couple of weeks to reflect on that season. Maybe reflect on that and leading into this season.

**JUSTIN THOMAS:** Yeah, I had all of four days to reflect on it. It was a very short offseason I guess you could say, if you could even call it that. But it was -- I mean the Presidents Cup was unbelievable, very enjoyable, a great experience, a lot of fun. And then last week was just kind of really trying to get some rest. This is I think my eighth event in 10 weeks, so I'm getting a little bit tired. So more -- if anything, just trying to stay rested, trying to keep my body feeling as good as possible so when I go out on the course, I don't make any mental mistakes or anything like that.

Yeah, it's always exciting being back here, a place that I've had success, but especially my first PGA Tour win. That's something that will never change and it's definitely a great feeling coming back here.

**MODERATOR:** The last year when you were here at the CIMB Classic was the first time you had a chance to defend a title on the PGA Tour and this is the second. Is there a different mindset you have going into the week?

**JUSTIN THOMAS:** Not at all. It's another week, another tournament. It's definitely different, a feeling I'm familiar with, winning a tournament back-to-back times or back-to-back years. But I'm just excited to go out and try to play the best I can, whether it's defending again or finishing top-10 or top-30, whatever it is, I'm going to go out and just give it all that I have and just play the best that I can.

**MODERATOR:** We'll open it up for some questions.

**Q. Justin, other than hard work, what's the reason for your success?**

**JUSTIN THOMAS:** I would say patience. Since you've said I couldn't say hard work, I definitely have worked very hard, but a lot of my wins have been because I've been patient and just giving myself an opportunity to win. Even the weeks or the times, some of the events that I've won, I haven't been playing my best or I've had stretches where kind of had my back up against a wall, against adversity and I've just stayed patient and I've come back.

Honestly, the reason and only reason that I won this golf tournament last year was because of my finish on Saturday. I birdied my last five holes and I was still 4 back going into Sunday. So if I birdie one of those last five, I'm 8 back going into Sunday and I have no chance to win that tournament. So I think that's a perfect example of me, I was playing terribly up until those five birdies. I was 4 over par on a place that I'm very comfortable with and feel like I can go low at and I was just patient and just kind of stayed in the moment and just tried to keep -- just keep playing and pressing on and those birdies were the reason I won.

**Q. I know you don't want to share your goal for the season but you're currently No. 4 in the world. How important is it to you chasing the No. 1 spot?**

**JUSTIN THOMAS:** It's extremely important. It's something not necessarily a goal of mine for this year. I mean obviously that would be great, but it's just a career goal, it's something I want to achieve. I think any or a lot of golfers also want to achieve that.

Yeah, I'm working hard to play the best that I can every week and trying to win the tournaments that I'm playing in that certain week. But I guess all of the preparation, all of the off-course preparation, anything that I'm putting in I guess you could say is striving or trying to get toward that No. 1 spot.

So that's definitely an extremely important and highly ranked goal of mine in my career.

**Q. Welcome back. They only had four players on the PGA Tour that finished (inaudible) in one tournament. How much do you want to accomplish that?**

**JUSTIN THOMAS:** It would be great. It's actually funny, I didn't realize this until today but the last person to do it was Steve Stricker, and who was caddying for him was my caddie. So I'm hoping that he is the reason for the three-peat and we can get some good vibes through him. But it would be an unbelievable achievement. It would -- it's so hard to win out here and there's so many great players and it's really just -- it's difficult to win. So if I were to be able to say that I did something three times in a row, it would be awesome. But I have so much golf in front of me, I have a lot of great players that I'm playing against, and also not exactly sure where my game's going to be at just in terms of lack of preparation last week. So it would be great to answer your question.

**MODERATOR:** Justin, given all that you accomplished in the last year, do you feel different sitting here than you did a year ago.

**JUSTIN THOMAS:** I don't feel like I feel different. Maybe a part of me somewhere inside does, but in terms of just doing this and being a two-time defending champion as opposed to one, the defending champion, I don't feel any different there. But I just feel more confident about everything, about the golf aspect, just going through everything, managing my time and what to do, what not to do, this and that. So I would say that's the biggest difference in how I feel.

**MODERATOR:** Justin, **best of luck this week on defending your title again.**

**JUSTIN THOMAS:** Thank you.