

**PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW**  
February 14, 2018

**DUSTIN JOHNSON**



**GENESIS OPEN**

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**ALEX URBAN:** I would like to welcome the defending champion here at the Genesis Open, Dustin Johnson. Dustin, your win last year propelled you to a great year, you got you off to a really nice start. Just your feelings being back here at Riviera.

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** It's a place I love coming back here. This is one of my favorite golf courses we play all year. Obviously after winning last year, it's just a place that's always special to me and I enjoy coming back here every year.

**ALEX URBAN:** We'll open it up for questions right away.

**Q. I think it was yesterday it had been a year since you've been world No. 1. Is it something you pay attention to? And along those lines, over the course of that year, did you look at the world rankings at all?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** Yeah, I check them. It's nice seeing my name at the top, so I look at it.

**Q. When do you look at it?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** On Mondays usually. That's about it, though. Just to see, see what's going on. I still don't really understand them, but I could read "one." Yeah, it's nice. It's been a tough year. Obviously starting here I got off to -- I was playing really, really well, and then the injury at Augusta kind of derailed me a little bit. But battling back, I felt like the game's finally starting to come into really good form. You know, even like last week I didn't feel like I had my best stuff, but I still was there in contention with a chance to win on Sunday, which shows me that my game is definitely getting back to where it was. It feels better today than it did last week, so that's really good.

**Q. Dustin, you mentioned when you were out here a couple weeks ago that being No. 1 is something you really think is pretty important. But as you hold on to that position week after week, does it get any more difficult to keep it, or is it something that occupies more of your thought, less of your thought?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** Yeah, it's definitely difficult to stay No. 1. The guys out here are very, very good and there's a lot of very talented players. But for me, I use it as motivation to keep working harder and to keep doing the things that I'm doing. It's a lot of validation on the things that I'm working on, the things that I'm doing are working, so it just pushes me to work that much harder at the things I'm doing now.

**Q. And just unrelated entirely to that, what was the reaction to the news last night of Bill Haas' crash? When did you hear?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** I heard it this morning when I was having breakfast. But, you know, just hopefully, you know, thankfully Bill's okay. That was what I was concerned about when I first heard it.

**Q. What's your favorite hole out here to play and why?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** All of them. I really do, I like them all, they're all fun. No. 10's a lot of fun. You either really like it or really don't some days, but I enjoy playing all the holes. They're all different. You've got to hit good golf shots on all of them, so I enjoy playing the whole golf course.

**Q. What drives your thinking on 10? Is it the hole location or just wind conditions and all that stuff?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** No, I mean, I just try to hit it just anywhere short left or long left of the green. It's a tough hole, but I just try to play it down the left side and hopefully my ball ends up in a decent spot.

**Q. Did the fact that Jon Rahm started to get really close to you as the new year kicked off, did that make you feel like you needed to work any harder?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** No. I mean, I can't really control what the other guys are doing. I wasn't even -- I played a few events but he was playing a few that I wasn't where he won one of them, I think. But yeah, he had a chance in Phoenix and maybe the week before that if he would have won, he could have got to No. 1. But it's just golf, it's how it goes. Somebody's probably eventually going to pass me, but hopefully not.

**Q. Dustin, when you consider going five weeks without playing and five months without getting some form back, are you surprised that you were able to stay No. 1 for an entire year, and is it at all surprising that only four of the guys have done it?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** Well, no, it's not surprising that I'm No. 1 all year. I feel like I played well enough to get there. But yeah, I mean, struggling a little bit through the summer to hold on to it was maybe a little bit because -- but like I said, I don't understand how the rankings work. I didn't feel like I was playing very well, but obviously the win at Northern Trust helped out a lot. But since then I feel like I've been playing pretty solid and have had I think my last, what, three starts on Tour were two seconds and a first. You know, even if I'm not playing my best, I'm still starting to contend more, which is what I want to do.

**Q. Aren't you supposed to be good at math?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** No, I'm not.

**Q. Considering the strength of the field this week, does that give you any maybe extra incentive to try to perform well considering all these other guys out here and the amount of quality players in this tournament?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** No. I mean, the field's good every week. Every week I tee it up, every tournament you play, the field's really good. From top to bottom the Tour's really strong, a lot of good players. I want to win, I'm going to have to play my best. But this week, this field is always very good. Last year was good, every year's good. You know, it's a week that you've got to come out and bring your A game if you want to win.

**Q. Dustin, looking ahead a couple of months, have you booked a rental house in Augusta yet, and if so, is it the same one?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** It's not the same one, no. And yes, I think we have one, but I'm not sure, though.

**Q. Scared off after last year?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** No. It just got bad juju, so I'm not going there.

**Q. In the 10 or almost 10 years you've been out here, if you consider everything from your equipment to your iPhone, TrackMan, whatever, what do you consider to be the greatest technological advancements since your rookie year as it relates to your game?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** For me, probably TrackMan I think has helped me the most just because it made -- for me, it actually helped me practice my wedges. I actually like practicing with TrackMan instead of stepping off or lasering a towel out there and trying to guess if your ball's landing short or past it without having your caddie stand in the middle of the range to tell you. It just made wedge practice for me a lot easier and more fun.

**Q. Have you ever taken it on the course?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** No.

**Q. Always on the range?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** Just on the range.

**Q. Dustin, obviously a lot of talk about No. 1 for the first time in 12 years Tiger Woods, former No. 1, is here. I was wondering if you could speak to growing up, some of your Tiger memories and what he's meant to golf?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** Yeah, golf wouldn't be where it is today without Tiger. It's great to see

him back, it's great to see him competing again. I think, you know, I played with him a couple of times; he's hitting well, he's swinging well, he looks healthy. It's good for the game of golf him being here. It can only help us and we've got a lot to thank Tiger for because he definitely put golf on the map for us.

**Q. I think you mentioned this last week that you're building towards Augusta, obviously there's a theme that sort of every player sort of embraces, but if you compare where you were at this time last year to where you are now and put a number on it, what's the difference between where you are now and where you were last year at this time?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** It's pretty close. .5

**Q. .5 difference?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** Yeah, difference.

**Q. Or .5 total?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** Difference. Total. How am I supposed to rate that? I don't know. I feel just as good as I did last year, how about that?

**Q. Every part of your game?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** It's pretty good, yeah. Ask Doug, he just walked around with me for nine holes. It's pretty darn close, how about that?

**Q. Dustin, just curious, given your basketball background, you didn't happen to get an invite to the Celebrity All-Star Game, did you?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** I did -- well, adidas is doing something on Friday that I got an invite to, but I've just got so much going on this week that it's not really -- don't have enough time to do it.

**Q. How do you think you would have done?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** I'd do okay. I beat Shane Battier in a three-point contest. That's my claim to fame in basketball.

**Q. When was that?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** It was in Miami at Doral, we did some little exhibition. Granted, it was blowing about 30 and it was outside, but I still won.

**Q. If you look at Tiger's record here, and it's not -- it's kind of the anti you here, do**

**you have a course out there on Tour that you like okay, you just can't perform very well?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** I don't know. I'm trying to think, sorry. Well, all the courses I play I like. I feel like I play well on them.

**Q. Put it this way: Last year you said if there was one tournament you would have wanted to win outside of the obvious four, it would have been Riv. What's next, how about that?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** Which one do I want to win? Besides a major?

**Q. Right, and the Hero.**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** All of them. There's not one specific one. I'm trying to win every tournament that I tee it up in.

**Q. THE PLAYERS?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** Yeah, well, I think that's a given that it's pretty much a major. Well, it would have been probably the Byron Nelson. I played well there and just never won, but I've been really close a bunch of times. Now that they moved courses, I don't know, I haven't seen the new course. Heard wonderful things about it, though.

**Q. Do you know what your pre-Masters schedule is?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** Yeah, I'm playing Mexico and Match Play.

**Q. Just those two?**

**DUSTIN JOHNSON:** Yes.

**ALEX URBAN:** Any more questions for Dustin? Good luck this week.