

ROUND 3 INTERVIEW
February 17, 2018

JORDAN SPIETH (-3)



GENESIS OPEN

Q. Jordan, statistically you got better every day on the greens. Does it feel that way to you, though?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, definitely. I thought each day last week I progressed. Thursday was really bad, and then I -- from talking with my coach and having Strick look at it, I got set up really nice. I got really comfortable on the greens even though they were very difficult to putt last week and this week. Just been trying to nail it in. That Monday pro-am out here I made everything and I've been trying to take those good vibes on to these greens. Any putt, I either made it or I left it just short today. It was one of those days that with the way I struck the ball, it was an off day, but that putter saved me and allowed me to shoot the lowest score so far this week.

Q. What's the challenge for you, I know you've gone through it before, of just trying to stay patient, because obviously by nature all you guys are impatient, you want it to happen yesterday kind of thing?

JORDAN SPIETH: Right, yeah. That's the reason I haven't won here yet. The way that I've been playing this golf course, I'll either finish I think third at best and anywhere from third to 25th because I'm just, I'm not quite patient enough to play this golf course.

I really need to approach it a lot like I approach Augusta. It has a lot of similarities in the way you have to attack it, which center of the green is fantastic. You can putt to any pin from the center of the green and wait for your chances. Just here or there I'm just trying to do a little too much. A good example is 17 today. I can easily reach the green in two, but the point isn't to hit the green in two, the point is if I hit it, make sure I hit it left either on or left of the green, then I'll make birdie. It's just a simple up-and-down, and I end up hitting it just a little too far right trying to be cute with it and it bounces into the downslope of the bunker and I can't make birdie anymore.

So that's kind of, I come off of the 16th hole making bogey and I try and do too much. Or I make a birdie and I'm trying to make three in a row. This course doesn't allow that to happen.

Q. When you know you've got to do that, what does it take to kind of knock yourself on the head?

JORDAN SPIETH: You could ask me the same thing on why I'm able to do it at Augusta and I don't do it at other places. I don't really know. The good news is I recognize it. The next step is actually acting upon it. I told Michael, this hole, just tell me never go this way.

You know, like 2 and 12, I always go in the right rough and it's the worst place you can be. You could go left all day. I know how to map this course out, I get on some of these shots and I try and get a little too aggressive when I'm 5, 6 behind. If I got off to a hot start it would be a whole different story, I'd probably be playing the golf course a lot better.

Q. Speaking of Augusta and speaking of patience, how do you balance wanting to peak four times a year and yet still wanting to go out now and contend?

JORDAN SPIETH: I kind of highlight around this stretch, I said that I wanted to be in contention and potentially get a win before Augusta as the ultimate preparation for Augusta. So I'm trying to peak -- I mean, you want to peak every week. You know that's not necessarily realistic.

What I do differently than what I do for Augusta is less balls on the range this week than I would -- than I probably did into Phoenix given it's the third week in a row. Just dial stuff back to save legs, save energy and kind of do a little trial and error because this is actually a great -- this three-week stretch is a great trial for the three-week stretch I normally play into Augusta where this course, being a difficult one where you have to have patience on similar to Augusta, they're both the third week in a row. So it's a learning experience here. But with a golf course that you can move up the leaderboard with so many birdies, a day like tomorrow, I may as well go out and fire. The patience isn't necessary anymore.

Q. Everybody talks a lot about No. 10, just what an interesting hole it is. When you talk as much about No. 1, which has to be a birdie hole, and No. 8 with the split fairways, especially where the pin was today, what was the strategy you had off the tee on No. 8 today?

JORDAN SPIETH: Well, I found that going left with the driver, as long as there's either no wind or downwind a little bit, is the play for me. I hit a really good drive and I had probably 102 yards I think (inaudible) and I couldn't play anywhere near it. I had to go almost 20 feet left of the hole on the line just because you never know exactly what bounce you're going to get. And then if you end up down in the swell, that's a bogey, that's pretty much an automatic bogey. So to lay up with a wedge is a discipline like I'm talking about that sometime I may have gone at that pin and tried to be perfect, but I hit a good shot today to the left side, it's just such a sucker pin. 7 and 8 today were really, really difficult hole locations.

Q. (No microphone.)

JORDAN SPIETH: Well, it's a big enough green that you obviously just want to put the ball on the green. Yeah, you feel like you lost a shot if you don't birdie it, for sure.

Q. I know there's more golf to play, but when do you start dialing your mind into Augusta, is there a line of demarcation so to speak at all?

JORDAN SPIETH: Probably approaching and getting to Match Play, that's about when you start thinking about how -- because again, right back to what I was saying about this three-week stretch, that's where you're really building a plan out for three weeks that you feel like not only are you rested, but you've had enough reps to just have to fine tune things once we get to Augusta. The times I played Augusta the best, I was playing well going in, and at Augusta I didn't try and do anything special, it was check all the check marks and make sure you get enough rest.