

**RUSSELL HENLEY**

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**JACK RYAN:** We'll go ahead and get started with Russell Henley here at the Houston Open, defending champion. Russell, you had four straight top-10s here, you've got to be feeling pretty confident coming in here.

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** Yeah. I mean, it's cool to come back to a Tour event that you won the year before being the defending champion. I've played well at this course. I love the greens. I feel like I know where to hit it, just a matter if I can do it. I'm excited to play.

**JACK RYAN:** We've heard a couple players talk about the way the course is constructed. Is there anything that sticks out to you about the way it's designed that you like?

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** I feel like it's very obvious where you need to hit it and where you don't need to hit it. It's right in front of you and I like the green complexes. I feel like you can use those to your advantage if you're hitting it well. And if you're not hitting it well, there's room for error if you use them correctly. And I've always just really liked the greens and thought that the course is pretty much always in perfect shape.

**JACK RYAN:** You and your wife are expecting a baby soon. What's that transition going to be like for you going from -- that's going to be a major change for you?

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** Yeah, well, I don't know what it's going to be like but I'm excited. It was hard leaving Charleston yesterday morning. He's kicking a lot and she's healthy and he's healthy. She's actually got a doctor's appointment today. He's due April 15th and I'm excited to meet him.

**JACK RYAN:** Do you feel this tournament provides you a good path to your goals for the rest of the season, whatever they may have been coming in? Where does this tournament rank for your opportunities of the rest of the season.

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** I like how it's the week before the Masters. It's similar conditions in the fairways and off the tees and whatnot, and perfect greens like next week. So I think it's a good transition there. I've played here, I've played well here the last four years and it always gives me confidence to come back here, for sure. I want to play well throughout the year and be a consistent player in all tournaments. Hopefully this one can help get my confidence level where I want it to be.

**Q. Russell have you successfully defended a title at any level, and if so, can you tell us about it? And last year what was the key element for you winning?**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** Yeah, so in college there was a tournament in my hometown, it's called the Brickyard Collegiate. I won that two years in a row. And I won the Georgia state am two years in a row. Those are the ones I can remember. I think those are the only two I've done that. That was cool winning the state am. Bobby Jones's name is on that trophy. You know, I remember my brother caddying for me and that was a lot of fun. But I haven't done it on Tour and I think it would be really fun to do that. Sorry, what was the second question?

**Q. What was the most successful thing you had going for you last year?**

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** I think last year I was second-most all-time in feet of putts made in a tournament, in a PGA TOUR event or something. I think I made a lot of putts. That might not be exactly right, but I might have been in the top-10. Putted really well and I feel like I just missed the ball in the correct spots. When I did hit a bad shot, I missed it in a spot where I could still make a par. I guess that's just the experience of playing the golf course, but I putted really well.

**JACK RYAN:** We had Justin Rose in here a little bit earlier and he was talking about how match play kind of makes it difficult to get a read on where your game is at. Did you experience that last week?

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** A little bit. I mean, I tried not to change what I was doing drastically based on what the other guy was doing. I just tried to play high-level golf, so I feel like last week I got a little bit better every day. I feel like I gained some confidence from last week and I liked where my game was. I think I shot around 4 under the last day and made maybe six or seven birdies and lost 1-down to Kyle on the last hole.

I think I know what he means, it can be difficult to read depending on the type of match you're in, but I feel like my game's in a good spot.

**JACK RYAN:** All right, Russell, thanks for coming in and best of luck this week.

**RUSSELL HENLEY:** Thank you all, appreciate it.