

FINAL ROUND INTERVIEW
February 17, 2019

JUSTIN THOMAS (-13)



Q. JT, I know you're not one to make excuses, but how much of this was 36 holes in difficult conditions (inaudible)?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, I mean, I wouldn't -- I definitely wouldn't make an excuse of being tired. I felt great out there, which is all the credit to my trainer, my physio.

I think it was just more I really struggled putting in that wind out there. It's something that I've needed to get better at and it unfortunately just kind of showed a flaw in my game. I really didn't play that bad. It was obviously very, very difficult out there. I'm sure the scores showed that.

J.B. won. He played great. But it's always a bummer to hand him a tournament. I feel like I should have won that thing. Hit some great shots the last four holes. Really, the last five holes. I hit a great shot on 14, too. Just hit a putt too hard and then misread one. But it is what it is and just got to find a way to learn from it.

Q. What about that putt on 17 (inaudible)?

JUSTIN THOMAS: I did, yeah. It was hard because it's so fast, so you have to hit it very soft. And the greens are very bumpy at the end of the day, but everyone's dealing with that. It was hard seeing Adam's ball not break, but the hard part too is the wind was coming against the slope. It was right to left, to where if you get a wind gust, it's not going to break. But that's just the conditions that we played in today. I hit a great putt, I hit a great wedge shot in there, I gave myself a great chance and then three, four great shots on 18. Yeah, just didn't get it done.

Q. Is there one putt you'll kick yourself about?

JUSTIN THOMAS: I mean, two three-putts and a four-putt on my back nine. The third putt on 13, it's just I've got to stop doing that. I mean, I could feel the wind coming and I got scared so I tried to hit it harder, and I did hit it harder and that's why I missed it, I jammed it. That's not the speed that I hit putts at when I'm putting well. And every time I miss a short putt, it's from that similar kind of scenario where I feel something when I'm over it and I either don't back off or I try to adjust over it. It ended up costing me the golf tournament.

Q. When stuff like that happens, is it almost a shock to the system for you? In other words, does it sort of snowball in a way?

JUSTIN THOMAS: It was just a bummer because it's so hard out here, to take two steps

back with a double is huge because it was so hard to make birdies, especially with 14, 15, 16 coming up, three holes dead into the teeth. You know, yeah, I went from -- I felt like I had great control of the tournament even after the first 10 holes of the round. J.B. made a great putt there, that was a huge flip. I'm sure he would say that that was probably the biggest turning point of the round for him, and that putt on 16. Yeah, it's such a momentum killer. And then to hit a great shot on 14 in there with a 5-iron. Actually, if I hit that putt softer, the first one, I think it goes in, but it didn't matter when I hit it five feet past.

Q. They talked about on the telecast how slow it was. Did it seem slow?

JUSTIN THOMAS: It was slow. It didn't seem, it was. Nothing against our group, it was slow. I mean, we were waiting the whole first round, we were waiting a lot of the second round. Then we got behind there a little bit I think because we were all playing poorly. At least Adam and I were struggling. So there's a difference between slow golf and bad golf, and Adam and I just weren't playing good golf so that's hard to keep the pace up. But yeah, it was definitely kind of hard to keep going when you felt like you were waiting a lot.

Q. (Question about Kentucky.)

JUSTIN THOMAS: It was cool. I mean, I said in the scoring tent, it's a pretty cool day for the state of Kentucky having a first and second. Obviously wish I was on the other part of that, but that doesn't -- if it's ever happened before on the PGA TOUR, two Kentuckians finishing first and second is pretty cool.

I've known J.B. since I was 7 or 8 or 9 years old. He was always so great to me. He would always pull me in the ropes in practice rounds in PGAs and stuff like that. I mean, that's stuff I never forget. I just never thought, you know, 15 years later he would beat my ass at Riviera. That was a bummer.

Q. You said you knew what you needed to work on, but how much of that is timing with the wind blowing on the green?

JUSTIN THOMAS: It's a lot. A lot of it is out of -- I mean, most of it is out of your control. If you hit a putt at the wrong time, there's absolutely nothing you can do. It's out of your hands. But that's -- that one on 14's on me. I need to back off that. I backed off my second putt and I hit a good putt there. I just have done that so many times now. I did it at the PGA a couple times and I've got to stop doing that. You would think I would learn my lesson. Maybe I will now.

Q. How much in control were you feeling when you were 13 under (inaudible)?

JUSTIN THOMAS: I've seen that story out here many times before. You're 1 under through 1 and then you're two over through 6 or 7. That's just the teeth of this golf course. It was so windy today, it was so different. The greens, they were not even close to firm but they were firmer, they weren't complete sponges.

I just didn't have as much control. I didn't hit my irons very well at the end of the third round. I drove it well, which is nice, but just little things here and there. I hit a great, great, great putt on 8 that, I mean, I don't know how it didn't go in. It's going four or five inches past the hole and it lips out.

Then again on 10, it's uphill breaking toward the hole and it's going four, five inches past and it almost 360 lip-out. That's the things, those putts go in when you win tournaments. There's plenty of other things I could have done to control that, but just wasn't my day.