

**TOMMY FLEETWOOD**

---

**DOUG MILNE:** We'll go ahead and get started. Tommy Fleetwood, thanks for joining us for a few minutes. I know speaking on behalf of a lot of people, I want to say welcome back, we're glad to have you back out here. With that said, just a few comments on how the last few months have treated you and your game and how excited you are to be back teeing it up here at the 3M Open this week.

**TOMMY FLEETWOOD:** Yeah, first of all, it's been beautiful family time. It would have been nice if sort of the time we had would have come under different circumstances in the world at the moment, but for us, the time we had together has been something that probably we'll never get again. Well, definitely not in the situation we are with Frankie being little and growing up and the kids growing up.

I never spent four months sleeping in the same bed all at once for a very, very long time. That part of it's been great. Just being at home and watching the season resume, watching the PGA TOUR resume and watching some golf. eventually it was always going to be my turn to come out, and really happy to be here. Nice to see so many familiar faces. that's kind of one of the great things about the Tour is that no matter how long you've kind of been away, you just kind of pick up where you left off and everybody just kind of says "hey" like they saw you yesterday or something, so that's been really nice. just getting back into that routine now of everything is good.

**DOUG MILNE:** I think you've had a chance to get out and see the golf course here. Just your thoughts on TPC Twin Cities.

**TOMMY FLEETWOOD:** Great golf course, a good test. I think there's quite a few holes where you're going to have good birdie chances, but at the same time the bogeys, you can easily hit a shot awry and end up making a bogey, which there's probably a few holes, especially on the back nine, which give you a few different options off the tee or into the green, which I always like. No right or wrong, just kind of try to get the best score you can.

Yeah, I think it sets up lovely. It's in great condition. It's been playing pretty soft, especially with the rain as well this morning. So if you're dialed in and you're hitting it well, then hopefully you can take advantage of that. But it's nice getting out and seeing a Tour setup again and preparing for that.

**Q. Speaking of starting right back up where you left off, almost won the Honda and I assume your form was as good as it's been on Tour. I was just wondering sort of where you are relative to that, or do you have really no idea after so long of a break?**

**TOMMY FLEETWOOD:** Well, it's an interesting one because for us in the U.K., we had golf courses and everything shut down for a good couple of months and then they opened back up. I think I've played quite a lot without any kind of tournament conditions and without that side to it, without particularly trying to get a score. So it will be interesting coming back to see if I can kind of continue that rhythm, if you like.

Of course, when you come out playing an area that has different challenges, the penalty for misses is a little bit stronger and all that, but I've been playing pretty well. I played plenty of golf and I've been practicing, so we'll see.

I'm definitely not going to use time off as any kind of excuse if I don't play well because I feel like I've had a lot of good practice and playing time. So hopefully I can just pick it up and come out here and put in a strong performance. We'll see. And if not, then I'm definitely going to learn from this week moving into the weeks ahead where there are some pretty big weeks coming up.

**Q. I'm assuming you're planning on playing just a massive amount of golf going forward here. What are your plans?**

**TOMMY FLEETWOOD:** Yeah, we're here now on the PGA TOUR for the duration of this season and seeing how far we can get through the FedEx. The plan is to go all the way and see how we can go for the rest of the season. Then as the U.S. Open -- I was planning on when I was coming out for this stretch, the Ryder Cup and the last event over this side, it's going to be the U.S. Open. So in the country for a long period of time and hopefully make the most of it, make it count.

**Q. Hey, Tommy, what was the thought process like of determining exactly when was going to be the right time to come back?**

**TOMMY FLEETWOOD:** Well, the thought process was pretty much I traveled two weeks ago, I did my two-weeks quarantine in the country to then start playing this week and play all the way through for the rest of the season. I've not got my family out with me, so I've now got nine weeks in the country that will be me and my caddie and seeing the guys out on Tour on stuff. It was always going to be like that with the way the quarantine rules are with coming into this country and doing the two weeks, and if I ever was going to go home, I had to do two weeks in the U.K. and that pretty much determined how it was going to play out. Like I say, I'm now in a nine-week stretch where I'm going to work hard and play hard and see how well we can do.

So leaving it just to almost to the latest possible point that there's events that I clearly want to play and there's events that I really did want to play, but it just wasn't a realistic kind of thing in the time frame, and I really did want to get out. I definitely think it was the right decision for myself and my family and going through this period because I knew once we come out, no matter when that was, I was going to be out here for the duration of the season now.

**Q. Is it nice to get a tournament under your belt I guess before the WGC?**

**TOMMY FLEETWOOD:** Well, definitely, yeah. And this one as well, it's a tournament I've never played before and I think after you play a course, it just kind of settled well for me in regular conditions. If I would have been playing the whole time and everything and got to this, I would feel very comfortable. Yeah, you know, you've got big events. I think as soon as Coronavirus sort of happened and then we got a schedule, that was always debatable whether it's going to happen. I think it's been amazing that we're doing so well as the PGA TOUR to be playing all these events, but I think straightaway you're looking at majors, you're looking at FedEx, you're looking at Race to Dubai, you look at those and then you work your way around them.

**Q. Tommy, I was wondering, during your time at home, if there was anything that you got the chance to do that you kind of never would have seen yourself doing, or because you had that time and you were forced to be in one place, anything silly or fun or really meaningful you were able to do?**

**TOMMY FLEETWOOD:** I decided to try cooking and realized I didn't -- first of all, I'm no good at it, and second of all, I didn't really enjoy it so it was like lose-lose. My wife is a much better cook than me, so that was pretty simple.

Honestly, like I think when we did get the -- in the U.K. we had the full lockdown where it was very, very strict and as soon as that happened I think a lot of people were like, what can we do, what can we get out of it, how are we going to make the most of it.

For me, my family was lucky, we have a nice home and a lot of space, so we were never really under each other's feet. I think seeing Frankie grow for four months, my little boy, I think that was the best part of it, and just spending that whole time with the family.

There was nothing -- you know, there is of course, there's plenty of things that I could have done, there's probably things I probably could have taken up and didn't really. Actually just spending the time with family, being in the same place, going to sleep and waking up in the same time zone every morning and night sounds silly, but that was a real treat for me and I enjoyed that side of it.

We did a lot of just general stuff like walking, being together, that kind of thing. And there was nothing else to it really. Throughout it's been very, very strict in the U.K. and now we're sort of coming out the other side of this, which is great. But there really wasn't a whole lot to do. Obviously I enjoy reading, I enjoy watching TV and stuff and that was pretty much four months gone by pretty quick.

**Q. What was your worst cooking misadventure?**

**TOMMY FLEETWOOD:** Chicken Milanese I did a very poor effort on. That was when I

decided to leave the career as a chef over.

**Q. As you've watched from afar and you've seen what Bryson has done and even Tony Finau last week rethinking things a little bit, do you think, are we seeing a little bit of the future of what might be off the tee, that even the longer hitters are going to have to think twice and wonder if they're being left behind at all?**

**TOMMY FLEETWOOD:** I was saying it was kind of -- it's kind of been a matter of time before sort of a long drive guy has come out and had like an all-around golf game. I think Bryson's obviously come out and, you know, he set out to do something and he's done it and he's hitting it a long, long way. Definitely there's going to be a ton of golf courses where that is going to massively play a part. And Tony's shown how far he can hit the ball.

I think will golf go that way? Maybe, if guys want to keep up, especially kids now. I think there's a lot of people out on Tour, it's hard to do, it's very, very hard to do and hard to sustain and I think it's been very impressive what Bryson has done. I think with how far he's hitting it, I think what has gone sort of missed is how good his putting has been, how good his short game is. From watching on TV, he didn't really give many shots away and he was putting really well and stuff like that, so putting his whole game together, winning just seemed like it was just a matter of time.

I think last week was on a very severe scale by the time it got to Sunday, but it just showed that you can set a golf course up that can defend itself from the week prior where JT was minus 21 with a couple holes to go and minus 19 was the winning score to watching how it played out just a week later on the same golf course. I think that was telling in how you can make a golf course defend itself no matter how long some guys are hitting it.

And at the end of the day if somebody's going to come out and drive it 370 straight down the middle and be good at the rest of it, then fair play. I'm definitely going to have a hard time week to week beating that, but on my day I'll give it a good go.

But yeah, those guys have been unbelievably impressive in what they're doing, and it will be interesting to see which way golf goes from here. All I can do is keep hitting golf shots and keep trying to improve my skills, but it will be interesting.

**Q. So, regarding the golf course, you mentioned it a little bit earlier, how do you prepare for an Arnold Palmer-designed course?**

**TOMMY FLEETWOOD:** It's a good question actually. I think you can only take each hole as it comes, decide -- like I said, it's been -- there's a few holes where there's two or three different options off the tee and you've got to make your mind up which one you want to play. I do like setups like that, I like making you think or giving you options and then making you commit to your decision and seeing which is the right one.

I think there's definitely times out there where you're going to have to accept that you might

get a choice wrong or get a shot wrong. I think it's very fair, I think the golf course is very fair. So you know that in general pretty much for the most part if you're going to hit good shots, you're going to get rewarded, so I think that's helpful if you are prepared because kind of nobody really ever prepares to play poorly. If you want to be there at the end of the week, you have to play well and choose those shots right. But I think that makes it a lot easier, there's no tricks, no gimmicks. Play well and hit the right shots and you're going to get rewarded, I think that is a massive key and a massive help to when you are preparing.

**Q. Tommy, where and when did you arrive in the U.S. and what did you do during your quarantine?**

**TOMMY FLEETWOOD:** So a couple of weekends ago, however long it's been. The days are starting to meld into one now that I'm back in tournament mode, but two weeks in quarantine. I went to the Hamptons with my family and kind of hunkered down, played some golf, stayed out of the way and just kind of enjoyed that last -- to me it was always -- it was a beautiful place to be, but I think it was two weeks where I knew this was kind of the last time that I'm going to have that's before getting started again. It was just a nice time.

Of course, like they would have helped if I didn't -- not helped, but it would have been nice and easy if I didn't have to do that, but at the same time the two weeks with the family and for myself being out in a beautiful place and just enjoying it was really, really nice. And time goes very, very quick. It goes like that. It was nice, just nice to have that done and now start the next phase of this year.

**Q. Where besides Shinnecock did you play and how did the 64 compare to your 63 on Sunday of a major?**

**TOMMY FLEETWOOD:** The conditions were slightly easier. There was a score to be had out there. I played a couple of places, I played National and I played Friar's Head and those places were great. That's the great thing. Again, I think originally going back to we can just get out there and be in your own little world or your own bubble and separate. I absolutely enjoyed playing a couple of courses and having the opportunity to do that while feeling like I was mentally preparing and physically preparing for these weeks. But it's a beautiful part of the world to be, so there was no complaints.

**Q. With Francesco Molinari, your partner from the Ryder Cup, he's decided to move over here. Having to spend nine weeks away from your family now, does this make you think about doing the same sort of thing?**

**TOMMY FLEETWOOD:** Not really. You know, kids are in school. This is very much a one-off situation. Hopefully it's a one-off situation. For now we're very settled at home. My parents are in the U.K., Clare's parents are in the U.K. The way travel goes these days, you can easily do a few weeks on and go home and stuff. The way the world is, nothing is that far away.

But we'll see. You never say never and you never know where the world is going to take you, but we'll see. Definitely for the foreseeable future, Oscar's only got two years left in high school and Mo's got three, so those guys can kind of go through that and then we'll see. I kind of feel like I'm landing you into my family planning at the moment if you want to discuss it, but definitely for the foreseeable future I'll be in the U.K.

**Q. How seriously did you consider just playing the European Tour events and skipping the PGA and other events here?**

**TOMMY FLEETWOOD:** You know, very tough. I think throughout this whole period there's been so much uncertainty in so many areas and nothing that you could take for granted. The fact that we're able to play golf, whether it be in Europe or over here in America, I think we're very lucky as a lot of people have lost jobs and don't have the option to work. We get to be outdoors on a golf course doing what you love and getting paid for it, so we're unbelievably lucky.

Whichever that situation was, there was never like a right one or one that I would be pressed to choose. I just think that with the way the golfing calendar is, the majors, WGCs, the FedEx, it's likely I was going to come over here and play these, which I think is the right thing to do.

**Q. This came up two weeks ago during the Workday Charity event, I don't know if you saw it, but there was a playoff between JT and Collin and players kind of talked about it in the aftermath. It seems like it's a little bit easier to win without fans because you don't have everything going on outside the ropes and you don't have to wait for everything to settle down. Do you have a thought one way or another on that?**

**TOMMY FLEETWOOD:** I don't know, I've not played yet without fans. I think whenever you think of I think as golfers from when we're kids and everything, if you set out goals at any kind of point, for me, I've always kind of pictured the atmosphere and crowds and everything, whether it be winning a major or winning a Tour event or anything like that. I always think about what that feeling's going to be, the reaction and interaction with the crowds.

It's been interesting to watch how sort of people go about things without crowds. I'm definitely going to find out this week. I'll probably be more qualified to answer that question after I've played without crowds. But I'm not really sure. I think at times you've seen the emotion from players which has been just the same, but there's no doubt about it, there's going to be less noise, less ebbs and flows momentum-wise without the crowd living and breathing it with you, so maybe that does play a big part. Probably be silly to say that it doesn't, but we'll see.

**DOUG MILNE:** Tommy, with that, we will let you go. We appreciate your time and certainly wish you the best of luck this week.