

**PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW**  
**November 17, 2020**



**TYLER DUNCAN**

---

**DOUG MILNE:** We would like to welcome the defending champion to the RSM Classic, Tyler Duncan.

Tyler, thanks for joining us for a few minutes. I know you've obviously got a lot on your plate, big week this week. Just some thoughts on being back here. I know it's still early in the week, but just kind of touch base on a lot of the things you have going on, the excitement you have going on as you defend your PGA TOUR title this week.

**TYLER DUNCAN:** It's awesome. It's a great feeling. This place is awesome. Even before I won last year it was one of my favorite places to visit. The courses are great. Just the vibe around here at the course and the island is pretty special. Staying with the same host family that I've stayed with the last few years from my hometown. They have a house just down the street here, so that's always nice to spend some time with them and keep the week light. Just looking forward to it.

**DOUG MILNE:** If I can take you back to last year, last year I guess it was your third start at the RSM Classic, you posted a career low of 61 in Round 2 and then you come back on Sunday and birdie I think three of your last four holes to get into a playoff, which obviously we know the outcome of that. Is that a week that for obviously a lot of reasons is incredibly special to you?

**TYLER DUNCAN:** It was, for sure. Just as far as confidence and just being able to play well and finish it off I think was huge for me. And I think I've learned a lot from that opportunity and I think when I get back in those situations, I think it will help me a lot.

**DOUG MILNE:** Okay. And one last question and we'll open it up. Just how you're feeling coming into the week game-wise. I know you've had a couple of top-30 finishes so far this season. Just kind of assess the state of your game as you're heading into the week.

**TYLER DUNCAN:** It's been good. I've played okay, I haven't played great. I feel like everything's kind of been trending in the right direction. Had a tough first round last week at the Masters, but I played really solid the second round and just try to clean up a few things. I feel really good about where the game's at.

**Q. Tyler, the perks that you get from winning on the PGA TOUR in a lot of ways you either had to wait longer than normal for or got taken away from you. You weren't able to finish THE PLAYERS Championship week along with everybody else, you had to wait to play in the PGA and the Masters obviously. When you were going about the season and getting back into playing golf, how did you help yourself curb the**

**disappointment of having those chances delayed, or even in the case of THE PLAYERS, didn't get that at all, at least the full week experience.**

**TYLER DUNCAN:** Right. I was disappointed just that, especially with the uncertainty at the start of everything, whether I was going to get an opportunity to play or if they were postponed or what was going to happen. But once we got back to the restart, I felt pretty comfortable that everything was going to kind of work out. I think the Tour did a great job with all the protocols and everything. It just seemed like each week got a little smoother and smoother, so that allowed me to kind of feel more confident and comfortable that I was going to be able to play in those events.

I think I've played all right. I haven't played great, but still working on that and looking forward to getting back to the PLAYERS Championship in March. Living in Ponte Vedre, that will be very exciting.

**Q. And the way the Tour restructured everything where they kind of essentially froze the eligibility so you've still got your status, when you found out they were going to do that, did that take a little pressure off of you knowing that you were still going to have some of the advantages as a Tour winner kind of extended a little bit into next year?**

**TYLER DUNCAN:** Yeah, that was awesome. That was definitely a relief and I was excited to hear that just because there's so many variables with all the different levels of status and the different tours. When I heard kind of how it was going to work out for the Tour winners from the fall, it was really -- I was excited to hear that, for sure. Yeah, happy with that.

**Q. Tyler, just curious, how did you celebrate the victory last year?**

**TYLER DUNCAN:** We went back to the family that I stay with just down the street here and he picked up some pizzas from here on the island. I forget the restaurant, but picked up some pizzas. Zach Johnson came over and talked to me for a little while and just had some pizza and beer. My wife and I stayed here on site that night. That was pretty awesome to be able to wake up and kind of walk out front and looking over the putting green and the water. That was pretty special.

**Q. What's been the biggest difference, some of the perks of being a Tour winner that you experienced over the course of the last year?**

**TYLER DUNCAN:** Just playing in a lot of the big tournaments that I haven't really been able to -- been fortunate to play before. I played -- obviously I didn't get to play or at least finish THE PLAYERS Championship, and then WGC St. Jude, that was nice to be able to play that. The PGA Championship into the FedExCup Playoffs and then the U.S. Open, the Masters, just being able to play in all of those tournaments is pretty awesome.

**Q. And can you share a little of your back story how you got into the game, the**

**courses you grew up playing in Indiana as a youngster?**

**TYLER DUNCAN:** Yeah. So my uncle, who's now my coach, he played professionally. As I was kind of growing up, he was climbing through the ranks and played, so that kind of gave me some motivation to work hard, because I always wanted to be like him. Travel around and play golf, who doesn't want to do that, right? So that was fun.

I grew up just on a little nine-hole golf course there in my hometown of Columbus. As I got older, we have a really nice 18-hole course, kind of transitioned into. Then our high school team played at another course there in town, so that was kind of nice being in high school and having three different places where I could go play and practice.

**Q. Okay. And during the course of the year or maybe just even after your victory, have you spent some time with Davis Love and just the connection with him being the tournament host of this, you being the winner, anything that he's meant to you?**

**TYLER DUNCAN:** Whenever I see him I always try to talk to him, but I haven't met up with him or we haven't had dinner or anything like that. No, he's -- it was great being able to spend time with him here last year after the tournament. I feel like I got to know him a lot better at that point. That was kind of the first time I had really been around him, so that was a really cool, special experience.

**Q. Does it feel different to be a defending champion, come back the defending champion this week?**

**TYLER DUNCAN:** It's different mainly just because everywhere I walk everyone's calling me the defending champion, so that's something I'm not used to hearing. It makes you feel good, for sure. I'm just happy to be here, I love it here, so just looking forward to the week.

**DOUG MILNE:** Well, that looks like all we have. We certainly appreciate your time and wish you all the best this week in defense of your title. Thanks for your time.

**TYLER DUNCAN:** Thank you.