

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
November 4, 2020



ADAM SCOTT

SHARON SHIN: I would like to welcome in the 2007 Vivint Houston Open champion, Adam Scott.

Adam, thank you so much for your time. You're making your eighth start in the event. Can we get some comments about your return to Houston and your thoughts on Memorial Park Golf Course?

ADAM SCOTT: Yes. It's obviously always nice coming back to an event being a past champion. Houston has been a really long time in my schedule. I got a sponsor's invitation in 2001 and they've really been very supportive of me ever since and I'm a proud champion in a really longstanding event on the PGA TOUR.

So it's fun to be back this year and at a new venue, which looks great. I've played all 18. It's going to be a challenge. The greens are firm, the rough is enough to kind of lose a little control, so if you can hit some fairways this week, that will be great. I think we're in for a good test.

SHARON SHIN: And you're making your first start since withdrawing from the ZOZO Championship at Sherwood after testing positive for COVID-19. How is your recovery process and how is your game feeling this week?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, I think fortunately for me, the symptoms weren't too bad and I was really only feeling below par for a day or so and then started feeling a lot better. I think I was lucky in that sense.

Obviously my golf preparations have taken a bit of a setback the last few weeks. Having not played since the U.S. Open, I was trying to get some golf in at ZOZO and here before the Masters, not only not getting ZOZO in, not getting any practice in for those 10 days either is a little setback, but I've actually come out swinging good this week and at least feel fresh. Hopefully that works in my favor.

SHARON SHIN: We'll open it up to questions.

Q. Adam, thanks for making the time. Just wondering your overall perspective on this crazy golf year. How impressed are you the way the PGA TOUR was able to keep the show going despite the many challenges?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, it's been incredibly impressive. The whole organization has had to really dig deep to get the show back on the road and to keep it going. I think it's been really

great given just the way COVID has seemingly spread, it hasn't really spread on the PGA TOUR. I think that's a remarkable effort. A lot of hard work from the Tour staff and everybody behaving very responsibly out here as well. So credit to everyone involved in the PGA TOUR for doing this.

Q. Inside the ropes there's been a lot of great stuff with Morikawa, Wolff, obviously Bryson. There's been a lot of excitement around the Tour, some crazy finishes on the 72nd hole. Can you speak to just the product that's been delivered and the high standard of golf and kind of this new generation of stars that's busting through, what this season might mean to the Tour going forward just competitively?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, I think it's kind of setting the Tour up for the next generation, I guess. I don't know how many years you want to call a generation, but at least the next five to 10 years. Seeing young guys break through quickly on the Tour like Collin, and Matt Wolff has already got his major career off to a pretty flying start, and obviously Bryson winning the U.S. Open. Hopefully there's room for a couple of older folk to hang in there like me for those next five or 10 years.

But it is exciting, I think the talent's great. The standard of golf is incredibly high. Even just looking a couple weeks ago in Las Vegas, the cut was 7 under par. There's been a lot of 5 under cuts through the summer. It's unheard of week after week.

So the standard right through the Tour is very high at the moment. It's because everyone is incredibly professional and pushing themselves to the limit.

Q. Adam, great to see you. Sorry what happened the other week at ZOZO, but you're back this week. I know you're focusing on another Houston Open win, but are you thinking about Augusta, going there next week? Have you been up there, and what will it be like being up there in November without any spectators and that sort of time of year with sort of less daylight hours as well?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, obviously we're thinking about the Masters and a lot of -- what I had planned in preparation was to kind of peak at the Masters and Houston's a big part of that. It's even more important since I tested positive and had to kind of not play in ZOZO and not really get practice in and make sure I got healthy again. So this is an important week for me. There's a lot to take out of it.

I've made some adjustments in my bag with Augusta in mind and a new Titleist driver and a new Titleist ball this week thinking also ahead, which is actually looking really good for this golf course, too. It's incredibly long, so hopefully that little bit of gain off the tee will be helpful here.

But again, I think a lot of guys thinking about that next week, potentially cool weather, a little less daylight and a very big, long golf course. I haven't been up there because my plans changed obviously and I was not free to move around. Yeah, I'm in for a surprise next week

when I get there, but I have no doubt that it will present incredibly well as they always do at Augusta National. It's going to be a great event.

Q. I just want to ask if you could take us through that a little bit. Were you surprised by the positive result? Were you not experiencing any symptoms? And then were you required -- I take it you were in California. Were you required to then stay there for the 10-day period of time and what were you able to do if you did?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, I mean, I was surprised. I had no symptoms at the time I tested positive, but I developed some symptoms about 12 hours after I tested positive and I had a slight fever for 24 hours and a headache and then that kind of passed. Then I continued to get better.

Yeah, I had to isolate. I was in the hotel there in L.A. for six days. Once I was sure I was healthy and not kind of just feeling okay, I investigated finding a house by myself for the next four or five days to isolate just so I could go outside and get some fresh air. So I drove myself to a house. And again, didn't have any contact with anyone until my 10 days of isolation was up.

Q. I take it you're like a lot of folks where you're not quite sure where you would have got it. I'm curious, did anybody in your family or anybody in your circle get it?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, no, I don't -- I don't know where I got it exactly and no one who was contact traced through me developed symptoms or tested positive. Everyone ended up testing negative days after and they've all been fine since as well.

However, there was a bit of an outbreak in our area where we live in the few days before I tested positive and then the 10 days after, but of course early on in those outbreaks you don't know it's happening because no one's tested positive. So I could have just got it from anywhere.

Q. Adam, if I could take you back to a rainy day in 2013 at Augusta, how important in your memories of that is the roar of the crowd and how big a deal is that, and what do you think the champion, whoever it is this year, will be missing for not having that?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, it is a big deal. The crowd really enhances the atmosphere, if they're not responsible for most of it, to be perfectly honest. I have very strong memories of those final couple of hours on the golf course as the clouds got low and the rain set in and it got a bit cool and it stayed that way.

You know, the patrons there at Augusta, it became like a bit of a hardcore sports fan feeling and it was such a great atmosphere, especially in the playoff with myself and Cabrera. Everyone was out there wet, but it didn't matter, they were at the Masters and watching some good golf. I certainly got a strong memory from that.

So there will be something missing, for sure. Having played two major championships now without galleries, there's no doubt there's something missing out there. I guess whoever the champion will be next week will miss one part of a special week for them in not having that experience of the atmosphere that you would normally have.

Q. Adam, welcome back. Question about next week. Obviously your routine was interrupted this year, but what's been the routine in the past for you in terms of going up early to play Augusta and what was the plan for this year?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, for quite a few years I had always kind of arrived on Friday night or Saturday morning and played over the weekend, but that wasn't really the plan this year; it was to get up there maybe after the ZOZO and go and visit for a day or so and just get a look at it, I guess, in this fall time of year.

So now I'm just going to go in Sunday night and play. I mean, I feel like it's nice to go and visit and it's nice to get familiar, but I've been there a lot and I am fairly familiar with it. I think certainly without the fans out there next week, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday will be totally different and much easier to get whatever work done that I might need to do.

Q. Just a follow-up. Secondly, what is the actual process for you in terms of when you do set up a round there ahead of time, be it a couple weeks out, and what do you actually get out of that when the course is playing quite different than it does tournament week so often we hear about?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, it does. It's really mostly for me just getting on the uneven lies in the fairways. I feel like it's one of the most severe set of fairways we play on and there are pivotal shots. Obviously at all tournaments there are pivotal shots, but even like the second hole, being on that downslope at the top of the hill, getting comfortable and understanding how you have to shift your weight around in the setup and the swing, we just don't do that so much. Especially if you take a course like here this week at Memorial Park, it's very flat. We're not going to get those extreme slopes. It's just to kind of have it in your mind so it's not a big adjustment on a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday, I think.

Q. A little dusty watching your old Maroons pulling off another miracle through the night, little buggers.

ADAM SCOTT: You love that?

Q. Yeah, that was fun. Mate, we were just talking about the young guns in the next generation, but can you talk to -- you said yourself offhand that you hope the older guys like yourself can do another five or 10 years. I mean, we've had Stewart Cink, Sergio and Brian Gay last week, like clearly the Tour still has a place across the gambit, right?

ADAM SCOTT: Yes, there's always going to be. Three talented guys you mentioned there,

two of them are major champions. I mean, I think it just becomes harder for guys getting well into their 40s to be consistently competitive. It just takes a bit more. They've got to find their right weeks and take advantage of that.

There's no doubt it's a small snippet just since we've come back from the shutdown or lockdown. You see Collin Morikawa winning, you see Bryson winning with this new style of game he's developed, Matt Wolff is going very well. These young guys are really challenging and very comfortable mixing it with even the stars of the game, not even the older generation but the Rory McIlroys and the Dustin Johnsons. They're not seeing anything that they can't do.

Q. Here's a hypothetical then for you, might be tough to answer, but if we had full crowds this year, would the same results play out with the young guys?

ADAM SCOTT: It's just speculation. I think what it will be is it's great to see what's set up for when crowds do return hopefully soon, what difference that makes.

There's no doubt I can say for myself walking out on Saturday at the PGA Championship to the putting green to warm up, it was nothing like I had ever experienced when you're kind of in contention for a major on a Saturday. There was no atmosphere. It's very, very different. You know, I think it's unfair to say there would be different results. I think only time will tell.

Q. Adam, there's another guy in the field that's kind of in the same boat as you, Dustin Johnson. And you've been a world No. 1, you've had hot stretches like he has. How do you think an unscheduled break like he and you have now had will affect him this week and for the Masters?

ADAM SCOTT: Like I said, it obviously wasn't ideal for me. Probably wasn't for Dustin, either, if he's had to change what he usually likes to do, but if there's anyone who can kind of dust off a change and kind of move on, it seems to be DJ. The way he plays golf, very little phases him out there. Problems on the golf course don't seem to phase him and he bounces back quick.

It's really the only thing that will be concerning is more like a physical health thing. If he's not really feeling 100 percent, then that might hold him back a little bit. He's a fit, young guy, he should be in good shape and whatever -- when you're playing as good as he has for so long now, one week here warming up, I'm sure he'll find all his feelings pretty quick. I don't think he's going to be struggling too much going into the Masters.

Q. And during your quarantine I'm just wondering, did you quarantine with a putter or two? Did you practice some putting?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah.

Q. Any changes with your putting?

ADAM SCOTT: No changes with my putting. I bought a putting mat for the hotel room that arrived and Scotty Cameron sent up -- his team sent up some stuff for me to just have some fun with, but I'm putting the same way with the longer putter and that's still in play.

Q. Adam, just touching on Bryson, are you surprised, are you shocked, are you interested, fascinated or just wish him well with what Bryson's doing?

Sort of a follow-up question on the back of that, Tiger was saying the other day when we asked him about the fact whether they should be curbing the golf ball and he said, "Well, they should have done that 20 years ago," and he used the line that the genie's out of the bag. Do you sort of have that view as well or not?

ADAM SCOTT: I'm impressed with Bryson. I thought his final round at the U.S. Open was sensational, nothing short of it. It's a great round of golf what he played there. I mean, the whole week he obviously played well, but I think to shoot that kind of round in the final round, any other year it would be one of the great rounds of golf. Maybe probably a little bit underrated. I think he certainly opened a lot of people's eyes to what's possible in the game. Not everyone is going to have the work ethic that he has, I think that's also impressive. What he's put in, he's now getting out. I'm very impressed.

As far as the -- yeah, I kind of agree with Tiger. I mean, that should have probably been addressed long ago and it hasn't. I don't want to see us be the only sport going backwards. That's kind of my feeling. I don't think we -- nothing in this world is really going backwards.

Q. One little quick question and I guess it was understandable, but news that the Australian Open and the Australian PGA Championship this year had to be postponed was I guess disappointing?

ADAM SCOTT: Well, it's disappointing, but it's sensible. Let's face it, they postponed it and now it's canceled. I don't know, maybe it will be at the end of next year. Let's hope that's possible. But the way certainly under the, you know, Australian restrictions or guidelines, it's going to be very hard to host those events. I think it's a good thing. They put them off for a year and hopefully by the end of next year we can have them back as normal.

Q. Well done. Good luck on the football as well.

ADAM SCOTT: Tough night for you guys.

Q. We'll get over it.

ADAM SCOTT: The good news is you've got two more games to redeem yourselves.

SHARON SHIN: One last followup.

Q. Adam, thanks. Just a quick one about the Masters. Just curious if over the years have you ever been one who's been inclined to buy any of the merchandise there? This year they're doing the first time ever where they're making it available to ticket holders who had tickets to buy stuff online. Would you be inclined to do that yourself?

ADAM SCOTT: Yep, I'll definitely take a look, yeah. They get me for some hats and there's stuff every year that I -- mostly hats, though. I like them, but they're great gifts as well, so I'll definitely be taking a look online. I'm sure they'll get me for something.

SHARON SHIN: Thank you so much for your time and good luck this week.

ADAM SCOTT: Thanks a lot.