

GREAT EXUMA CLASSIC

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW

January 15, 2023



JEREMY PAUL (-7)

Q. Jeremy, 7 under opening round, how are you feeling right now sitting alone atop the leaderboard?

JEREMY PAUL: It feels good, I mean, 7 under. I honestly didn't even see it playing this course. I just really had good control over my ball today. Especially the back nine is really exposed to the water and super windy out there, so you really have to hit a lot of shots. And it was tough to really prepare for this because where I live in Arizona it never gets that windy, so you really just have to be creative and kind of shape shots around just to keep it in the wind because otherwise it's really easy to, you know, to control or really difficult to control the ball. So I was really happy with I was able to hit a lot of fairways, a lot of greens today and then I was able to roll in a couple putts.

Q. How difficult is it -- you were just saying you don't really have any conditions to prepare for this. How difficult is it not only playing these conditions, but it's the season-opening event, too?

JEREMY PAUL: Yeah, I think that's why a lot of people skip this event because you haven't -- haven't played a tournament since October, so it's a really difficult tournament to just get into the swing of things and just see where the game's at. If there's any rust or something, you get exposed here really quickly. You don't have to hit that many bad shots and you collect easily a couple bogeys, double bogeys. Yeah, it's definitely a good test to start off the season and just happy how it all worked out today.

Q. Getting off to a hot start, four birdies on the first six holes, got to feel like your year can't start much better than that?

JEREMY PAUL: Yeah, especially those, the back nine is I think the tougher stretch just because you have more wind over there. I kind of started on my second hole, par 3, I hit a good shot, just the wind knocked down a wedge shot. I was just short of the green and I was -- I chipped in from there so it was awesome. It was a really makeable chip and for it to go in, that kind of kickstarted the round. Then I was able to roll in like two putts the following holes and once you get a little bit into the swing of things and you feel like the round is kind of going your way, then you kind of get in a little bit of a flow and you just play along and try to make more birdies.

Q. How did you spend the last couple months, I guess month, two months killing time? How much time did you spend practicing or did you really just kind of relax?

JEREMY PAUL: Yeah, at the beginning I didn't really do too much once the season ended, like four or five months away from the new season. I played a tournament in Europe in October, then just spent some time at home with my family after that. Had to renew my visa. Then I actually got engaged to my long-time girlfriend, so that was exciting. Then I went back to Germany for Christmas which I usually do to see the family.

Then, yeah, I was always practicing in Arizona. It's fun. It's boring when you sit at home. We have a good group of guys in Arizona that we always play and practice with. My brother moved back down there, so it was nice to play and practice with him. It was kind of a good mix of doing a little bit of hanging out, resting, working out and getting some practice in.

Q. Do you have any goals or, you know, any expectations for yourself this season?

JEREMY PAUL: Yeah, I mean, my goal's obviously to get to the PGA TOUR, that's my biggest goal. I was very close last year, didn't quite do it at the end of the year, but feel like everything -- looking back, if I look back now one year ago, I feel like I've gotten better in so many aspects of my game. My ball-striking feels better, my chipping's better and I feel like I putt better. I have a good system that I'm following now, I have a good team now around me to help me to kind of stay in the lane and get better and I think that's key just to, you know, reach the goal at the end of the season.

Q. And in your mindset you're always so positive. That was like No. 1 thing I remember about you and your brother, y'all are so fun. How do you keep that energy and stay up even when rounds get hard?

JEREMY PAUL: Here it's easy because you look around, you see the blue ocean, that's very difficult to be in a bad mood. I kind of like to have a positive mindset in life. I feel like usually if you are positive, positive things kind of come your way. And especially here, it's unbelievable. I mean, getting to play golf where people vacation, it's really difficult to not be in a good mood. So I just try to feel grateful that I get to follow my passion and play at one of the highest levels in the world. It's awesome, that's why I try to embrace that and enjoy my time.