

## DICK'S SPORTING GOODS OPEN

### ROUND 1 INTERVIEW

June 23, 2023



### JOE DURANT ( -8)

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**Q. All right, Joe, great playing out there today.**

**JOE DURANT:** Thank you.

**Q. Beat the weather, currently leader in the clubhouse. Just what was going well for you today?**

**JOE DURANT:** I think the putter definitely cooperated today. I didn't drive it that great. This is a tough driving golf course, the fairways are pretty narrow and if you just peel it a little bit one way or the other you tend to miss some fairways. But hit some really good recovery shots from the first cuts and whatnot. We did have ball in hand, which, you know, to protect the weather possibly coming against us, so that made it a little easier to score. I played really well. I just scored well, I stayed patient and made a lot of birdies.

**Q. No one has gone wire to wire at this tournament yet. Obviously it's early, but what do you think that would mean for you and your first win this season?**

**JOE DURANT:** You know what, I'm just trying to resurrect my golf game right now. I've really struggled the first half of the season. I played well in Madison two weeks ago. I'm starting to see many so signs of life, but I still have a lot to work on. I'm just trying to put one foot in front of the other right now, just see some good scores and just see what happens really.

**Q. Joe, what was going on? What did you find in Madison that's leading to this good play?**

**JOE DURANT:** It's actually kind of things I've been working on for a while. The biggest thing that I've been struggling with, I've been battling some injuries so I've been kind of swinging around them. I finally feel decent enough to where I can actually use my legs a little bit rather than just kind of lifting the club and kind of slapping at it. I actually have a little more power now and just hitting it more solid, putting it a little better. Just a combination of doing everything just a little better is just paying some dividends right now.

**Q. Was it the wrist?**

**JOE DURANT:** Well, it was my knee, my left knee. I've got a torn medial meniscus so it flares up and I just have trouble posting up on it sometimes. It's been feeling pretty good



with the hot weather so knock on wood, wherever wood is, I'll stay healthy for a little bit longer.

**Q. Strong finish to the round. What was going right for you in those last few holes that allowed you to move from second into the lead?**

**JOE DURANT:** Hit a really nice approach on 15 to about three feet, which is probably the hardest hole out here, made a nice birdie there. No. 16, drove it right on the front apron and made an up-and-down. Made a really good up-and-down on 17 from behind the green. The pin's all the way in the back and I was over the green and it was a real touchy shot and I hit it real close. And then 18, I made a nice 20-footer. Just seemed like I just capitalized on every opportunity I had today, which the course is firm right now, it's playing pretty tricky.

**Q. You say that, but scores are low out there. Is it because of ball in hand?**

**JOE DURANT:** That helps, and just how good the guys are out here. No wind, guys just figure out a way to get it done, and that's every week out here.

