

PRESS CONFERENCE
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JUSTIN THOMAS



JOHN BUSH: We would like to welcome Justin Thomas into the interview room. He is making his fourth career start at Wyndham Championship, his first since 2016.

But it's 2009 I want to start with, Justin, as a 16-year-old where you made the cut here in your first PGA TOUR event. Take us back to that year and what that tournament meant to you and what you remember about it.

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, I never thought you were going to ask about that. It was an unbelievable week obviously. It was an eye-opening experience, it was a blast.

There's a lot of funny memories. You know, I remember whoever was working the range not believing I was a player and giving me range balls, my dad getting the restart time an hour off and me being the only person on the property for an hour, and obviously playing some good golf and getting in contention there for a little bit on Friday.

It was -- I was talking to Todd out there and I obviously knew I wanted to play professional golf and I knew I wanted to play on the PGA TOUR and try to be winning tournaments out here, but that somehow took my want and drive and determination even higher after that week. It was just the coolest experience. I'm like I want to do this every week and I want to do this for a really long time.

I just can't believe that was 14 years ago, that's pretty wild.

JOHN BUSH: And speaking of that, 14 years later here we are, this is a huge week for you, I know. Just talk a little bit about your game plan coming into the week and your expectations and what you're hoping for.

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, I mean, expectations, I mean, I don't necessarily have anything in particular. I just, I know I'm really, really close to playing some really, really good golf. The reality is, you know, I need to play well this week to give that an opportunity to come out. That's the unfortunate but also realistic part of where I'm at right now.

I'm excited. I think it's an unbelievable opportunity. It's -- I'm enjoying it. I mean, this is -- I think it's great for the Wyndham. There's plenty of guys here that, some big names that are going to get this tournament kind of some of the credit it deserves I feel like on a great golf course. I'm just going to go out and play the best that I can and try to see if we can get in contention to try to win a golf tournament and see if we can get on a little run to end the season.



Q. Justin, I heard you say on Saturday that you're embracing this. Can you just explain -- I mean it would be easy to fight it, I guess. How are you embracing it?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Well, I think I've learned, I mean, I'm not -- I'm obviously not playing as well as I have in the past, but I'm really not playing that poorly. I haven't really gotten much out of my rounds. You know, like on Friday last week at 3M, I had two swings that literally cost me five strokes on Friday. If those swings go how they normally do in any other situation, you know, I'm like 15th heading into the weekend instead of missing the cut.

It's just been kind of one of those seasons, I guess, if you will.

But I've obviously had a lot of time to -- some weekends to reflect, but a lot of time. It's just I think obviously I would much rather not be in the situation that I'm in, but it just really has reminded me a lot kind of beginning of the season or last year when the whole elevated events came out or the top players playing in more events and guys getting mad. Of course all the rich get richer. All the top guys, like of course this benefits them.

But this is a perfect -- like this is golf. Like what is happening this year, it happens every single year. Someone of, I don't -- I mean, my caliber, you know, a top player, I'm not having a bad season, I just haven't won anything, haven't finished tournaments off how I want.

I'm like in a position where I might not make the Playoffs and there's a lot of other good players that have, too. There's also guys that maybe have been in this position I'm in right now that have played as well as I have other seasons. It's like that is the reality of golf, like it's all on you. You're not relying on any teammates to bail you out, to hinder you, it's all on you.

There's just guys that have played better than me this season whether they're ranked 1st in the world or 101st in the world. But now I have an opportunity to play well this week, get into the Playoffs and to go to three courses that I love. Like I said to Todd out there, I have a chance to have one of the craziest endings to a PGA TOUR season and I'm going to try to do that.

Q. Justin, what's your reaction to the Tour's announcement about 30 minutes ago that Tiger is now a player director as well as the decision that kind of measures that will be taken with regard to the framework without the approval of the players?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, I'm obviously excited to have Tiger on behalf of the players. I mean, I know that he takes it very seriously. I think he's spoken to it some, but obviously his relationship with Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus and what they did to basically create the PGA TOUR, kind of what it is now.

Then we've been dealt with some roadblocks, if you will, or just some difficult circumstances. I think he takes it seriously that he is going to be a part of paving the way for the future and the current I guess I don't know if you want to call it structure or whatever of the PGA TOUR.



I think especially with him not playing as much now, I know he has a little bit more time than if he was playing a full season, full schedule.

So he's -- he takes the future of the PGA TOUR very seriously and he wants it to be in the best hands possible and it to be in the best position possible. I think it would be very easy for someone like him, all he's done, just kind of like what do I need to do, I've made the Tour what it is, where it's at financially, all the sponsors, TV deals whatever, and it would be pretty easy for him to just hide under a rock the rest of his life and be just fine. But that's not who he is, he wants to continue to see the PGA TOUR grow and succeed.

Q. (No microphone.)

JUSTIN THOMAS: I think it's important. I think it's very obvious last year that a pretty good amount of us were frustrated and taken back with how some things took place. You know, we were just kind of put in a funky or tough position with how stuff was handled in the past.

Yeah, we just, we want to have a say of what's going on because, you know, it is our tour as well and how it's structured and how it looks is important to us. So we would like to have a little bit of a say-so on how that looks.

Q. J.T., with just how important this week is and having a good showing, how confident are you as a competitor in crunch time situations?

JUSTIN THOMAS: I'm very confident, I am. It's different than trying to win a tournament or making a putt for a Ryder Cup or Presidents Cup, whatever it may be, but it's still that same feeling.

I was and am so excited to be playing this week. Like I said, it's just, it's a cool opportunity, it's a great opportunity for me. I just, I mean, I've been in the right frame of mind I feel like for the last kind of month or so. I've been in a lot better head space of just a feeling like really good things are coming, But not as much expecting or saying, you know, when's this going to be over. It's just making it not as big of a deal as it is and just having an understanding that just having good scoring and doing what I have in the past, and know that any week just one shot, one round, one tournament could flip it and in a month nobody's talking about it anymore.

I just, yeah, I'm excited. I feel like I'm going to play well this week. I've also felt like I was going to play well at the U.S. Open and I finished what I felt was about last place. That's also part of golf, you just don't know what you're going to get.

One thing I definitely have learned is you need to be in the right head space and expect some good things to happen and at least that's where I'm at, so we'll see.

Q. Justin, what areas of Sedgefield are you looking to attack? You've got experience here, so --



JUSTIN THOMAS: Yeah, I really do like this -- actually, I love this golf course. It's very old school. It has some similarities or feels of probably more so just because of the grass, but of like a Memphis or an East Lake, two places that I love and I've played well.

But if you hit the fairways, you can make a lot of birdies out here, but if you miss the fairways, you're grinding. Bermuda rough is just no joke. The greens are very tough to hold out of the rough. The greens are so good. I just went and putted for probably 45 minutes or an hour and I quickly remembered when I first played here they were bent and then when they changed to bermuda, they just, you know, almost had a whole new feel to them.

You have to have control of your ball, leave it in the right spots on the greens on your approach shots. If you get out of position, don't, you know, don't make it worse than it is, avoid the double bogeys and stupid mistakes like that, just kind of wait for your run. Because I feel like you have an opportunity at this place to kind of have a stretch, whether it be 6, 12, 18, 27 holes of getting after it pretty good, just kind of staying patient and waiting for that to happen.

JOHN BUSH: J.T., thanks for your time. Best of luck this week.

