

Fort Worth Invitational

Saturday, May 26, 2018

Justin Rose

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Go ahead and get started here with Justin Rose, third round leader here at the Fort Worth Invitational.

Justin, you birdied the first three holes today. How important was it to get off to that start?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, that was definitely a great start for me today. Two really nice swings at No. 1 and two putts is a simple way to start. You know, it seems simple at the time.

Nice little kick-in birdie at No. 2.

And then holing a mid-range putt at No. 3 was kind of good. It got me feeling good about my putting as well.

I think as key as the birdies were the saves I made on 4 and 5 just to keep up the momentum of that good start. Obviously built a nice lead on the front nine.

THE MODERATOR: This ties the largest 54-hole lead of your career. Going into tomorrow what's the attitude and is this a position that you're comfortable in?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, it is. I think I've won and lost actually from four ahead, so I've got experience both ways. Just shows you can't get ahead of yourself.

It is a big led, but it's in the big enough. You kind of -- it's not big enough to be counting the holes away. You've got to go out and play good, you got to go out positive, you got to continue to make birdies and keep going forward.

So my mindset is to not really focus on the lead, it's to focus on my game tomorrow and my performance. You know, just keep executing the way I have been. That's going to be my challenge tomorrow. Going to look forward to that mindset.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Can you just talk about the balance, I guess, with a 4-shot lead of being smart but also being aggressive and kind of how you do that, so to speak?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, that's the key to tomorrow, no doubt. I mean, that is the balance. That balance is important, and you can make smart decisions and hit

poor shots and you can -- you got to really also be aggressive when the opportunity presents itself. You got to make those birdies.

I feel like you go out and make five, six birdies tomorrow, that's kind of -- there are a few mistakes that can be had that way. I think if you go out there too sort of conservative and not making enough of the good stuff, I think there are just two ways to think about it.

I think for me, I may as well look at it in the positive mindset right now. Keep making birdies. Birdies have been coming my way this week, so just try and stay on the front foot a little bit going into tomorrow.

Q. You seem to be doing everything perfectly in terms of how you win Colonial. What's been the most important, fairways hit or scrambling? What?

JUSTIN ROSE: I think fairways hit to this point for sure. I have missed a few here and there, and that's when you do need your short game to back you up.

I feel like I have seen everything from my game this week: I've putted well in spells, I've hit fairways, I've hit my irons well, I've chipped well when I needed to.

So everything has been there or thereabouts for me, which gives my confidence going into tomorrow. Quite often there is one aspect of the game that doesn't always feel good on the day and you need something to back it up. I feel like ever thing this week has been working at some point.

But, yeah, I've really enjoyed the golf course first and foremost. I've enjoyed the strategy of it and the challenge of it. So far being able to sort of play smart but also play it well enough to find some birdies out of it.

Q. How did you feel coming out of last week's practice session with Sean, and did you kind of see this at all?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, I played really well the final round of The PLAYERS. I felt like I strung -- I birdied maybe seven of my last ten holes there. I really felt like I keyed into something. Then we had a practice session and everything remained feeling really good. So we're working really well for, I don't know, a year now. We kind of made a few changes about a year

ago. I feel like they're pretty bedded in now.

Last few weeks things have just simplified a touch. Sometimes it can take that long before you understand a change or it begins to feel natural.

Q. I know you won earlier this season, but the last time you had a 54-hole lead it was the Masters. How different is it when you take a 54-hole lead after...

JUSTIN ROSE: Where was it?

Q. At the Masters in 2017.

JUSTIN ROSE: I don't think so. Oh, that was tied for the lead, not 4-shot lead. I would have remembered that.

Q. No, tied for the lead. What's the difference of going in having a 54 lead after having a round like today where you were steady throughout and had the lead, as opposed to like then when you fought hard at the end to tie going into the final round?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, I think I was in the lead going into the final round in Turkey when I won, and I had 4-shot lead going into the final round in Indonesia in December and managed to put that one away on Sunday; win by eight there.

I was five, six back maybe of DJ, so I've get experience the other way. You can see where things -- where I won in China -- so you can see how things can go both ways real quick. That's why there is no point in getting too far ahead of myself.

Great position going into tomorrow, yeah. Look forward to putting it away, but I kind of know there are going to be challenges out there tomorrow. I'm ready for them either way.

Yeah, like your question, just going to go out there and try and stay on the front foot as best I can because that's what's been working and getting me to this point.

Q. It's so hot here. What does the heat bring to it? Does it help at all because you can't look too far ahead; you're just trying to stay hydrated and stay upright?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, Fulch has done a great job of just literally handing me water bottle after water bottle. It seems relentless, to be honest with you. I haven't even seen the inside of a restroom yet, so you can't even drink quick enough out there. He's doing a great job doing everything he can to support me.

Yeah, it was a factor today. I struggled a little bit on the back nine with my focus. I felt it go around 12, 13. From that point I was really trying to put one foot in

front of the other and stay committed.

Yeah, I think that was a factor today for sure. I think it's as hot tomorrow, so recovery tonight is a big focus.