

Charles Schwab Challenge

Wednesday, May 22, 2019

Justin Rose

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'll get started. Please help me welcome in the defending champion at Charles Schwab Challenge, Justin Rose. Justin, welcome back. Get some comments about your return to Colonial.

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, obviously great to be back here. It was special week for me obviously last year. Played some of my best golf on the PGA Tour that I can remember. 20-under par. Have my name now on the wall on the 1st tee. Obviously it's an honor because there are so many great names on that wall. I saw it today for the first time and it was a cool moment.

So always good to be back at a classic, brilliant venue, but definitely somewhere where you've won before.

THE MODERATOR: I'm sure you saw on the course already the 1973 Dodge Challenger for the winner this week.

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Is that an extra incentive to defend your title this week?

JUSTIN ROSE: Well, I had the good fortune of playing nine holes with Charles Schwab himself today, and I told him, Man, what were you doing last year? It was cool to hear the story about the '73 Challenger. I think that's when they started the business with four employees and they were a challenger to the big names.

So he felt like the story behind the Challenger and the name behind the Challenger and the timeline behind it sort of mirrored his company and his rise to what is now a huge organization that's very thankfully sponsoring the PGA Tour.

THE MODERATOR: Open it up for questions.

Q. First off, how do you feel your game is? Second off, Ben Hogan is the only guy who has won back-to-back titles here. What makes it so hard to win consecutive years at a specific tournament?

JUSTIN ROSE: I think it's just hard to win probably. That's the first thing. And then obviously hard to win

the same week two years in a row. It shouldn't be harder to win at the same venue because when you come back to a golf course -- obviously some major championships you win and the following year you're not even back at the same venue.

I think there should be a greater chance of winning somewhere where you have already won. I feel like there is all those good old sayings, you know. Horses for courses or it suits my eye or fits my eye. That's going to apply for me this year.

From that point of view of course I'll feel better than if it was any other week that I hadn't won before. I just think, yeah, it's tough to beat 120, 156 guys in the field every week on the PGA Tour.

Q. I watched you play last year with Brooks, and watching you play, just looked to me like you were really being patient. Is that accurate? Can you talk about your approach to playing?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, when you're playing good golf it looks patient. You're not making many mistakes. You're able to kind of trust that you're going to have a run of birdies at any point. Your confidence is up.

But I think my mentality, especially playing an Sunday, was that I wanted to play as free and as aggressively as the chasing pack. I think I had a 4-shot lead going into Sunday, but I sort of realized if I go out and play cagey, I don't have a 4-shot lead. The guys behind will be loose and pushing for birdies, and they're going to, just through mindset, are going to pull back a couple of shots.

Why give them that opportunity? I'm going to go out and be as loose and as free as them. I think it worked out. I think I shot 64 on Sunday. I needed to. I think Brooks shot show 63 or something.

Q. You hit a lot of fairway woods off the tee. Koepka was hitting drivers. I felt like you were playing...

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, I think I was trusting my iron play. I felt like I was aggressive where my irons, you know, coming into the green looking for birdie.

For me this golf course, again, you can't play out of the rough. It's just a different style of rough that we face at



Bethpage, for example. It's more of that ball slightly out of control, can't control your spin. The greens here are fairly small. I think last year they played a little bigger because it was pretty soft; you could attack it. But soon is as these greens get firm you have to keep the ball in play off the tee.

Q. How do you kind of go from playing Bethpage, which is such a monster, to coming to a course that you've had success at, but it is a different style of course?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, I enjoyed Bethpage for sure, but it didn't offer any player who wasn't on top of their game much opportunity to scramble. It was kind of all or nothing. You're either playing beautiful golf and you're keeping it in the fairways, and if you were keeping it in the fairways there were birdies to be had. If you weren't in the fairway there wasn't even an opportunity to get it up and around the green. It was pretty much wedge it out, wedge it on.

I feel like this kind of golf course gives many more players more options. Yes, if you play beautiful golf you'll score, but if you need to scrap it around for a few holes, a few shots go awry, you have the ability to make some great comeback shots.

I think very different style of golf. They're both good in their own right. I think certainly last week for a PGA championship, a major championship, the more severe test is probably what you want. This kind of golf course I think offers every PGA Tour member, player in the field, an opportunity to do well and to potentially win here.

It's a golf course that suits good ball strikers obviously, but doesn't -- it's not dictated by length as maybe last week was.

Q. On a completely unrelated note, have you heard much about this '70s theme that's going to be going on tomorrow for Throwback Thursday with the outfits?

JUSTIN ROSE: Okay, haven't heard a ton about it, but I have to see what I can...

Q. Sounds like it's an initiative to get golfers to be wearing '70s themed clothing. Do you need a ride to Goodwill?

JUSTIN ROSE: I do. Or I'll just borrow some Ian Poulter's old stuff. He had that '70s vibe going for a while.

Q. Will you be participating in that at all do you think?

JUSTIN ROSE: I better go and see what I got packed, you know what I mean? But it sounds fun. It would be

cool. I'm assuming obviously '73 Challenger and all of that, yeah, it's a cool vibe. It's now making more sense to me than it did.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take a question from a junior reporter.

Q. I was wondering, so how you played today for the practice basically, how do you put that in perspective to how you'll actually play in the tournament?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, that's a great question. I like to play well in practice, but I don't always -- if I play poorly in practice I wouldn't be concerned about tomorrow. Today was important to go out and judge the conditions. It's really very windy out there.

But because it's quite warm, too, just trying to gauge the conditions going into tomorrow. I believe it's going to be a windy week. Just trying to understand how the golf course might play and what kind of scoring there may be out there this week. I don't think it's going to be 20-under like last year with the conditions.

Just trying to get a feel for the course. I've hit enough good shots I feel like I don't have to go off to the range and try to find my game going into tomorrow. It's kind of the perfect balance.

Q. You're on the outside looking in on the Wyndham Rewards points. You're No. 11; looking to get in the top 10. Does that affect you in any way? What do you think of the program in the first place?

JUSTIN ROSE: I think the Wyndham Rewards points is a great program. It rewards guys that have played well all season long. Obviously playoffs are all about volatility and bringing your game when you really, really need it. We've all bought in and love that concept.

But, if I guy has a great season and then a poor playoff season it's a bit of a shame. I think it kind of ticks the box of really rewarding a guy who has played well all year. A Matt Kuchar for example, who's having a great season.

For me at No. 11, I've got my eye on it, yeah. It's something I'm aware, that I'm pushing for. It comes through playing good golf, so I'll focus on this first and foremost.

It will be interesting to see if it does dictate your schedule towards the end of the season. Right now I hope I'm going to play enough tournaments and I have enough opportunity that if I play well things are going to take care of themselves.

If I find myself 11 through the week or two, be interesting.

Q. Speaking of schedule switches in 2019, before this point you haven't played weeks after majors or after the PLAYERS. Knowing this week was coming up an obviously you're defending, was there any switch in your mindset having to emotionally reset after giving your all playing a major style golf course and coming back and playing a week after a major this year?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, that's a good point. I haven't historically played much after a major championship. I feel for me last week I rolled into that major a little bit more like it was a regular event. I didn't go sort of go the weekend before and really try and grind out the course, because the course I knew pretty well anyway.

I think I felt pretty fresh last week, and because of how I prepared for the PGA I think I'm going to be able to go nicely through the next two weeks, because I'm playing next week at Memorial as well.

I feel like there is good energy. If you can pick to peak at a major championship you're going to do that every time. Obviously I feel like this is a three-week run of golf, and hopefully I'll find my best at some point in this run.

I like the way the schedule has switched up. It offers the European Tour a decent opportunity at the back end of the season to fit in some events. Not necessarily in Asia, but in the U.K. Historically I haven't played this event because it's always clashed with the BMW PGA Championship. So the fact that they're not near each other gives me an opportunity to really enjoy the Colonial.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for your time and good luck this week.

JUSTIN ROSE: Thank you.