

# Charles Schwab Challenge

Thursday, June 11, 2020

## Justin Rose

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for joining us, Justin. I'd like to welcome the 2018 Charles Schwab Challenge champion with a 7-under 63 in the first round. Can we get some comments about how it went out there today.

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, obviously I think everyone is in the same boat. Obviously I think everyone has been trying to do their best to prepare, and we're certainly all coming in rested, that's for sure. But no one quite knows where their tournament game is. I think for me we're delighted for the way it kicked into gear today, especially short game, putting, some of the stuff that is hard to practice without some pressure, and I think for me the key was getting off to a good start. Although my game wasn't great the first few holes, I made a couple of putts, I knocked one in from just off the green on my first hole of the day, so I've looked at my caddie and went, welcome back. It was a nice little positive start to the day and therefore I was able to get the momentum going on my front nine, which was the back nine, and then actually played much better golf as the round went on and felt like I had a couple of opportunities to maybe get in a little bit lower than I did. But certainly I rode my luck early in the round and then started to find my final rhythm a bit more and played some -- hit a lot of fairways and greens on the back nine.

THE MODERATOR: Today was a round without fans; what was that experience like for you?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, felt quite subdued out there for sure. Sometimes you get up really early and some morning rounds on TOUR can kind feel of a little subdued and quiet, but it never really picked up. Obviously it's a bit of a strange situation for sure. It kind of feels like a competitive practice round. But obviously I think we all know what's on the line. We all know what we're playing for. We all know the competition this week especially, the field is incredible. So that's obviously -- we miss the fans. They definitely provide a ton of energy and atmosphere.

But I think as a professional, you love going up against great players. Obviously today I was playing with Dustin Johnson and Bryson DeChambeau, I haven't had that competition at home to deal with, so that obviously makes it feel pretty real. You're back playing the PGA TOUR when you tee it up with guys like that.



So it felt great, but obviously the fans were missed.

**Q. Just wondering if you can take us through the specifics of your bag now that you're kind of an official equipment free agent.**

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, sure. Kept it pretty simple, I suppose. I spent a lot of years at TaylorMade, so I felt like I needed just to get a bit of a baseline on my game, and using the SIM driver, SIM 3-wood, got a little Cobra 5-wood in there, which has been a nice find. It's amazing out of the rough and obviously I can fade it up and draw it, so that's a nice little versatile club. And then P730s through the bag and then Vokey wedges, and then my Axis1 putter, which has been a staple for me the last couple of years.

**Q. 63 is a career low round for you out here; how do you sustain the success going forward after a hot start like this?**

JUSTIN ROSE: I mean, you don't know. Obviously the first morning you've got good greens, we had no wind, so 63 -- I'm not sure I'm going to get the golf course easier than that this week, so I could shoot 66 on a Saturday or Sunday in a bit more of a breeze playing the back end of the field, and it's actually a better round of golf than today. So I mean, the score is always slightly subjective, I think. But I feel -- the good thing is I feel like I didn't max everything out today. Yes, my short game was good, my putting was good, but I feel like there's another level there or another gear or two with the long game, so yeah, I feel like it's important even though today was 63, I feel like it's important to still be able to grow into the week and have areas of my game that can improve.

**Q. I know you touched on this, but when you knocked in that long birdie on No. 10, your first hole, early in the morning, is that when it kind of hits you, wow, this is a unique tournament, so to speak?**

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, I was kind of having a little fun with it, thanks, tipping the cap to the silence. But to be fair, Dustin Johnson's caddie, his brother, he kind of gave me a little round of applause there. So the guys were having a bit of fun with the unique environment that we were dealing with, but on the back nine, on 15 and 16 here at Colonial Country Club, there's a couple of houses that have sort of built mini-stands, so there might be a couple of grandstands just off property here

where there might be a small gathering of people on the weekend, but we'll see.

**Q. This is regarding Bryson. I'm kind of curious about what your impression is about what he's done with his bulking up and how much you've noticed that and if you see any kind of difference in what he's doing in terms of his ball striking and whatnot.**

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, I saw a massive difference. One, in his physique for sure. I mean, he's huge. I played with Dustin Johnson -- I'm not small, but at 6'3" and 190 I kind of felt pretty small out on the golf course today. I hit a good drive down 1. I think No. 1 today is probably the best measure. I hit a good tee shot. I'm probably like low 170s ball speed, 71, 72, 73 possibly, but when I hit it well, I've got good spin and good launch and I carry it 300, and I probably got it out there 320 down No. 1 today, and I was 40 behind Bryson. It's a pretty significant difference for sure. Like DJ was kind of in between me and Bryson really. Pretty unique -- yeah, it's definitely different. You can tell the practice swings are very intentional. He's looking for speed. He's obviously trained speed. But the other elements of his game still look in control. So it looks like he's definitely added a couple of weapons for sure.

**Q. Unrelated to that, could you speak to what it was like for that 8:46 pause this morning and maybe some of the things you may have reflected on and how powerful a moment you feel like that was?**

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, for sure. Obviously I think it was very quiet out on the golf course anyway. Sometimes when you have thousands of people and there's that momentary pause, I think you feel the energy and the gravity of the situation more, but I think obviously it's a very personal moment right now to reflect on your life, how you go about your life, how you live your life and how inclusive you are in your own life with everybody you come across. I guess everything that's going on right now in the world, there definitely seems to be hopefully an opportunity, and the momentum that is obviously created right now, that's what I was reflecting on really is just how widespread this has become. This has become much bigger than the U.S., as well, which is good to see.

**Q. I just wanted to ask you how you're planning to manage your schedule in the last 10 weeks of the season, regular season, just all the big events coming up. What are you looking at?**

JUSTIN ROSE: I don't really have the luxury of -- I don't really have any points on the board, so for me it's important just to try to get as many points as I can, so I think I'm going to play quite a lot early. Probably going to play five of the first six weeks is the way it's looking,

and then I guess that gives me a bit of a reassessment at that point, obviously with the U.S. PGA coming up, it's how I want to tailor my preparation into the PGA, and then obviously afterwards the FedExCup Playoffs begin. Tournaments like Wyndham and what have you, I'm just going to have to assess where I'm at.

But definitely five of the next six weeks I need to make my run now for sure.

**Q. I was just wondering if you could discuss the social distancing and what you guys -- if you were conscious of it out there today. I did notice your caddie had a towel or some kind of something that he held with him as he was holding the rake and holding the flagstick. Are you conscious of that? Did you talk about it during the round, before the round to make sure you were following the guidelines?**

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, for sure, we're trying to follow the guidelines, but it's amazing how routine and what you've done for 20 years kicks in, and you've got to keep reminding yourself -- definitely I'm sure we all made a couple of mistakes out there, but we're definitely very conscious of what we touch personally and therefore who touches that next and how that's dealt with. I think obviously all the caddies are trying to do a good job with the flagstick because obviously that impacts the whole field, raking the bunkers and what have you. Obviously I'm staying with my caddie, we've been in close proximity and kind of living in a little bubble together, so whether that be touching the golf clubs with a towel, I'm kind of relatively comfortable with that, but we've got to be cognizant of other people. Every surface you look at now, you've just got to kind of treat it as an unknown. It's interesting. But we're definitely doing our best to play by the guidelines for sure.