

Charles Schwab Challenge

Friday, June 12, 2020

Jordan Spieth

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Jordan, solid play to start the Charles Schwab Challenge through two weeks. Can we get a comment on today's round.

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, when I got done yesterday I thought I could just minorly improve in a couple areas of the game, stuff I'm working on, trying to trust it a little bit more with different shots and especially off the tee with the long clubs, and certainly it was improved today. I played a really, really solid round of golf with a kind of 20-minute hiccup for a couple holes, and with eight birdies around this place, it's nothing to complain about. I'm obviously very pleased with the position I'm in after two rounds.

Q. You just referred to it as a 20-minute hiccup.

Can you talk about the swing of your emotions, going birdie-birdie, double bogey, birdie-birdie?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, not much, honestly. I did a really good job of staying very neutral where I'd been kind of getting really negative or down on myself for a little while in the past now, I felt that I gave myself some grace to say, look, I haven't really been practicing a ton of those kind of short-range putts over the -- those are ones where you just have a ton of them when you're playing in competition but you're picking them up a lot of times when you're playing regular rounds of golf at home.

That's really all it was. 4 is a hard hole. I just hit a not-so-great 240-yard shot, so that bogey I didn't think much of. I hit a good putt, good chip there. Yeah, to answer your question, there wasn't a huge swing of emotions. I stayed calm. I was just trying to hit each shot where it needed to go to make the best score on that hole, and 5 was huge. 5 was really big, to feel like I kind of salvaged the horrible horseshoe and came out of it with actually some momentum, it was nice when I knew I was going to have a couple wedge opportunities coming in.

Q. After 36 holes, and I know without fans is different, but is it starting to feel normal out there for you?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I didn't think it felt totally different yesterday other than you don't really know how close some of the shots are because you're normally waiting on the crowd reaction and stuff, but



the fans don't end up having an impact typically, but you can ride the momentum if they're -- it's great to have the support and the pickup when things aren't going well and it's nice to have the roars when it is going well. But golf is golf; like I just mentioned before, it's about where do I hit this shot to be in the best position to hit the next one, where to hit that one. The definition of taking it one shot at a time, you don't actually really notice that you're out here alone. But I think the weekend will change that for sure, especially Sunday when you're kind of interested in where everyone is at and you don't hear any roars and you just kind of don't really know. You're going to have to look at scoreboards and figure out how to play some of those holes because there's a lot of risk-reward in the last five, six holes out here.

Q. You kind of touched on fans, but can you just expound on that? When you're getting hot like you were, especially on the back nine, do you kind of build off that momentum? I guess you didn't have the support maybe to lift you up after the four-putt or the bogey on No. 4.

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, you know, on that back nine, we actually do kind of have fans on 15 and 16. There's a couple grandstands. That actually felt kind of normal. But yeah, I mean, in some ways it actually -- when things aren't going well, it's nice to have kind of the support of people. But at the same time, it's really nice to just kind of have your own space and not have people reminding you of what you just did. Not that anyone is actually telling you, but as they -- come on, you can get it back, is enough to say something bad just happened. So it's almost like I just felt a lot of space. I walked a little slower to the next tee. Same to 5, and just said, all right, if we put this ball in the fairway on 5, I'm going to have some birdie looks coming in. I've had them the whole day, and I can maybe play under par from here on in. My goal was to play 5 through 9 under par, and to do it at 2-under certainly accomplished that.

Q. You were on the course for the 8:46 moment of silence today. What went through your mind, and just big picture-wise, do you think it's good for the sport to see a guy like Harold Varner right up there at the top of the leaderboard going into the weekend?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, what was going through my



mind? It really put things in perspective. You're just playing -- it seems like normal playing golf. I'm playing with two of my best friends. We're having fun, and then you sit back and you reflect, and you're like, there are bigger things that are going on right now, and we're trying to kind of have a -- I think everybody wants unity throughout the country. It's tough right now. I think everybody wants to come out of this better, stronger and together, and Harold leading, I mean, it's great. It's as if anybody is; I don't think of Harold as different than anybody else. He's a really good player who can get really hot, make a lot of birdies, and when he does that on this golf course, you can start making a lot of them because you do get wedges in your hand if you're hitting the fairways.

I don't know what the lead is going to be at the end of the day, but I'm happy with where I'm sitting and looking forward to the battle with some of the greatest players in the game for the next two days.

Q. Jordan, just two questions unrelated. One was you talked to us the other day about how focused you've been during the down period and with all the work you've been doing and whatnot. I wonder if 36 holes is enough to show you that you're in a place that you were trying to get to, if that makes any sense?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, it wasn't -- I actually wasn't looking at scores like everybody else would be. To me it's about feels. So I know how the club feels when I'm starting to really gain control of it. There's certain shots that I really haven't been able to hit when I was off that when I hit them in competition, whether it's just a cut 3-iron off the tee or it's even a high draw wedge that stays right -- for me, I'm looking for the feels, and I was giving myself grace on the outcome, and as long as I stay focused on doing that this weekend, that keeps me progressing forward.

It's just trying to feel like I'm even in more control of my swing than I was the day before, and sometimes that translates to lower scores and sometimes it doesn't, but ultimately it'll make me much more consistent as I start to get the club into the places I want to get to and it feels like it should.

Q. So those feels, the feels that you were looking to get back, you're feeling that these last two days?

JORDAN SPIETH: They're certainly much improved, that's for sure. Are they at the level I want them at yet? No. But they're almost pretty much there on the range, and then when I go to the course, it's 90 percent. It's that last bit that some of the shots that I hit that weren't so great don't -- and it's not that I won't hit bad shots; obviously I will. But it's just that full control of the club that I know I've had in the past and leads to

consistency more than anything else.

Q. On a completely unrelated note, the program the PGA TOUR has been doing with the caddie bibs and the first responders on the back, what was your reaction to that when you heard about that, and how cool of an element to this do you think that is?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I mean, I think it's great. It's a great idea. It seems like a no-brainer now, but someone had to think of it. So I think it's a really good idea. There's some really cool billboards. I've been making the drive home and back every day, and so you see a lot of billboards. You get the ones where not all heroes wear capes and it shows our first responders, nurses, doctors, those in the food and beverage industry. It's anyway that we can support them, and I know the PGA TOUR is going to continue to financially and through other ways, and us players kind of should feel a responsibility to do so, as well.

Q. Have you thought about reaching out to your caddie bib guy at all or person and autograph the bib or do anything when it's all said and done?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think it's a great idea. No, I haven't. I really don't see the back of Michael very often because he's carrying the bag behind me, but I think it would be a really good idea, yeah, absolutely, to at least sign the bib if not just make contact with whoever it is.

Q. What options did you have right of the 8th green, and how did you play that shot?

JORDAN SPIETH: Not much. Yeah, I told Michael right after it was a top 10 up-and-down I've ever had, but it may have been a top 5 on the PGA TOUR for me. It was a bare lie, and then there's a tree up so I couldn't flop it, so my only option was banking it through the rough, and certainly required a lot of luck, but I took a 52-degree to make sure I'd get kind of that first hop wouldn't stand up, it would actually shoot forward, and it was all about leaving -- I was prepared -- I thought if I hit the green, it would have been a phenomenal shot, I mean, a really, really good shot just to hit the green, and if I didn't hit the green, I wanted it to just stay short in line with the hole and that would be the easiest chance to make a 4. After I hit the shot, I just looked and Rickie and Justin were both staring at me, making signs with their backs to the cameras at me like it was pretty ridiculous. Yeah, my option was a bank through the rough, needs to be hit in a certain place, but it also needs to get lucky on the bounce.

The hardest part for me then was making that putt because after that kind of shot you can't let it go to waste and make bogey. So that was definitely a steal. That made up for any or all of the mess on No. 3 for me

when I look back on the round.

Q. And secondly, if you were a big golf fan living in the area in Fort Worth here, a teenager if you will, would you consider trying to sneak on the course, pressing your nose against the fence or paying any kind of money to get into one of those tents around 15 and 16?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah. I mean, yeah, if I love golf and I'm in the area, there are people that are there behind 2 tee box and by 1 green and then over there off 15 and 16. I think absolutely. I know some of my friends even a couple weeks ago were planning on coming over to here. A lot of the stuff is open, so they were planning on trying to find an out door spot like at a sports bar and be able to watch it there and at least be next to the tournament, even though they wouldn't see a shot over here, just feel like they're over here and it's Colonial week.

I would say yes, I would be -- I wouldn't try and sneak on. I don't think that's going to go well for you. But certainly try and get a view.

Q. I was curious how you would compare the scoring conditions the first two days here to say the previous seven starts you've made at Colonial, particularly the year you won.

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, it's very -- it actually has played very, very different. It's played, I think, into bombers' hands, because not only the lack of wind but the direction it's been with that east -- it was like east-northeast yesterday, east-southeast today, a lot of the holes where it's normally straight into the wind and it's blowing 10 to 15 in May, it's blowing 2, 3 miles an hour straight off the left and you can fly all the bunkers. We're looking back at Brooks, Rory and Jon Rahm, and some of these holes they're just hitting flip wedges into. They're just bombing it over everything. With how receptive the greens are, that makes it a bit easier.

But I think the weekend is going to change a bit. I think it's moving more towards the south where it's supposed to be. But I would say if anything I think it's played a stroke or two easier in my opinion just off of the wind direction and the lack of wind that we've had.