

DEAN & DELUCA

Invitational

Saturday, May 28, 2016

Ryan Palmer

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Ryan Palmer is here after a third round 4-under par 66. He'll be one stroke behind Jordan Spieth and playing in the final group. Ryan, what a day we have scheduled for us tomorrow.

RYAN PALMER: Yeah, that was a one thing I wanted was, I was so sick and disappointed with the putt I hit on 18, because that was what I wanted, I wanted to be with him in the final group on my home course in front of my family and friends and in front of the members of Colonial. That's what I wanted.

And it worked out, so I'm very excited. Jordan's become a pretty good friend of mine, I think. I'm looking forward to, even though I'm 15 years older, maybe learning something, maybe. But, no, I mean, it's good. It's going to be a blast. I can't wait.

THE MODERATOR: Recap your third round for us today.

RYAN PALMER: It was solid. I got off to a good start and a couple hiccups there on 4 and 5. Which is why they call it the Horrible Horseshoe. But played solid.

Great birdie on 9. I hit it really good today. One of my better ball striking rounds of the year, I think.

The way I drove it, my wedge game was on cue, and I hit a lot of good putts, just couldn't get the speed down. But made some good birdies coming down the stretch.

So, I love where my game's at, the work that I've been doing, the mental work I've been doing with Neil Smith, the work with James Edmonton and it's going to be a fun day for sure.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Questions?

Q. A lot of talk last week about what Jordan was trying to do win in Dallas, 8,000 bobbleheads, all his friends there. Do you have some empathy for what he's going through trying to win in Dallas and trying to win Dallas/Fort Worth, and then what you're trying to do, winning in Fort Worth, which is your home as well? Do you have some sympathy for both of you guys on that?



RYAN PALMER: Sympathy? Yeah, no, that's the cool thing about it is when you're home, in front of your home, family, your home crowd, that's great.

Obviously, last week, Jordan being a Dallas guy, AT&T Byron Nelson. This week, I mean physically it's still kind of a home for him as well, because he's got so many people here as well.

But for me it's my home course. This is where I'm a member at, this is where I play all my golf, I play in the games with all the guys. I come here to enjoy the game and play with James a lot. So this is technically my home course, my house this week is the way James and I talked about it. So it's going to be an unbelievable exciting day tomorrow.

Q. Obviously, it will be pretty emotional for you, how do you go about putting your emotions in check for 18 holes tomorrow?

RYAN PALMER: I've been doing it all week. I knew there was going to be a lot of people here and I told myself I was not going to get so engaged with everybody like I have in the past. I'll get chatty with people walking down the fairways and get out of the mindset of what I'm doing.

This week I told myself I was just going to kind of keep my eye down the middle of the fairway, just fist bump, shake hands with the kids going from tee to green. But not engage as much and just kind of stay focused and work on the task at hand. Not really get involved with my family and friends, I will see them afterwards. That's what I've really focused on and I think it's helped me keep my, keep sharp in what I'm trying to do.

Q. I wanted to ask you, you talked about it earlier this week about your dad and do you think that it's going to be hard to keep him out of your mind for 18 holes or do you want to think about him?

RYAN PALMER: No, he's been there every step. In the mornings, on the way here, this is his favorite golf tournament. He loved being here. He and his buddies and everybody would be in the Champions Club and this is the one place he couldn't wait to come to every year.

And being the first one obviously since he passed in August, it's, I caught all the T-shirts they made, saying

in honor of him. And he'll be with me tomorrow for sure and of course he'll creep in my mind.

But I keep telling myself, it's this shot. I'll let all that come out at the end. I'm proud and excited of how I've been handling it so far this week.

Q. You touched on this a little bit about playing with Jordan on your home course. Does that almost give you guys more comfort going into tomorrow that you guys are friends and kind of Monday match out here and all that?

RYAN PALMER: I think so. Just can't play the games we play with James and Michael, because usually the games we play the caddies get to putt if we miss that. Wish we could do that tomorrow.

(Laughter.)

No it's going to be a blast. Because I have gotten to know Michael as well, so it's going to be fun with his fans, my fans, and he started getting that stuff and they're going to really get into it. So that's going to be fun playing with a friend of mine like that. We joke around a lot and we should be in for a treat, I think.

Q. On 5, when you were short after hitting out of the rough, you chose to putt instead of pitching the ball that was a little surprising to me. How about for you?

RYAN PALMER: No, because of the way the grass was, it was kind of bare and chipping is very easy to hit into the grain and real easy to, not chilly dip, but you could catch the grain real easy when there's not very much grass and really bare. There wasn't much fairway to putt out. So I just didn't hit it hard enough. If I can putt, I'll putt all day. Because, anyway I look at it, a bad putt is always going to be closer than a bad chip. So it just didn't work out that time.

Q. You had four birdies over the last from 9 on in. How much momentum did that carry as you were closing, how much did you feed off the crowd coming in out there? I'm sure that got people stirred up quite a bit?

RYAN PALMER: Oh, yeah, definitely. Obviously the putt I made on 9 and then I had some good putts coming in.

Great birdie on 11.

And then had some chances just couldn't get the speed down.

And great wedge on 14 that I missed.

And of course the short birdie putt on 15.

And the awesome 9-iron I hit on 16.

But, yeah, feeding off them, it helps. You ask anybody, when you get the crowd going and the ball gets rolling, that's the way you live to do, that's what we hard to get in those moments and get the crowd ramped up like that. So, it's going to be a fun one tomorrow to get the crowd ramped up. So I'm really looking forward to it for sure.

Q. How are you holding up physically? Was it a long day considering round two completion?

RYAN PALMER: I feel good. I really do. I finished my nine holes and I went in there and saw Doctor Troy, who I work with, as well as Jordan, so I'm going to tell Troy to get into Jordan a little more tonight.

But, no, I took a little 10 minute power nap on his table and which to me was great. I went in, took a shower, cleaned up, just went through the whole motions of like I was starting the day. I brought everything from deodorant, to spray, to you name it. Like I was home getting ready. And that's what I did.

So when I went out there, I felt fresh and ready and excited to go and the work.

What I've been doing with Neil Smith mentally has helped me through these rounds, because he's helped me learn to not deal so much between shots. And really if I've hit a bad shot, just kind of end it, be done with it, and I'm not really concentrating on it and dwelling on it.

And then, after rounds, I'm more fresh than I ever have been, because I'm not putting so much pressure on myself, not beating myself up between shots. And it's really helped a lot.

Q. I say this tongue in cheek, of course, but the Dallas/Fort Worth rivalry, are you ready to hold up your end of the bargain and battle against Jordan?

RYAN PALMER: A Longhorn and Aggie, that's going to be the fun part of the thing. So, I'll tell Jordan to wear burnt orange and I'll wear my maroon, but both colors won't look good with that jacket either.

But it's going to be a blast with Jordan, obviously, from Dallas and me coming from the Fort Worth side, it will be a nice VFW clash, I think. It will be fun.

Q. You might be the only one that can give Jordan a run for his money from a popularity standpoint here. Who do you think is going to be more popular tomorrow in your group?

RYAN PALMER: Well, it will be -- I got my few hundred.

I was told he beat me in tickets, so, I guess he will. But you see what he's bringing to the game. You expect it. The young kids and everybody, that's been special watching him, the way he has brought to the game -- all the guys, he, Rickie and the young guys what they're doing. And it's to great to see it and the kids are coming out to watch, to watch that kid, that big kid he is.

But no, it's going to be fun. I can't wait to get out there and really pick at him, he'll pick at me and hopefully we'll have fun and come down and to the last hole, who knows.

Q. Your proximity to hole in the last five holes, have you ever felt as dialed in as you were down the stretch?

RYAN PALMER: That's when I felt it. That's when you get what they call the zone, when you can put the pin anywhere and we'll find it. And that's where I felt that just the way I was swinging, the confidence I had with what I was doing with the golf ball, so it was -- and plus knowing I could hit driver on all these holes and get wedges, that's, that helps a lot.

And I'm able to do that because I've done it so many times. That's why I'm hitting drivers more. And you'll see I'm playing with guys that are hitting 5-woods and 3-woods and I'm taking drivers at certain spots because I know I can. I know I missed it everywhere on this golf course because I played it so many times. But it helps knowing that, so I can get a lot more lower irons and wedges in. When you're dialed in it's fun, that's for sure.

THE MODERATOR: It will be a Sunday to remember. Thank you, Ryan.

RYAN PALMER: All right. Thanks, guys.