

# Travelers Championship

Thursday, June 21, 2018

## Zach Johnson

### Quick Quotes

**Q. Zach, eight birdies, one bogey, but six birdies in a row. That doesn't happen too often even for an accomplished player like yourself. That's got to feel pretty good?**

ZACH JOHNSON: Yeah, that felt great. The ever competitor in me felt like it could have been more. I actually lipped out my chip on 10, lipped out for eagle on 13. So I'm saying all that, but yet I made some putts and hit quality shots.

So, yeah, six in a row is a treat. I had a lot of loft in my hand, lot of wedges in my hand. So that's kind of how you've got to think about it is you have a lot of opportunity on the back side if you get the ball on the fairway. There are some holes you can get at. There is a stretch there where you can make some big numbers or you can make some low numbers. That's why I think this golf course here at Travelers is terrific.

**Q. You've had a consistent year. You've only missed one cut. So I mean, consistently it's been pretty good. You just haven't cashed in yet on a victory.**

ZACH JOHNSON: Yeah, there's certainly a ton of positives. I'm not out here to make cuts, but at the same time, I'm putting myself in an opportunity to climb the board. That's all you can ask for, especially considering how good and how deep this field is week in, week out.

But, yeah, today's one day. I feel good. It's always a great position to be in going into the second round. I think the golf course is gettable. There are probably going to be some lower scores today, especially with this temperature and the favorable wind conditions.

But I'm encouraged. I'm encouraged with the direction of my game and the way I'm putting. It's about execution.

**Q. Zach, what was it about today?**

ZACH JOHNSON: I think today was a day where just I felt good going into it. I felt good coming into the week. I felt good going into last week. But today was kind of a day where if I just remain patient and stayed in it, hit a lot of fairways, lot of greens. I think I missed two greens. Technically got up-and-down on both. I hit quality shots, gave myself -- gave my putter an opportunity, and capitalized on a bunch of those.



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So just mentioned that the competitor in me feels like I left something out there, but you can always say that. So that's probably mildly pathetic to think that, but it's the truth.

I love what my caddie and I are doing, processing. It's just one day, but hopefully it's a day for more to come like this.

**Q. When you go on a birdie run, how do you stay in the moment and not get excited about what you're doing? Just concentrate on one shot?**

ZACH JOHNSON: Well, you don't. You do get excited. But you stay in the moment and get excited. I got to 17 tee, which I had just birdied 16 -- is that right? Yeah, 16. I got the honor on 17, at least I would hope I would after 6. It's an awkward shot for anybody, whether you play a cut or a draw. It's just a hard tee shot into the wind, which makes it even more difficult. You know, it's probably a perfect 5-wood, but I took my 5-wood out this week and last week. So I'm like I'm just going to punt to 3-wood.

So to execute shots when you know you have to, especially when you've got momentum, it's fun. You know, I kind of got caught up in my numbers on the putting green there, but when it comes to hitting shots, I thoroughly enjoy having the confidence to just go up there and hit a shot. That's what I was doing today, whether it was a putt or a shot, and it felt good.

**Q. Does this course make you be more aggressive because you know a lot of guys are going to, if the conditions are right, post good scores?**

ZACH JOHNSON: I feel like this course, specifically the backside, there's ample opportunity there to put some red on the board. There is also ample opportunity to do a lot of this, and kind of go the other way. So I've always felt, my caddie and I feel that there's a time and a place to be aggressive, and a time and place where you take the conservatively aggressive line, if that makes sense. That's kind of an oxymoron, but there are ways to go plot your way around this, where you're going to give yourself an opportunity and eliminate the big number you've still got to execute.

Don't get me wrong. You've still got to hit quality shots, whether it's 13th hole, the par-5. Whether it's 15th hole, the tee shot, or 17th tee shot. I mean, there's --

there's a lot of holes there where you can put a 3 on the card or put a 5 or 6 on the card. I think that's the beauty of this place though is the character and what it demands. I think what makes it even better is you have those holes on the back side. So, on Sunday afternoon, it can kind of promote good drama, you know. No one's out of it. No one's got it. I think that's the beauty of this golf course.

**Q. You really like this place?**

ZACH JOHNSON: Yeah, I've always loved it. It's humbled me in a sense that I get here and -- they've made some changes and made it probably more difficult. But I feel like every time I get here it just feels like I should shoot nothing and it bites me. The last couple years I'm like, all right, you can't have any expectations in that regard. You've just got to go out and execute, you know, put the ball on the fairway and you will have opportunity.

I think the fairways with these conditions, you might get a little bit of rain, but they're drying up. I'm hitting 3-woods on holes I always hit a driver. So, you know, it's still got teeth.

**Q. Coming off last week, do you sort of exhale here a little bit, relax, and still want to post a good score but relax a little bit?**

ZACH JOHNSON: Yeah, I mean, it's a different kind of breathing. It's a different kind of exhaling, if you will, but they're both good. We all as competitors and golfers, we want to have really, really difficult tests that make you push it physically and mentally. You know, we want that for everybody across the board in a fair manner. I think the PGA TOUR, specifically this tournament does that in a great job.

You can put some red on the board here. We know that. We've seen it. You can go the other way in a hurry, and if you press it, it can keep going the other way. So you have to kind of let it happen. This is one of those courses where you have to let it happen.

But, yeah, I took Monday off. Exhaled as you coined it, and did a couple things Tuesday, nothing significant. Then obviously, the Pro-Am yesterday. So I was rested. I slept a lot. I was very acquainted with my pillow.

**Q. (Inaudible)?**

ZACH JOHNSON: Yeah, I felt great about my driver for the last year and a half. I guess I kind of knew what it was last year, but two years ago my stats were not good from an accuracy standpoint. The last year or so, in particular, it's gotten a lot better. Fundamentally I've kind of gotten back to where I was to some degree.

I mean, I love what I'm doing off the tee, whether it's an

iron or a driver. I just love how we're going about it. This isn't going to blow you guys away, but I'm hitting the ball much further than I ever have. So I've actually had to introduce another wedge. I've always had three wedges, I've got four, just because of my variance in my yardages now.

So, you know, you get -- you find out what needs to happen to get better and you do it. My team and I have discussed it numerous and at length, and it wasn't much of a discussion I would say over the last few weeks. So last week I put four wedges in, and I don't think I'm going to be looking back, because it feels pretty good right now.