

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW
May 3, 2018



JASON DAY (-2)

Q. Jason, I thought you drove the golf ball beautifully today. How's the swing?

JASON DAY: The swing feels good. I did drive it pretty decent, I just wasn't quite happy with how I was driving it. I hit a lot of good quality shots. There's a couple -- the one on 9 I actually just tugged it a little bit. I didn't hit it awful, I just tugged it a little bit without thinking. To be able to come to a golf course like this, you need to be driving it well. Give you obviously a shorter club coming into these greens. They're kind of tabletop greens where they're just kind of bouncing and firm, so it's difficult to get close to these pin locations.

Q. Talk about this incarnation of this golf course. The Tour's been coming here for 15 years. It's a different golf course now than it was before and even different than last August.

JASON DAY: Yeah, obviously we had bermudagrass last August at the PGA, and this is, I think, definitely an easier grass to play on. I think bermuda, coming out of the rough, you have more chances of having big flyers. The biggest thing is there were a couple times when I was in the rough and I really catch a flyer, and you know that when you're in bermudagrass, you've got to catch it. And if you're in the rough and you're trying to land it on these greens, which are bouncing five to 10 paces with a wedge, that makes it difficult to hold greens. I think this is definitely an easier grass, but also still playing difficult because it's obviously the scores reflect how the course is.

Q. I want to ask you one more question. When you're standing over a tee shot like the one on 13, the par 3, as high as you hit it, are you thinking about hitting it even higher than that?

JASON DAY: I did, yeah, I did. You're actually 100 percent correct, because I do hit it high. I stood up there and I know that my 8-iron is 175 yards, I had to take a little bit off of it. I've been working a lot on trying to get the right trajectory of my flights with my irons because I just changed them. This is like my third tournament with new irons. So being able to try and pull that shot off where I actually hit a little high, and surprising enough, it bounced 15 feet past. So yeah, I did try and hit it a little bit higher.

Q. Jason, a pretty solid day, not much going wrong out there. I know obviously not the way you wanted to finish, but the overall picture, very healthy.

JASON DAY: Yeah, it was good. When I got myself out of position, I saved myself with some pretty solid putts, which was nice. That just keeps momentum rolling your way. I knew that 7 and 8 were kind of gettable to me with that southwest wind. I actually drove it

pretty well today. Didn't hit as many fairways as I should have, but I missed a couple fairways with irons in my hand. Overall, I'm pretty happy with how everything went.

Q. Open with a 70. What do we have -- excuse me, a 69. What do we have to do to turn a 69 into a 66, 65?

JASON DAY: Not too much different. I mean, I missed a few. I mean, at the start of the round, it was a short one on the 10th hole for birdie, and then the one on 12 I lipped out. So there was just a couple there where you have the right speed, the right line, it goes in and you're shooting something lower.

But I just said earlier that the first rounds for me this year have been a little bit tough. So it's good to start off in the 60s and I've just got to kind of build on that hopefully by Sunday.

Q. How's it compare to August?

JASON DAY: I think -- well, what was leading after the first round in August?

Q. 67.

JASON DAY: I definitely think -- I think it's pretty much the same, playing the same. But I think this grass is a lot easier than what we had in August with bermuda. Bermuda's definitely a tougher grass to either hit into the greens or chip and kind of -- in and around the greens as well. There's a lot more that can go wrong with that stuff, whereas when we have overseed here, it's easier to get through the rough and kind of pick it if it's going to be a flyer.

Q. Two years ago you had the greatest putting year ever strokes gained. It's hard to keep that up. You're No. 1 again. What have you done to find that magic again?

JASON DAY: To be honest, I just bust my tail. I spend about an hour and a half to two hours every day when I practice just putting. So if I have -- if I have a six-hour day and I spend two hours, I mean, that's a third of my practice time. And if you break down an 18-hole round, you're probably in and around 30 to 40 percent maybe of actual putting. So you've got to spend that amount of time to obviously either stay where you are or improve it.

I've just really been working really hard on speed. I know that I had good putting stats in the past, but obviously I can't look at those, but I've just got to try and keep myself moving forward and working.

I think the biggest thing is actually my desire's back and I really want to hole a lot of putts. I really want to get back to No. 1 in the world. So when that's the case, practice comes easy. You're working on the right things, you're doing the right things as well. I'm driving it well. I've just got to tighten the irons up when that happens. And I'm putting well and I feel like I can win any week.

Q. Were you unable to put the time in to that level last year?

JASON DAY: I think it's either -- no, I didn't put the time in. The fact that obviously with what happened with my mom, but also kind of burnt out that I just didn't -- I wouldn't say I took things for granted. I just was like, I just kind of had enough. Sometimes it's okay to do that, but you can't let it happen all the time. You can't get in there and just kind of, you know, give it only 50 percent.

So this year my goal was to try to get back to No. 1. I know that's going to be tough, but I've got to work hard. So I've been working hard this year and hopefully things start turning. I know I'm really close, I'm very close. I'm driving it well. I've just got to put the driving with -- take those opportunities and put them onto the greens where I can give myself the putts. I'm just not hitting it close enough with my irons currently, but I know that's going to change here soon because I've been working really hard on it.

Q. What makes it tough to get to No. 1?

JASON DAY: Right now or just in general?

Q. Well, for you. When you say you know it's going to be tough, I'm just curious what makes it tough.

JASON DAY: I think obviously you've got to win, you've got to win a lot of tournaments every year, but you've got to win big ones. It's just the time and effort that you have to put into it. I think it's more so the desire actually going into it and saying I want to be the best in the world because --

Q. You've got that now?

JASON DAY: Yeah. But the thing is like every year it's easy to kind of cruise because, like, we earn a lot of money and it's a double-edged sword there because you can -- it can actually motivate you or it can not motivate you in a way where you can just kind of -- you're pretty comfortable. And you can't get comfortable and that's the biggest thing.

When you're uncomfortable and you're kind of practicing and working, usually that means you're heading in the right direction because you're out of your comfort zone.

I always, like for the two years that I was or year that I was No. 1 in the world, I always say I'm happy being uncomfortable because usually you're doing something right. The work, desire is probably the biggest thing for me to get back to No. 1.