

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
July 31, 2019



WEBB SIMPSON

MAUREEN RADZAVICZ: We would like to welcome Webb Simpson into the interview room. Webb, you're making your 11th start this week at the Wyndham Championship. It's a place you've had some success and obviously know very well. Just your thoughts on the home game and what it means to be back.

WEBB SIMPSON: Yeah, feels great to be back here every year. I think I've said in the past that I think it took me a couple years to get used to playing at home in front of friends and family, but once I kind of got over that hump and just really learned how to enjoy it, it's been a great run here. Obviously this tournament's meaningful to me in many ways; my first Tour win here in '11 and named our third child after the Wyndham.

So I love being here, I love this golf course. You guys will probably hear it a lot this week from the players that we don't play enough courses like this; shorter, tree lined, doglegs, tight fairways. So it's just fun to play a course like this where you just don't get on every hole and bomb a driver. So it feels good to be back.

MAUREEN RADZAVICZ: With your solo second finish last week in Memphis, you move to No. 13 in the FedExCup standings. Can you just take us through the state of your game right now and your goals as we head into the Playoffs?

WEBB SIMPSON: Yeah, so this season's been, I think, consistent as a whole. I've tried to cut my tournaments down a little bit, partially to be home more with my family and partially because I think, as I look at the best players in the world, for the most part they're playing less than other players.

So I took a hard look at it and it seemed like they're getting more rest. So I just kind of set out as a year trial to see if I could be more rested and show up at tournaments a little more hungry to win and contend and play well, and that's been great this year. I think with the new season, the new schedule, I was able to take a lot of time off after the U.S. Open. I took four weeks off. So the flow of my season has felt a lot better.

And the state of my game, you know, last week was a great confidence booster. I played well at The Open Championship, I just didn't finish well on Sunday. So I feel like for a while it's been pretty solid.

Q. Webb, do you feel any more pressure as a favorite? I mean, everyone's looking at you, you're the highest ranked player, I think, here, or does it help that you're at this course?

WEBB SIMPSON: I think it helps. I don't really feel the pressure anymore. I forgot who said it to me, someone close to me kind of gave me a pep talk back in the day just to be able to use the crowd to your advantage, not in a way of pressure but the fact that they're rooting for you, they want to see you be successful.

So I don't feel that pressure here that I used to. If anything, I feel more pressure at Quail Hollow because it's my home course and I should play well. But yeah, I think the whole week as a whole, there's a relaxed feel to it, especially knowing what we're about to go into the Playoffs. So I think all the players enjoy that part of it, too.

Q. And you said you had some rest. Do you think that helps you here? Do you feel more refreshed from the four weeks off after the U.S. Open?

WEBB SIMPSON: I definitely do. If I make it to Atlanta, that will be a six-week stretch, which I haven't had one three-week stretch this year, so it's a lot of golf. You just have to be strategic about taking Monday, Tuesday off each week. That was part of the reason, we had a family vacation planned in that four weeks that I was wanting to go to Rocket Mortgage but couldn't, so it just turned out I had four weeks off. Slightly uncomfortable to go from playing competitive tournament golf to four weeks at home, but, you know, I kind of stayed with the practice routine and workout regimen and didn't feel like I was away that long when I got to the British in a good way. So definitely something I need it take a harder look at at taking more time off during the season.

Q. Well, with five kids, and Dowd and the kids won that one?

WEBB SIMPSON: Yes, they won. The nod went to them.

Q. You've seen this tournament with a loaded field, with a lighter field. With the Wyndham Rewards, how many years do you think it will take for that to catch on?

WEBB SIMPSON: Hopefully, it will be a really big deal this weekend. Hopefully, it'll get talked about a lot. Hopefully, there will be a few guys, at least a couple guys to move into the top-10. I know Paul Casey, I've talked to him about it, he's watching it very closely.

It's a tremendous thing, and I'm so happy that Wyndham was the first sponsor to kind of jump in and say, hey, the regular season means a lot. It's an accomplishment to finish top-10 in the regular season because you're looking at close to nine months of golf.

So I love it. I hope next year it's an even bigger deal. I know they're talking about how to make it even better. You know, maybe even how to get the guys who are in the top-10, how to get them here to try to move up a spot or two. I'm on the outside looking in. I know I've got to play well to jump in there, but it's definitely a great goal of mine.

Q. Webb, right now you're 10th on the Presidents Cup U.S. standings. Was curious how much that's on your radar and kind of what you think needs to unfold over the

next few weeks to either play your way on or possibly get a pick?

WEBB SIMPSON: Yeah, it's a really big goal every year to make the team event. I just think if you make a team event, no matter how you think your year's gone, it's a good thing. It's saying something good about your game.

I called Tiger on Monday to talk to him. I thought I was going to move up more and I didn't, and he told me to play better, so that was funny. I said, Fair enough.

But yeah, I'm looking -- I don't really look at that until kind of mid season as kind of the majors are happening. But now I'm really paying attention. I know I'll only have three more weeks. You want to qualify because from BMW to HSBC, that's a long waiting period and that gives guys who are maybe not quite on his radar a chance to play their way onto the team.

So yeah, I'm thinking about it a lot. I want to make it. That was my first team event in 2011 in Melbourne and I can't imagine how cool it would be to play for Tiger, the guy that we all grew up watching. Yeah, I hope I'm there.

Q. Webb, you have ties to Wilmington, Raleigh, Winston, Greensboro, Charlotte. You mentioned a vacation. Where do you go on vacation, anywhere but North Carolina?

WEBB SIMPSON: No, we stayed in North Carolina. We went to Wilmington, didn't leave.

Q. Is there a story to Wyndham's name beyond just the tournament, the obvious? Was there some discussion or how did you guys come to that?

WEBB SIMPSON: Well, we joked, we kind of joked and were kind of serious about Augusta. Well, I missed the cut one year and I'm sitting on the front porch with Dowd after a missed cut and I said I don't want to name our daughter Augusta. I don't know what it is about this place, I didn't play well.

So then we kind of quit talking about it and then this tournament rolls around and I won and all we had at the time was James, he was a little boy, and then we had Willow in '12. So '14 rolls around and I just loved the name.

And then Winnie comes from Winnie Palmer. My dad knew Winnie Palmer. Winnie loved my dad, my dad loved Winnie, and we just thought it fit. So that was kind of the story behind it. But if you say Wyndham, she won't look at you, it's Winnie.

Q. Another question, does James have a dog yet?

WEBB SIMPSON: We've been looking hard. He's not as concerned as he was about getting a dog. But I've got a lot going on right now, so I'm thankful he's willing to be patient, wait until the fall.