

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW
November 18, 2021



ZACH JOHNSON (-9)

ZACH JOHNSON: Man, that's a stretch. So my point is, when you've got just absolute pure conditions weather-wise and pure conditions on the golf course -- the best I've ever seen these two golf courses, period -- greens are rolling fantastic, you know you've got to get after it.

So, no, I didn't look at the leaderboard till -- frankly, it was on accident. I saw it on 15 green. I don't know what I was at that point. I shot 9 under? I birdied that hole. Anyway, that was like T-4, I was like, I'm 8 under at T-4?

But I understand, I get it, you know. Plus you've got four par 5s on the other golf course with no wind, so you can kind of get it. But all that being said, you've still got to make putts. I had a very, very frankly and thankfully a boring day.

Q. Sebastian had to birdie the last hole just to get to 60. You had a few holes left when you got it to 9. Any thoughts of 11 under?

ZACH JOHNSON: Oh, yeah, it hit me after I birdied 13, birdied 12 and 13 and I got it to 8. I had a pitching wedge in my hand on 14, hit a good shot, actually hit a really good putt, but it was all of 18 to 20 feet. It wasn't like it was -- and then obviously making birdie on 15, I was like, well, two more and I'm right there.

I gave myself looks. I gave myself pretty good looks and that's all you can hope for. I kind of wanted to get to 60. There was a point -- I've shot 60 twice out here and there was a point where I was the only one to do it, and then Phil did it, of course. So I think there's only two guys -- Jimmy shot below 60 twice.

Q. In this tournament?

ZACH JOHNSON: No. Jim Furyk shot a 58 and a 59 on Tour. I was saying I've shot 60 twice on the PGA TOUR, but I've never shot -- a couple 61s I think, maybe one or two, two or three. I don't know, that was not my -- I'm just ecstatic the fact I hit every green and gave myself a very just smooth, easy day where I made a couple putts, hit a couple shots close. That's all I can ask for.

Q. What do you tell someone who's playing this tournament for the first time and has only experienced these conditions given what the forecast is going to be like tomorrow?

ZACH JOHNSON: I'll say a couple things. When I explain this tournament, I talk about

certainly Seaside because we play it three days, right? And I've been here 13-plus years and every time I play it, it grows on me. Every time I play in the tournament, I'm like, I mean, I'm a little biased, but I just feel like -- I'm like this course is so good. I mean, it requires everything. And when it's windy, which it usually is windy, you've got to pucker up and hit some good shots.

Today is the anomaly. Today is the Chamber of Commerce -- it was a little humid, though. This is the day where it's just not usual.

So, with that being said, like you asked, tomorrow is not -- sounds to me like it's going to be the complete opposite of today. They're talking not just wind, but gusts. I've heard anything from 25 to 35. I don't know what's coming. And arguably a 180, but you could see it.

That's also today I would also throw in the fact, I was talking to a couple rules officials yesterday and they kind of brought it up, I didn't have to bring it up, when you've got two courses and you've basically got to play them the exact same and you've got a day where it's absolutely benign, the flags are just drooping, and then tomorrow the pins are going to be whipping, you've got to be set up for the pins whipping, you know?

So we had tee boxes today -- the 14th hole was the best example. That's one of the hardest, best holes on this golf course, arguably on the PGA TOUR. More times than not it's a driver and a mid to long iron and today it was a 3-wood, wedge because the tees were up, slightly down off the right and it's just not normal. I mean, I've hit -- I'm assuming I've hit a head cover in there at some point, but a lot of 6s and 5s.

So they're prepared for tomorrow and that's what they had to do. The unfortunate thing is you see a lot of low scores. If you don't like low scores, but I like low scores.

Q. You're not surprised somebody would go lower?

ZACH JOHNSON: You've still got to make putts. I mean, yeah, sure. I mean, I don't -- a 59, that's rare signage right there.

Q. How rare are these conditions out here?

ZACH JOHNSON: I think they're pretty rare. I mean, you can get them obviously. I don't think the temperature's that rare, I just think the humidity and getting that southeast humid wind, or if there is any wind, that's the easy wind. The north by northeast, the north wind's brutal. In November that's typically what we see.

So today's the day you've got to get after it, both courses. I don't know which one has it easier wave to wave. My guess is it's probably going to be pretty complementary. We were talking about it, I think the Seaside greens are a little bit faster and I think it's really hard to hit shots. I think it's harder to putt in wind, especially when the greens are elevated like they are. It's very difficult to -- you've got to play the wind when you putt.

So maybe Plantation tomorrow will have an advantage. They're a little slower, they sit in the trees a little bit. I don't know, I'm complete guessing on that one at that point. Yeah, it's going to be quite the oddity going through today to tomorrow if it comes to fruition that it's going to blow.