

ROUND 3 INTERVIEW
April 3, 2021



JORDAN SPIETH (-12)

Q. Jordan, a bit of a slow start to the round today, but ended up with a 5-under 67. Takeaways from the day?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I was kind of a bit surprised at the end of it that that's what happened. I mean, hit some really nice shots towards the end of the round, left the ball in the right spots when it was missed and really, I did a great job managing today. I didn't feel like I had great control of the golf ball. Just starting out on the range today I got into some bad habits that I've been trying to work my way out of and just thought I really needed to just manage the round well and kind of let chipping and putting kind of take over. It was just really nice kind of get that one to go on 9, I made birdie on 9 and that was kind of a confidence booster for me to see the lid come off the hole and it fed into a really nice back nine.

Q. You mentioned managing. You're managing your game, but at the same time are you also managing a lot of emotion out there?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, I felt like I kept my emotions really under control until I got really upset on 17, but for the rest of the day I was pretty calm and chill and just knowing that I didn't have my stuff. Unfortunately, that's been kind of where I've been at for a while and coming out of that, it's tough. That balance of that patience and having things come together and contending and wanting it to be there and have everything feel great. So did a pretty good job of that. Let the emotions get the best of me for a good couple minutes there on 17 and then was able to settle down and hit a great shot. So I really like the way I played 18 today. Driver, 3-wood onto that green, and to hold that green is really, really challenging. I can use those couple swings for some confidence into tomorrow.

Q. The flop shot on 17 seemed like the shot of the day, possibly the shot of the tournament depending on how things turn out. Could you walk us through how the setup to that was?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah. So I guess my ball got onto the cart path and then ran to the end of it. You can miss that tee shot right if you want all day and it stays short of pin high and it's a pretty easy up-and-down to that pin. So I was in a tough spot. Got a drop from the cart path and just ended up on some kind of hardpan stuff. I was looking to lay up way to the left and then walked up to the green and saw that that was just as difficult as going at the hole, so I figured may as well go to the hole in case I pull the shot off. I think I told Wally it was like a one in ten, but it was maybe like a one in five. It's kind of like a half long bunker shot almost. For it to go the right distance is certainly fortunate, but I was just trying to make four and got a bonus out of it.

Q. Did you guys have fun together today?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah, it was good fun on the back nine Trading birdies. I think that's what we'll hopefully look to do tomorrow Cam was in there striping for a while as well on the front nine and I fell behind. And on the back, it was nice to kind of get a little -- see some putts go in within the group. The hole starts to look bigger when he's pouring them in and I get to go next. It was a fun atmosphere out there.

Q. Finally, earlier in the week you said winning here would be great practice for Augusta. All in all, how do you feel about this week and then going into a major next week?

JORDAN SPIETH: Winning here would be -- I mean, winning a PGA TOUR event is a very, very difficult thing to do and I've certainly been humbled in that process over the last few years. First, I'm focused on this week, always have been. I haven't thought ahead whatsoever. I thought the best prep for next week is to work yourself into contention and just kind of see where all facets of the game are under pressure. Got quite a bit of that today to test out and hopefully make some improvements for tomorrow.

Q. So here you are. I think this is the third time you've had the 54-hole lead this season, this short season. I wonder if you can just explain your state of mind and how it might be different than the first 54-hole, which I think was Pebble Beach.

JORDAN SPIETH: I think it was Phoenix. I was pretty anxious to start that next day. I felt really calm at Pebble and then been in contention a few times since then. Whether you're tied for the lead or one or two back, you know you have a chance to win that day. I wouldn't say that either feels any different unless you've got like a three- or four-shot lead in a major. I would say that's pretty hard to sleep on.

Yeah, it's about going out tomorrow and hoping that me and Wally can make a lot of birdies and come down the stretch on the last few holes and see what happens. Yeah, I feel good. It's going to be fun, just try and have fun. You know, it's a tough golf course in its own right, but then it gives you a lot of opportunities and some exciting closing holes.

Q. Good to feel the nerves again?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah. Trust me, I feel the nerves even when you're not playing well because sometimes you're even more nervous because you don't know where the damn ball's going to go. It's nice feeling comfortable under pressure, I think that's the most important thing. You start doing it more often and you feel more comfortable under pressure and that's kind of why we play the game at this level, that's what's fun for us.

Q. Jordan, let's talk about first eight holes, plus one; last 10 holes, minus six. Something changed there.

JORDAN SPIETH: Honestly, not much. I felt like I had some decent looks and just didn't quite make them in the first eight holes. Really could have been -- hit some good putts and could have been 2 under or so on those eight. I just did a really good job, I almost tried to make it feel boring out there. Just wait, just wait, just wait, get enough chances. When the one went in on 9, kind of the lid came off. For me, a lot of times it's just see one go in and just kind of get that confidence that there's going to be a magnet and the ball's going to find the hole. So on that one, I made that one.

I put a lot of good strokes on it on the back nine. I really, really was off today. I mean, I knew going in I didn't feel great on the range and I knew kind of starting out it was going to kind of be the off day and I needed to -- as far as swing-wise, I needed to kind of make sure I was missing in the right spots to where I wasn't going to make many mistakes. Fortunately, that's what happened. Capitalized from some pretty tough spots coming in. It's funny, I played so much better yesterday than I did the other two days and it was the highest score.

Q. Talk about tomorrow then. Opportunity knocking to get the win, first one in a while. How excited are you?

JORDAN SPIETH: Yeah. The goal this week was to get myself into contention and have a chance to win on Sunday. Really, that's goal accomplished at this point. So the next goal is to try and get myself in position to be in control on the back nine. That's kind of how it is every week.

But certainly as you look forward to next week at the Masters, it's just trying to see where things are. I didn't love where things were today, how they felt. I got probably a little stacked hitting all the shots into the wind on the range. I might just go to the other end of the range tomorrow and just try and see if I can find my rhythm a little better tomorrow.