

2015 US Open Championship

Thursday, June 18

Quick Quotes

Dustin Johnson



Quick Quotes From:
DUSTIN JOHNSON

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, I'm very pleased with my round today. I thought I played really solid all day. Obviously the bogey at 9, I hit a poor tee shot there. And hit a really good chip to even have a 15-footer for par and hit a good putt, just came up a little bit short. All in all I thought I had a great day.

Q. Anything out there throw you off?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: No, I thought the setup was great. I thought they had some really tough flags and they had some pins that you could get close to. I thought they did a good job with the setup today for sure.

Q. Do you think distance was an advantage?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: If I'm driving it straight, yeah. And I drove it pretty straight today, so that was nice. I think I only missed three fairways.

Q. What was your first impression when you got to this place?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I really liked it. The first time I played I thought it was great. I still like it. It's definitely an interesting golf course. But I thought it was a lot of fun to play. And I really enjoyed it today, too.

Q. (Inaudible.)

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I like using my imagination on shots. It's always fun to play courses that are different than what you play every day. I just enjoy playing here. I enjoy playing over at the British. It's golf that I really like to play.

Q. Did you feel like it was a mental struggle out there for you?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: No, you've just got to be smart with your club selection. You really need to pick out a spot where you're trying to land your golf ball. I thought I did a really good job with that today.

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Press Conference

Dustin Johnson

An Interview With:
DUSTIN JOHNSON

BETH MAJOR: Good afternoon. We'd like to welcome you to the U.S. Open at Chambers Bay. Very happy to have with us this afternoon the first round co-leader, Dustin Johnson, who recorded a 5-under, 65, this morning on Chambers Bay track. Can you talk about the conditions and the play out there today.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: The conditions are real similar to what they have been the first couple of days. It's firm and the greens are at a really good speed. I thought the conditions were favorable, especially this morning. It's firm but you could control your golf ball, for sure. And today I did a really good job with that all day.

BETH MAJOR: During your preparations did you feel like this would be a course that would suit well to your game?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, I got out here on Saturday afternoon and played 18, and I really liked the golf course. I thought it set up well for me. I thought that it was a golf course I could do well. The fairways are fairly wide. You don't want to miss the fairways, but they are wide enough to where you can hit a lot of fairways and I did that today. The tricky part is coming into the greens. It's really getting a good number, getting a good feel of how the ball is bouncing. Today I controlled my ball very well.

Q. Did it feel like you were playing a U.S. Open out there?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, it definitely does. The conditions are tough. They're definitely tough. Today they had some pins that you could get to, but then there were a lot of pins that were very difficult. It's definitely a little bit different for a U.S. Open, but last year was kind of similar at Pinehurst. It was firm and fast and brown and I really like that, too.

Q. Can you talk a little about the confidence level going into the next day?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, well, leading up to this week I was actually a little bit frustrated. I've been



playing pretty well. I had some good finishes. But just wasn't striking it like I wanted to. But the last few days, have done a lot of good work with Butch and felt really comfortable when I came out on Saturday. I was really swinging well. I've really got a good feel for the golf course because I'm swinging a lot better than I have been in the past few weeks. And it carried right over into today. I really felt like I swung it well all day. I hit a couple of bad drives and then I hit, really only had one bad iron swing, and that was on No. 9 today. But other than that, I really felt like I swung it well and hit a lot of quality iron shots. So the confidence is definitely there. I feel really good about where I'm at and going into tomorrow.

Q. This is the first time this region's had a major in 17 years. I don't think you were here in '98, by the way.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: No.

Q. I think the locals would like to hear from you on just the atmosphere, the galleries, the experience so far, how you've been treated and what do you make of holding this event in this part of the country?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I think it's great. Obviously this is a beautiful golf course, great views and looking out on the water and stuff, it's a beautiful place. All the people around here have been very nice and good fans. It was a lot of fun out there today.

Q. What's either the strangest bounce or the strangest shot you played today?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I don't know. The one on 9 was pretty -- I hit it a little bit left, it landed kind of in between the bunkers and then it went way down to the left, not even in the bunker, so it rolled all the way through it. So then I almost hit it backwards up and around. That was probably the strangest one I had all day.

Q. Off the tee, what iron off the tee?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: 6. I hooked it a little bit.

Q. And secondly, was it at all a blessing in disguise to play the way you did at Memphis and be able to leave early?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I wasn't feeling too well. I got there early and I practiced and played and I was all

right. And Thursday I just didn't -- maybe it's the heat or something. I just wasn't feeling well. But, yeah, it was definitely a blessing. I got to rest a little bit. I went and saw Butch, got to work with him, got a couple of hours of work with him and then came up here and got to see the golf course. Because once I got here, it's a golf course that you do need to see a couple of times before you play.

Q. You mentioned that the greens were fast and firm. Some of the other players have mentioned that they're finding that there's different speeds on each of the greens. Did you find that and did you have a hard time trying to judge those speeds?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: My speed was pretty good all day, that was one thing that I thought I did very well was the speed of my putts. Hitting the greens and I hit good putts all day, all of them looked like they had a chance to go in, and when I missed I had a tap-in. So I was very pleased with that. The greens here, they're real fine, they're a little bumpy, but that's how -- it's just like that for everyone. So I think speed's important so you can get those close tap-in pars. But I didn't notice anything today. I thought they were all pretty similar.

Q. What specifically was the illness in Memphis? And how would you describe your season so far?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I thought I had -- I think I've had a pretty good season so far. I played pretty solid all year. And so I'm pretty happy with it. It could be a lot better, though. As far as -- I don't know, I think I just touched on that a minute ago, but I just wasn't feeling well.

Q. You talked about certain holes fit your eye here. Can you give us some examples? Guys have talked about No. 7, for example, the longer hitters can take a different line. Are there a couple of holes you can walk us through and tell us where it fits your game?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: 7 is a good one. Over the right side it's a pretty long carry, so it definitely helps, because I can fly it over that corner. 8 is another hole that you know if you can -- today I didn't hit a great drive, I popped it up a little bit, but it was still in the fairway. But there's a little knob, if you can fly it over that knob down the left side, hit and it will run forever. I've hit a couple of drives on 8 that's gotten way out there. I'm trying to think. There's a few holes where if you can carry it. Today on 16, I think, you know, with the tee up, that bunker on the right, it's like 300 carry, and I can carry it that far, so it definitely helps to take the bunker out of play.

Q. Phil said that this course was a lot like the British Open and like St. Andrews in particular, and Robert Trent Jones said something similar. Is it strange to have two majors on courses so similar?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: No, I don't think -- I think this place definitely plays like a British. And I enjoy that. I like that kind of golf. You've got to use your imagination. You've got to really control your golf ball. I don't know, I like it. I'm excited. I think it's different from St. Andrews, for sure, it's not even close. But they play similar, yes.

Q. You had a 5-under at Whistling Straits in 2010. Both fescue grasses at both golf courses. From a playable standpoint, how do the grasses at Whistling Straits play similar or dissimilar to here?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I don't think it's similar at all. The fairways, I'm not sure what they are, I think they're bent and the greens are bent there, I'm pretty sure. But the fairways here definitely run a lot more and the greens are a lot more bouncier.

Q. Do you approach these majors as an opportunity to kind of get the monkey off your back for Whistling Straits and Pebble Beach?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: No. I'm here to play golf and put myself in a position on Sunday to have a chance to win. Whistling Straits was a long time ago. I know I'm going back there this year, and I'm excited. I like the golf course and I played well there last time.

Q. Obviously before the tournament there was a debate about whether this was a second-shot course or a course for a bomber. Did you feel to some degree that you overpowered it today and what is your confidence level going forward from here?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: No. I mean, you can't really overpower this golf course. It definitely is a second-shot course. Coming in with shorter irons helps to control your spin, control your ball. Today I did a really good job of that. I just controlled my distances very well. I was landing the ball where I wanted to. And I was having a lot of looks at birdies. It helps to hit it longer, only if you're hitting it straighter. If you're not in the fairway, doesn't matter how far you got, it's hard to get it close to the hole.

Q. Where would you rank this round among the good rounds you've had this season?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Well, I've had a lot of good ones. I don't know. I thought it was just a good, solid round of golf. I don't know how to rank it. It was just good.

Q. How would you compare where your game is right now to where it was when you were 54-hole leader at the Open back at Pebble?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: That was a long time ago. I think I'm a better player, obviously a lot more mature. My game is definitely in better shape than it was then.

Q. Given what you had heard about this course prior to getting here versus your experience now with a competitive round, what was the differences or was it what you expected?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Honestly, I really didn't know what to think when I first got here on Saturday. From a handful of people I heard they liked it. From maybe even more than a handful of others they didn't like it and they thought -- so I really didn't know what to think, because I heard kind of both sides of it. So I looked at it on-line and saw some pictures of it and I thought it looked great. So I was excited to come. And when I did, I played it for the first time, I really enjoyed it, I thought it was a great course to play.

BETH MAJOR: We sure enjoyed watching you play today. Well done. Thanks for joining us.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Thank you.