

# US Open Championship 2016

Wednesday, June 15, 2016

## Dustin Johnson

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon. Welcome again to the 2016 U.S. Open Championship at Oakmont Country Club. It's my pleasure to introduce this afternoon Dustin Johnson, currently ranked sixth in the world, coming in playing very well with top five finishes in his last two events. This is Dustin's ninth U.S. Open, first at Oakmont.

Dustin, can you offer a few thoughts, your first impressions of Oakmont Country Club.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: It's tough, but I think it's in great shape. Right now, the conditions are really good. I think it's firm but it's not overboard by any means. It's going to reward good golf shots, but if you get out of position, it's going to be very difficult.

THE MODERATOR: You've played very well in the last few U.S. Opens and coming in playing well this week. How important is that, that past history and then also playing well coming into this week?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: It's always good to be playing well coming into a U.S. Open because you know it's going to be tough. This is one place you really need to control your golf ball. You've got to control your spin and where you want the ball to land, so obviously, it's a premium to hit the fairways because the rough's thick and deep. You can get a decent lie every once in a while, but the majority of them, they sit down, and it's tough to control it.

And then the fairway bunkers are almost a penalty stroke too because they're so deep, and the ball, you never really get that good of a lie. So I really think it's important to hit the fairways here.

**Q. Dustin, you talked about the putting as something that you really needed to work on at Memorial. With your finishes, how comfortable are you with your putting game as it stands right now?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I mean, I'm always comfortable with it. It just the ball doesn't always go in the hole. But I've been working on it the past few weeks, so I feel like it's getting better, getting some more confidence in it. Just keep hitting good shots and giving myself looks, and they'll start to go in.

**Q. Dustin, everyone's talked about their game plan going into the week. With the possibility of maybe**

**some rain, fairways soften, do you have a Plan B and maybe instead of hitting irons off tees, you might go 3 wood or driver, or are you just going to see how it goes as you go?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Well, I played last Tuesday, and it had rained pretty good Monday night, so I've played when it was soft. You can hit -- I hit a couple more drivers than I would if the conditions play like this the rest of the week. Obviously, with softer fairways, the fairways get a little bit wider, and you can be a little more aggressive.

But I did get to play it when it was soft, so I do have an idea of how it plays if it does rain and it's soft on Thursday or whatever day. But you never know. The conditions right now, I think, are really great. So hopefully, if it does rain, it doesn't rain much.

THE MODERATOR: You'll be playing the first two rounds with Hideki and Sergio. Can you talk a little bit about that pairing, how familiar you are with those two players and how that pairing will be.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, it will be good. I've played with Sergio and Hideki quite a bit, so I'm looking forward to it. They're both great players. Obviously, Sergio's playing pretty well. He just won in Dallas. So it will be a good pairing.

**Q. How much do you think about what winning a major would do for sort of your legacy and your resume and all that stuff?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, obviously, it would be great. I don't know how much I would think about it, but it's all about just putting myself in position, giving myself a chance to win on Sunday, coming down the back nine.

Obviously, it does all kinds of things for you.

**Q. Dustin, this is your first time playing at Oakmont, so I was just wondering, what's different about the course compared to the other courses to you, since it is your first time?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I don't think it's that much different. It's U.S. Open. They tend to -- every course you play is different. It's my first time here. I really like the golf course. I enjoy playing it. It's just tough, but I like hard golf courses. I think they suit my game very well.



**Q. Dustin, there's been quite a few guys who have maybe taken some woods out of the bags this week and put in some longer driving irons. Was there a thought for you to do that, or were you pretty much set on going with the woods and the drivers for the week?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: My bag doesn't really change no matter what course I'm playing. I put a 2 iron in every once in a while, and I'll take a wedge out. But this week, I'm going to play a 2 iron and just three wedges. Sometimes I go just driver, 3 wood, 3 iron, and then four wedges, just depending on the course. But I've got -- this week, I do have a 2 iron in.

THE MODERATOR: Dustin, you're laid back and patient. How important is that heading into a difficult course like Oakmont?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: You're definitely going to have to be patient out here. Par is a good score on any hole. If you look at the scores here over the years and the tournaments they've played, if you shoot even par, you're going to do very well.

So you've got to be patient. You can't be -- you've got to hit shots to the middle of the green. Just try to leave yourself with uphill putts as best as you can and just try to make 4s.

**Q. Dustin, what have you learned about yourself as a golfer coming off the disappointment last year? Do you feel you're better prepared to handle things if you're in that position again?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah. I feel like I handled that situation good. It wasn't like I hit bad shots or did anything. Unfortunately, the greens weren't as smooth as they could have been. This week, you don't have to worry about that. If I miss a putt, then I can blame myself, not the greens, which I like.

I feel like my game, in those situations, has held up just fine the past few times I've been in this situation. So that's all I'm trying to do is just give myself a chance on the back nine on Sunday.

**Q. You've done well in U.S. Opens. Would you consider this your favorite tournament?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, what's not to like? It's the U.S. Open. I like all the tournaments I play in, but the U.S. Open's definitely one of my favorites.

**Q. Phil was in here before. We were talking about the fact that he didn't win a Major until he was 33. Do you consider yourself a young guy?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I still feel young. I don't know. I mean, the guys out here, they keep getting younger

and younger, and I keep getting older. But I still feel young.

**Q. Justin, you've been able to, at times, make courses look pretty easy. Do you feel like this week there might be a low number out there for a round or two for you?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: It just all depends on the conditions, I think the setup and the conditions. If you drive it really straight and hit a lot of good iron shots, yeah, I think you can shoot a good score. I mean, I think anything under par is a really good score -- 1 under, 2 under.

**Q. Dustin, the story line from a lot of the media has been that this is kind of, not a make or break, but this is a really important Major for you so you can try and capture that first one. How have you blocked out the noise because that's kind of what the story line's been?**

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Well, I don't really read the media, so I didn't even know. So that's how I block it out.

THE MODERATOR: Dustin, thank you so much for joining us. We appreciate it. We wish you well this week.