

## **ZACH JOHNSON PRESS CONFERENCE**

### **SANFORD INTERNATIONAL – WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2026**

**We're now joined by Zach Johnson, making his debut here at the Sanford International. You just got done playing the pro-am – what are your thoughts on the golf course?**

I love it. I feel like I'm kind of back in my old stomping grounds with this type of turf, the grass, the way the holes lay out. It's just an old good golf club, country club, Midwest – this is exactly what I grew up on playing, you know, traveling around the Midwest – these types of golf courses.

This place is in really, really good shape. Obviously, a little bit of rain has kept it somewhat soft. I heard it was firm last year, which, that would change the dynamics, but all to say, you've still got to execute. So, I'm impressed. It's going to be windy every day.

**14<sup>th</sup> start of your rookie season here on PGA Tour Champions. The last time we saw you was two weeks ago at The Ally Challenge. How would you assess your week there and how are you feeling coming into this week?**

I feel good about this week. Ally was not my best form by any stretch of the imagination, but sometimes, you need a little bit of that to kind of slightly reassess or reevaluate. I'm not going to reinvent anything or change anything necessarily, I just got to get back to where I was, which required some work on my behalf, which is fine.

My game's good. Today was one of the more solid ball-striking days I've had in weeks, so that was encouraging. I'm not playing tomorrow, so for my last go on this golf course before the championship, I was certainly encouraged. It doesn't mean it's going to happen, but I'm encouraged with the direction of my game.

**Zach, with seven tournaments left before the championship (Schwab Cup), are you going to play all seven? What's your schedule like?**

No, I'm not playing all seven, I'm taking at least two off. It just kind of depends on how it floats. I've got a lot of other commitments and priorities, certainly starting at home. So, obviously playing this week, I'm playing next week at Pebble, and then it gets kind of finicky, but I'd like to get one more in before the playoffs start and I intend on doing that.

Right now, I'm committed to Jim and Tabs (Constellation Furyk and Friends on October 11). If I had another one, I don't know which one it would be, it'd be kind of hard to do that. But, I hate that because I know they're great - every tournament I've played in has been awesome, so at some point, I would love to get those venues. But, I think it looks like Pebble and then down in northeast Florida, so it's good.

I mean, I've played a lot this year. I played on tour early, obviously had some other commitments with John Deere and other majors and things like that. So, it's my first go at it, my first crack at it, I don't have a perfect formula, but I'll reevaluate for 2027.

**Have you looked back on your body of work in 2026?**

I'm not quite there yet. I still want to keep operating where my feet are. I'm not suggesting I can't certainly learn from what I've done – there's growth there, there's a lot of positives. I mean, my team would say it's some of the best golf I've played in five, six, seven years. So, I mean, I think that's pretty obvious given what I've not done and done. All that to say, I don't want to get stagnant or complacent. I still got to want to and purposely, intentionally try to improve. And so, that's my goal.

**First year on the Champions Tour – how's it going so far?**

Amazing – best tour I've ever played on. I know that sounds kind of cheesy and maybe outlandish, but it is. It's still highly competitive, the guys are great. It's fresh, it's maybe a little more laid back, but still competition. Like, when you get to the first tee, you've got to go – little bit better on my body. And the guys are great – I mean, you're talking about some of my best friends out here, so I've been very welcomed and I welcomed it as well.

**I know you haven't been here at all, but just some of your thoughts on Sioux Falls and the course itself.**

I'm impressed. I'm not surprised because you hear the buzz from the players. We don't dwell on it, but I mean, 'hey, what's Sanford like?' To some of these guys, it's their favorite event and I can understand why. It's hard to rank them because this one's really good. There's been a lot of good ones. I mean, the build out this week is tremendous.

Obviously, having the beneficiary with the health system of Sanford, that's why we do what we do, that's why we're here. So, a great title sponsor, great support. I know the community doesn't have anything else like this, so I've heard the fans, if the weather's ideal, will be out and having a good time, which is what it's about – a lot of kids activities, I mean, I don't know what more you'd want from an event? I'm staying downtown, it's awesome, food's good. I'm not hard to please, but so far, so good.

**With all the golf you've played in your career, is it kind of a fun, new experience just playing courses like this that you haven't played before?**

Yeah, I'm not opposed to playing new venues. It's more difficult, vastly more difficult because I mean, this is my job, so it's not like I go on golf vacations. So, when I go compete, I'm going to venues on the PGA Tour that I've seen, nine out of ten I've seen. Sometimes, there's a new one here or there, but for the most part, I'm very fluent and very much, I know

the golf courses, based on the conditions, I know what to do. I haven't seen most of these, I've seen probably a quarter of them because they used to be on tour, but I've got to get refreshed on those.

So, it's required more work, which is fine, I don't mind the work. But I'm not playing tomorrow on the pro-am, I played today, I played yesterday, I've played 36 holes in the last 48 hours. So, with that being said, I'm certainly getting an understanding of how to play this place, but I've played it only wet, I haven't played it bouncy. There's a lot that goes into it, it's all about where to go and where not to go. And so, I'm starting to figure that out. Often times, it's very obvious, however, it requires experience, it requires time, and it requires work, so I don't mind it. This place is as straightforward as I've seen so far, it's great. Hit the fairway, stay below the hole.

### **Is there something cool or different about this course?**

We're pretty spoiled, we see a lot of different venues, obviously different grasses, different altitudes, different architecture, different constructs, we're very spoiled in the variety and character with which we compete in week in and week out.

This one's very much right in front of you, I don't know how else to say it. Hit the fairway, don't go in the rough, stay below the hole, try not to get above it because it's fast. And you've got to control your trajectory because the wind is very prevalent. I'm not suggesting it's easy, that's not what I'm getting at – I'm just saying it is straightforward in the sense that you know what you've got to do. Now, you've got to go execute. So, I don't think there's been anything that I've seen that's been too surprising.

I think the topography change from this side of the golf course, then you go down that bluff over there by 12 to the flat part is pretty cool, there's some variety there. You know, you've got the hills, significant hills up here by the clubhouse and by the range and then down by the water down there, it's pretty flat, so I appreciate that. It's got good character in that regard, but yeah, it's been welcomed so far.