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VOLVO MASTERS

20 YEARS

• 1988 - 2007 •

An Interview With:

JUSTIN ROSE

GORDON SIMPSON: Justin, first of all, we have to say, many, many congratulations on being, firstly, the Volvo Masters Champion for 2007, and also European No. 1, and head European on the World Rankings now. You move up to No. 7 ahead of Padraig.

So all in all, it's a day to imagine.

JUSTIN ROSE: You said 6. (Laughter).

GORDON SIMPSON: Sorry about that.

JUSTIN ROSE: This moment, I've been really hoping it would come all week long. I've been in the hunt, in the mix all week long and this couldn't come quick enough. But obviously the only way you get here is by going shot-for-shot and hard work. And today was, again, I mean, a grind.

It was all looking quite comfortable I guess after I made the birdie on the 9th hole. Certainly don't like to make things easy, but it's a wonderful feeling. It's such a relief, really, to have won the tournament, and this is just an amazing icing on the cake for an incredible year. It's a huge honour to be the Order of Merit Champion, the European No. 1. So, huge year for me.

GORDON SIMPSON: Let's start with the tournament first, what an afternoon it was, so much was happening after you walked off the ninth green, you had such a handsome lead and then you had to call in all your resolve on the back nine.

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, very much so. I was playing nicely at that point. I was just trying to exactly do keep doing what I was doing. I made a bad decision on 11, I brought the bunker into play with my lay up, which is obviously a mental error. I had visions of the triple-bogey I made at Huntingdale where I hit the lip of the bunker, actually it was an 8-iron again and I hit the lip of the bunker again and I thought, oh, no, it's coming back to haunt me.

Obviously I did one better, I didn't make an 8, I made a 7. That was encouraging.

But that shook me a little bit obviously. Just made things uncomfortable from that moment on. I hit a great 3-iron on the next green and made a good three and got the round going again. I felt comfortable again.

But I decided to hit driver off the 13th tee where I had been hitting 2-iron all week and that was a decision I made because I thought the hole was playing slightly different and ended up making bogey there and just felt like I was abandoning my game plan a little bit and making a few errors. Managed just to regroup. I said to myself on the 15th tee, I mean, 1-under from here, you're going to win the tournament, and, well, I don't know, my mind is everywhere to be honest with you.

On the 16th hole, I actually looked like losing the Order of Merit as well as the tournament to be honest. I saw Graeme McDowell had made an albatross. Padraig was maybe going to even par up in front of me. Simon Dyson was going to 1-under, Søren was 2-under. It looked like it was going very much in the wrong direction.

The 2-putt I made on 16 with the tension beginning to build, that was a key 2-putt. It was 45 feet up, right-to-left, and to knock that stone dead and then give my tee shot away on 17, that was the turning point. I mean, that's where I believed I could then win the tournament again.

So I went through, I guess in the space of 20 minutes, feeling like I was not going to be in the situation with either of these two trophies in front of me to both of them; I turned it around in a 20-minute period.

GORDON SIMPSON: Thank you. We'll just move into questions.

Q. The Order of Merit, Justin, I know that it only came into your reckoning, your thinking in recent times, but it's been a tremendously consistent year, a first place last year at the start of the season, three second places, a lot of Top-10s. Surely you can credit yourself with being consistent.

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, that's been the key

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to the year for me has been consistency. That's why the win was so valuable. I'm back to the win, the win was so valuable to me today I've had a lot of consistent Top-10 finishes and three seconds and I think what was missing from the year was a win.

I think personally, the Order of Merit has been an amazing achievement for me and wasn't a goal of mine at start of the year but very much did become a goal of mine. I could see I was making progress fast up the Order of Merit by playing well in the majors and when I finished second in the Bridgestone Invitational at Akron, made a big check there, I began to realise it was a possibility, because I knew I was coming back to The European Tour in September to play, you know, three or four events at the end of the year.

So I think when we were all talking about the Order of Merit at St. Andrews at the Alfred Dunhill Links Championship, we knew myself, Ernie, Niclas Fasth, Henrik Stenson, one of us was going to go ahead and win one of those remaining tournaments, and I managed to do that.

Q. What happened on the 18th, your third shot, was it the tension you were talking about which built up?

JUSTIN ROSE: Not really. It was just an exceptionally difficult chip. If you looked at Simon Dyson's chip, how firm that green was, his ball went bounce, bounce and through, which I knew that green was rock hard and I was just in the semi rough and couldn't get any spin on the ball. So I had to try to hit a high, soft shot, and whenever you hit a high, soft shot you run the risk of going underneath the ball a little bit. It was just a really tough chip shot. It was always going to be -- you had to try to play it so perfectly to get it close and obviously at that time I'm trying to make four to win the tournament and hit a perfect shot. It was just an awkward chip shot, really.

Q. Ordinary mortals like us get a bit stressed out at the odd deadline, but a guy like you, two trophies on the line, talk about what pressure does to you physically, mentally.

JUSTIN ROSE: Obviously I was feeling it out there, but I think this year's been so much more comfortable out on the golf course this year. I'm not out there shaking like a leaf anymore. I'm out there pretty calm, pretty collected. I feel like I'm in control. It's still never easy. You've still got to get the ball in the hole and that's obviously not an easy job sometimes.

But I'm feeling like I'm in control of my body and in control of my emotions, and that's -- then you can enjoy the occasion. 17 has been an amazing hole all week. It's such a great atmosphere and I really enjoyed the atmosphere there this afternoon, and the crowd had been wonderful to me.

So I feel like I'm able to enjoy the occasion and enjoy the moment, which is obviously why we play golf. You need to be able to enjoy it down the stretch. Like I said, still never easy but at least I feel like I'm backing myself and at least I feel in control.

Q. 17, you talk about the tee shot, but surely the second shot was -- had that not gone right -- and what club was it by the way?

JUSTIN ROSE: It was a 7-iron. But you're right. The second shot was key. But obviously to give the drive away and enable the second shot to happen -- but you're right, the second shot was a great shot. It's just one you had to trust. You're playing for 20 yards of wind and you just hope it's there, otherwise you're going to be in the water.

So it's just a matter of trusting the wind and trusting your caddie and just putting a good swing on it. But I managed to do that.

I made a few dodgy swings the last few holes and it was great to putt two great swings on it when I really needed it.

Q. The yardage you had?

JUSTIN ROSE: It was 192 to the pin. It was about 178 to carry the water.

Q. I'm sorry to have to ask you to look so swiftly ahead, but 7th on the World Rankings, that's a leap of five places, how are you going to cope with this position, and what are you going to do over the next six months to make it much better?

JUSTIN ROSE: Well, I'm going to cope with it by enjoying it to start with. I'm going to set my goals even higher. I'm going to -- and I don't think to move further up the World Rankings, I don't think I've got to change anything, which is the exciting thing. I've just got to keep getting a tiny bit better.

I think golf's getting to a stage where it's the tiny improvements are going to make the biggest differences at this stage obviously at moving onwards and upwards.

But yeah, I don't really know yet to be honest. My goal at the start of the year was get inside the Top 20 in the world, let's say I'm going to achieve Top-10, so really I haven't quite got my head around it just yet. But certainly before next year starts and in the coming months, I'll reset my goals.

Q. How far can you go?

JUSTIN ROSE: Well, I think No. 2 is a legitimate goal. I mean, I think No. 1 is a fairway off right now. But for the rest of the normal guys, No. 2 is a good goal.

Q. So you'll take No. 2?

JUSTIN ROSE: For the time being.

GORDON SIMPSON: How does this day actually compare to other golfing highs you have going back ten years ago, Birkdale and from then?

JUSTIN ROSE: This seems a lot more real. I've worked hard for this and I've known -- I know, like Birkdale, for example, was just a complete fairy tale and I was just -- it was just -- it just happened, you know. I didn't really know much about it, whereas this situation right now, I've known what's been required. I've worked hard for it. I've prepared for it. It's a lot more of a professional approach.

And in that way, it's sometimes easier to enjoy it because you feel like you can maybe go onto do it again, if you just keep doing those things well; whereas, sometimes Birkdale was like, wow, where did that come from.

Q. When you were small, did you have the dream of winning the big majors, the ultimate goal?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, definitely, I still have that dream. That's really what drives me.

I think majors, that's really -- I geared my year around the majors this year and this week I actually treated a lot more like a major than any other tournament that hasn't been a major. And, yeah, ultimately I want my career to include a major championship, or more than one, hopefully.

But I think that's really, you know, I've won The Open Championship a thousand times on the putting green back home, so it's something I've always dreamed about as a kid, and hopefully will go onto do one day.

Q. Good luck to you.

JUSTIN ROSE: Thank you.

Q. Are you physically tip-top then?

JUSTIN ROSE: Yeah, this week is the best I've felt physically for a long, long time to be honest with you.

Yeah, a couple of weeks ago, I had an X-ray and a checkup and structurally looking really, really good, so I had the all-clear and like I said the other week, just a matter of trying to get on top of my fitness to get to the peak, really. But I'm certainly in good shape.

GORDON SIMPSON: Well, Justin, with the 20th Volvo Masters, I don't think there's many, many better than this one. Well done.

JUSTIN ROSE: A point I just want to make, at the start of the week, I thought this tournament really deserves an exciting finish that maybe it got today with Padraig up on the leaderboard all week. I think it was great for the tournament and I certainly enjoyed being a part of that, so thanks.

GORDON SIMPSON: We enjoyed watching it. Thank you very much.

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