

GOLF:



Jason Day wins third title of year

World No.1 Jason Day has entrenched his place as the dominant man in golf, claiming the lucrative Players Championship by four shots.

Day claimed his 10th US PGA Tour win and seventh in his last 17 starts with a one-under-71 final round at TPC Sawgrass to finish at 15-under-273.

It is his third win in 2016 after triumphs at the Arnold Palmer Invitational and World Golf Championships Match Play.

He has now closed out tournaments on the last five occasions he has held the 54-hole lead.

American Kevin Chappell (69) finished second at 11-under, the second time this year he's been runner up to Day.

Justin Thomas (65), Colt Knost (69), veteran Ken Duke (72) and former champion Matt Kuchar (68) finished at 10 under.

Day is the seventh Australian to win at least 10 US PGA Tour events and is just the fifth player behind Tiger Woods, Rory McIlroy, David Duval and Phil Mickelson to win 10 times before his 29th birthday.

He is the fourth Australian behind Steve Elkington, Greg Norman and Adam Scott to win the Players and joins Woods, Scott, Martin Kaymer and Mickelson as players to have won a major, a WGC event and the Players Championship in their careers.

Former world No.1 Scott, who finished at seven under in a tie for 12th, did not hold back with his praise.

"That's Tiger-esque, that kind of a run," Scott said.

"I always try to explain how good you feel after one win, and I try to imagine how good Tiger felt just playing about five years into his pro career having won like 50 events.

"Just imagine how you'd feel confidence-wise, and Jason must be kind of feeling something

like that at the moment, and that's an incredibly nice way to walk out on the golf course.

"You can see there's that calmness inside him, calm confidence, and the way he's walking around, he's got that kind of unbeatable look about him."

Scott is not expecting the run to end anytime

soon.

Day is due up next at the Memorial tournament in his hometown in Columbus, Ohio before the US Open.

"From that stretch last summer, he's managed so far to keep that momentum going, and that's one of the hardest things to do when you are hot

like that, to keep pushing," Scott said.

"But he has a very strong desire to achieve so much, and I think probably his goals are changing throughout this period, and he's expecting more and more of himself.

"He's got that ability to push himself and accomplish."

MOTOR RACING - FORMULA 1: Verstappen rewrites the record books

Less than eight months after passing his driving test on his 18th birthday, Max Verstappen raced into the record books as Formula One's youngest winner.

"It feels amazing," the Dutch youngster said on Sunday after finally coming down from the top of the Spanish Grand Prix podium. "I can't believe it.

"I was targeting a podium but then to win straight away, it's an amazing feeling," said Verstappen, who likened the last 10 laps with Ferrari's 2007 champion Kimi Raikkonen in his mirrors to "driving on ice".

He suffered some cramp, as well as rising excitement as he saw his name on the big screens, but made himself focus on the tyres and taking a car - that he first drove only on Friday - to the chequered flag.

"I'm still learning the car," he said. "Before I got into the car, I didn't even have a hole for my drink tube. I still had to make it."

The son of former grand prix driver Jos, Verstappen has racing in his blood and the confidence and maturity of someone who has been on and around wheels for as long as he can remember.

He has also had to prove more than once that he is the exception to the rule.

When Red Bull signed the then 16-year-old for their Toro Rosso junior team in 2014, ahead of his debut in 2015, the sport was so concerned that it introduced a minimum age rule to keep out other such precocious talents.

In future, they decided, drivers would have to be at least 18 with sufficient experience demonstrated by points acquired in other series.

That rule would have barred him from competing in 2015 had it been in force at the time.

Verstappen ended that season with two fourth places and three awards from the governing International Automobile Federation (FIA) - for Rookie of the Year, Personality of the Year and Action of the Year.

There were those who felt Red Bull had been callous when they dropped Russian Daniil Kvyat

this month and promoted Verstappen in his place alongside Australian Daniel Ricciardo.

Verstappen, once again did his talking on the track with a measured drive as the strategy played into his hands and the dominant Mercedes drivers cleared the way by crashing into each other on the opening lap.

Red Bull principal Christian Horner, celebrating his team's first win since 2014, said he had been most impressed by Verstappen's calmness.

"No agitation in his voice, no panic, no tension. He was a young man completely in control of what he was doing."

