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**State Farm**



**An interview with:**

**MARK GIBSON  
JUSTIN MORNEAU  
TIFFANY ALVAREZ**

THE MODERATOR: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming down. This is the State Farm Home Run Derby post-event press conference. From your left, Mark Gibson, Assistant Vice President of Advertising for State Farm; Justin Morneau, the 2008 State Farm Home Run Derby Champion; and Tiffany Alvarez of the Variety Boys & Girls Club of Queens.

We'll start with a comment from you, Mark.

MARK GIBSON: Thank you very much. Obviously, another State Farm Home Run Derby is in the books. We're very, very pleased with the outcome. Congratulations to Justin Morneau of the Minnesota Twins for his performance tonight. And while Justin is the winner here, obviously the real winners are the Boys & Girls Clubs.

We at State Farm had 10 gold balls that were hit out of the park tonight for a total of \$170,000 in donations. But not taking anything away from Justin's accomplishments, but if you saw what Mr. Hamilton did this evening, and what he did, and what he accomplished with those 28 home runs in the first round, that record-setting performance, we're going to donate an additional \$80,000 on behalf of that performance to make it a full \$250,000 donation from State Farm and Major League Baseball to the Boys & Girls Clubs.

Additionally, obviously we have the \$50,000 winner here, Tiffany. Her Boys & Girls Club here in the New York City area in Queens. Congratulations for that. We're, again, very, very pleased to be associated with this event. It's a

wonderful to say good-bye in a little bit of a way to Yankee Stadium this evening. We look forward to next year in St. Louis (applause).

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Mark. Tiffany is joined by Frank Sanchez of the Variety Boys & Girls Variety Club of Queens. As Mark mentioned, Tiffany, that was \$50,000 extra for your Boys & Girls Club. Anything you'd like to say to Justin?

TIFFANY ALVAREZ: Just to thank you, and thank you for State Farm for everything, because we're gonna have a fun time now (smiling).

JUSTIN MORNEAU: You're welcome. I'm glad we can help you guys out. Maybe I made one Twins fan out of this night. It should be good.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up for questions.

**Q. Justin, after watching Josh's first round, the way the stadium reacted, was any part of you rooting for him in the finals?**

JUSTIN MORNEAU: Definitely. He's the story of this year. I mean, the year he's having, for him to come in and put on a show like that, I mean, it was something impressive. We were over there in awe of what he was doing.

I was kind of cheering for him because, you know, the whole crowd's behind him, everybody's cheering him on. You want to see that story end in a good way, but, you know, at the same time, it's something I always dreamed of. You know, I played Home Run Derby in my backyard all the time. I watched it on TV. You know, it was something that I always wanted to do. To be able to do it here, be a part of that performance Josh put on, it was something special.

**Q. Justin, do you feel like you've pushed the U.S. Olympic team over Russia to No. 2 on all-time upsets in sports history?**

JUSTIN MORNEAU: I don't know. Maybe. No, not even close.

But I mean, I think he just got tired. You know, he hit so many in a row. I mean, that's hard to do in itself. Then to have to get back out there and swing a couple more times, you know, I mean, he was the one that put on the show tonight. I think everyone will remember Josh Hamilton's 28 home runs more than they'll remember I won the thing. I'm just glad I was a part of the whole thing.

**Q. Does it feel almost weird to win it? I mean, you had 13 fewer home runs than he did. Do you think the rule should be like rewritten or...?**

JUSTIN MORNEAU: Yeah, I mean, I didn't really make the rules. But, you know, it's been that way. They changed the rules the last couple years and made it so you add the two total rounds and all that kind of thing. The format is great. I mean, there's nothing really that I would change. But, you know, it does seem kind of unfair that he didn't get, you know, to win the whole thing with hitting the most total home runs. But at the same time, we were, you know, just going by what the rules were, and I'll definitely take it (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: Just to announce, Joe Vavra is here.

**Q. Does it feel good, considering they kind of waited a while to invite you to this one, and you had to wait and wonder, and then you came out tonight and kind of did better than last year?**

JUSTIN MORNEAU: Yeah, they ran out of all the good players and then they asked me (smiling). It was fun. It was something, if they asked me, you know, it was definitely gonna be hard for me to turn down. I did it last year and wasn't quite as successful. But, you know, I had the experience.

And to be part of the last one at Yankee Stadium, to be here, you know, in this place, in this time, it's an honor just to be on that field, to be in the Home Run Derby. And, you know, it's something you couldn't say no to. It's something I'm glad I did, and I'm glad Joe (Vavra) took two days out of his All-Star break and came here with us to throw to me, all the hard work he puts in. He's our hitting coach. He's in that cage with me

for hours. He's seen that swing a few times. I'm glad he came and got to be a part of this, too.

**Q. How much does this say about stamina and how much that's such a big part of this as well?**

JUSTIN MORNEAU: I take a lot of swings every day in the cage. I don't know if that helped me at all. We're usually the first ones down in the cage with Joe. He'll throw to me until I can't swing anymore pretty much. But it's something -- I like to take a lot of swings. And, you know, I mean, Josh, to take that many swings in a row like he did, there's no way you can't get tired from doing that. What he did was, like I said, anyone who was here won't forget that performance.

**Q. Justin, you thought that this ballpark might have set up for you a little bit better than last year in San Francisco. Did you have a different approach as well going in this time?**

JUSTIN MORNEAU: San Francisco is a little higher wall in right. It was a little deeper out there in right-center, all that kind of stuff. You almost start over-swinging, think you have to hit it harder, farther. You know, everyone wanted to see the ball go in the water there, you know, all that kind of stuff. So you start trying to do that, and you get away from your swing. Here, I was trying not to over-swing. But in the end I was swinging as hard as I could anyway.

You know, it was one of those things where you try to get that home run early, then relax, and you know what to expect the whole day coming in.

**Q. Justin, this one is obviously the last All-Star Game at Yankee Stadium. There's a lot of red, white and blue waving going on. You're one of three Canadians here at the game. You gonna wave the red and white?**

JUSTIN MORNEAU: The Canadian media is also here, too. It's awesome for Canada to have this many players here at the All-Star Game. I think it's good for kids growing up in Canada to see there's something we do other than play hockey, and we can do it at this level. And it's an honor to be on the same field as Russ Martin and Dempster, and the years they've had. And, you know, you could have an argument for Bay also to have him here. And to be in there with those guys

and to know that, you know, Larry Walker was the guy that I always looked up to as a Canadian, he got to play in some All-Star Games, he did the Derbys and all that kind of stuff. It's pretty cool for me to think of the guy I grew up wanting to be like from BC that, you know, I'm here in this moment right now.

**Q. Justin, you excited to have bragging rights over something over Walker?**

JUSTIN MORNEAU: I don't know. He accomplished a lot in his career, you know. I'll definitely send him a text message after this, you know.

But he did so much in his career that he set the bar for all Canadian players. He's a guy that, you know, he's always there if I need something, and he's the guy that everybody growing up wanted to hit like.

THE MODERATOR: Any further questions?

**Q. Justin, after seeing Josh's first performance, was there a feeling amongst any of the other hitters like yourself that you guys were just killing time waiting for him to wrap up the thing?**

JUSTIN MORNEAU: Well, we were sitting there saying to each other, you know, How do you follow that? I mean, Berkman went out there, he was hitting balls, blasting balls in the upper deck, and everyone, it almost seemed like they were bored after him hitting the ball out of the stadium. I mean, what Berkman was doing was impressive. To go up there, I'm glad I didn't hit right after him, that's for sure.

You get up there and you see what he did. You know, when players are giving a guy a standing ovation, when they're in awe of what a guy is doing, that's something special.

THE MODERATOR: Justin, Mark, Tiffany, thank you and congratulations.

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