

Travelers Championship

Sunday, June 25, 2023

TPC River Highlands
Cromwell, Connecticut, USA

Keegan Bradley

Press Conference



TRAVELERS CHAMPIONSHIP

THE MODERATOR: Okay, we'd like to welcome our 2023 Travelers Championship winner, Keegan Bradley. Congratulations, Keegan, on a great win. Obviously a huge fan base out there that really enjoyed that finish.

With the victory it's your sixth on tour; number five in the FedExCup you move to; a lot of great things happened with a win, as you know.

But this one particularly special for you I would think. Being from here and having your family here, just how meaningful is that?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, I mean, it was the first PGA TOUR event I've ever been to back when I was a kid. I drove from Vermont and drove here to come here and watch David Duval play. It's an event my first handful of years on TOUR I really struggled at, because the pressure of wanting to play well for wow family and the local community was too much. I had to learn how to do it.

Other than the majors and those type of tournaments, this was always the top of my list. What a special thing to be the winner of this tournament.

THE MODERATOR: It was an amazing finish really. Got off to a six-stroke lead after 12, 13 holes, and then a couple errors down the stretch. What was the mindset? What were you thinking? Was everything going a little fast, and how did you rectify that situation?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, I was playing great. I didn't look a little many leaderboards because I knew I sort of had control of the tournament if I just played my best. With Chez, who was kind of right behind me who was a little bit back, I knew that I sort of had control.

This course is so fun to play because every hole is a birdie hole, but also on that backside there is water everywhere so you can make a bogey in a second. It was a stressful finish, but once I got that ball on the green on 17, I kind of could take a little bit of a deep breath.

It got it moving a little quick, but I did a great job just trying to stay calm and ended up winning the tournament.

THE MODERATOR: Take some questions.

Q. What's it like to -- I think Travelers had statistically the best field in golf this year. What's it like to be a part of that field, to be out there with a really packed property and they're all cheering for you? Was that something that set in, and was it kind of hard to compete with that to kind of keep your emotions at bay?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, it is, because for me, I'm always trying to keep my emotions down. That's one of the reasons why I love the Ryder Cup, because you let it all out at all times.

You don't want to get too emotional on any shot, whether it be good or bad. It's easy to get emotional on a really good shot out here because of the fans. My biggest job was to try to stay calm and not get too excited, especially early in in the round, because you know coming down the end it's going to be stressful. No matter how big of a lead you have, there are some tough tee shots you have to hit.

I was able to do that.

At times when I was lacking a little bit I would look to the crowd. If I just look into the crowd they cheered, and I tried to just take that energy they were cheering at me.

Q. Two questions, if I may: First, how important was it after struggling at LACC to take that time that you mentioned at home to readjust to mentally prepare your game for this tournament?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, I really played awful there. I called my coach, Darren May, and I went home to Massachusetts and then I drove up here Monday. We had a great day Monday, great day Tuesday, and a great day Wednesday.

That doesn't always mean you're going to play well, but seemed like I was in great shape. It really clicked in, and



when it clicks in like that -- I've never played -- that's the only time I've ever played in my career that I can think of that I did everything the best I could.

Q. Follow up: You've played at this tournament multiple times before. It's New England's only tournament consistently on the calendar. Have you ever been prouder to be from this region of the country than you are now?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: No. One of my favorite things about myself is where I'm from. The bond that you have with people from New England is different than anywhere in the world, any country I've ever been.

I'm very proud. I've lived all over New England, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and I'm very, very proud of where I come from. And I love every sports team in this area, so to hear the fans cheer for me like they would a sports team, it means a lot.

Q. Of the difficult shots in your life, where does the shot at 17 fit?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: It was what was going to win or lose me the tournament, so I remember when I won the PGA I made triple on 15 and then my tee shot on 16 was regular tee shot, but, again, I always used to say that was the best shot I've ever hit and not one that anyone would remember.

That 17th hole is for sure up there because you have to take an aggressive line. And I did an interview with Chamblee and he said it played as the second hardest hole on the course, or maybe the first. 44 balls in the water today.

What a great shot, one of the best I've ever hit in my life.

Q. Keegan, you won the PGA so quickly, your first major. It was probably before winning a major became a thing for you. I just wondering where does this stand on the level with a major championship? I know you addressed it yesterday a little bit.

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, the majors are the majors and they hold such weight and they hold history, and you know, where your legacy is in the game.

But then you can measure other tournaments with what happened out here today, and enjoyment level. Winning before family versus winning after family doesn't even compare. Winning a tournament with your family is the greatest feeling because they put up with a lot of nonsense I would say of my traveling, missing first days of school, or

my wife being alone all the time when I'm on the road.

For them to be able to feel the excitement of this and be here and feel it, I can't put a price on that. It's just the greatest feeling.

Q. Just curious, down the stretch which of the shots, the drive at 13, the putt from the front of 14 green, which of those things kind of made it tightened a little bit and said, all right, get back to what I got to do here?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Well, the putt on 14 was in an old ball mark, and I don't know if anyone knew. It was halfway down. It was brutal.

When I missed the birdie putt on 15 I hit a great shot in there and I had that up-and-over. I figured a three here is going to go a really long way.

When I made par there I kind of was like, all right, this is definitely getting a little tight. I had to refocus.

Hit a great shot on 16 and the wind was just stronger than we thought. Again, that tee shot on 17 is what really did it.

Q. First things first, did you know that Vermont was part of Connecticut, because it certainly felt like that? Did you feel that?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, I did feel it. Yes, I did.

Q. What does it mean to you when you look at the kids in the crowd, right, to be able to show them a New England golfer winning?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, I said in my interview after the round, this is for all the kids like me that grew up in winters and can't play and would watch the kids from Florida and down south get better and compete and get invited to the biggest tournaments in the country that I was never invited to.

And I hope that they know that they can come from this area. From where I grew up this is like the south down here. They can come from this area and still make it in golf. If you put your time in and work when you can and enjoy the game, I hope they can see they can do that.

Q. Do you have any gratitude or a message for the fans that were cheering you on today?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah. I can't even describe what that felt like. I dreamt my whole life of playing in Fenway Park, Gillette Stadium, and it feel pretty close to what that would feel like.

You know, I had a bunch of people say they've never heard the 18th hole sound like that. It was just so fun to have a three-shot lead where I could enjoy it and mess up a little bit and still win. I could let my guard down a little bit.

You know, I've never been able to do that in my six wins. I'm so thankful for the fans. I'm so honored to be their winner.

Q. Keegan, was it hard or easier to keep your emotions in check last night sleeping, this morning warming up? Was it harder than dealing with what you had to deal with on the back nine?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Really hard. I had two dreams that I woke up to last night to hitting shots out of bounds. Like nightmares. I had a dream that Justin Thomas was shooting 10-under par.

Like I felt great yesterday. This morning I was feeling it. I texted my wife, I got here and I was feeling it. I went out this morning and played basketball with my son thinking that would help. Didn't really help.

I was really nervous on the first hole, and then once I got third hole I just felt really calm. Then later in the round I definitely felt it too. This was a real tough one the last couple days.

Q. You mention the Ryder Cup earlier and how much you enjoy it given the play with the energy and the crowd. Obviously this win puts you squarely in the Ryder Cup mix. What do you have to do over the next couple months to secure your spot on the team?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, I mean, it is the first thing I said to my wife walking up to sign my card: This is a pretty big step towards doing that. I'm 37 years old. I hope to play in multiple more. I don't know how many more with everybody so good and the younger kids, just the team is incredible.

I still got a lot to show the captain. I would love to go to Rome and be a part of that team.

THE MODERATOR: Before we let you go, we know your phone is blowing up. Care to share any text messages you might have got? I know you get a lot of support from the guys out here. Any others that you can share?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Well, of course Michael Jordan texted me, and that means a lot to me. He's obviously my hero but one my good friends. Timmy Wakefield, Boston Red Sock. Baba Boey from Howard Stern texted me.

That was probably my favorite.

I did a quick scan. I had two, three hundred texts and I saw that. Aaron Rodgers. That meant a lot, even though he plays for the Jets now.

It's such a cool -- when you get a text from an athlete it hits different because they know what goes into doing something like this and it means a lot.

THE MODERATOR: I'm sure you'll have time when you're celebrating this evening to so scroll through the rest. Thank you for your time.

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Thank you, guys.

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