

# BMW Championship

Tuesday, June 25, 2024

Castle Rock, Colorado, USA

Castle Pines Golf Club

## Wyndham Clark

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Wyndham Clark, come on up, Wyndham. Wyndham, do you remember the golf lesson --

(Applause.)

This is an Open champion, one of the best players on TOUR, and most importantly, he's our very own. He's from Denver, Colorado. We're going to do a short Q&A, and after our Q&A, we'll open it up for a few questions from the crowd.

Before we get going, I've got to ask you, do you remember the lesson you gave me on the court of a Nuggets game?

WYNDHAM CLARK: I do, yes. It's probably the most random place I've ever given a golf lesson in front of thousands of people.

THE MODERATOR: My handicap has doubled since then. You're a much better player.

WYNDHAM CLARK: I gave you the long-term lesson.

THE MODERATOR: Yes, you did. Listen, you all know about Wyndham Clark. You wouldn't be here, you wouldn't be covering this tournament if you don't know about this man.

But I want to ask you, as a man who grew up in Greenwood Village, the pride of Valor Christian, what are you hearing from the folks in your home state about this tournament coming to town next month?

WYNDHAM CLARK: Well, first off, I just want to express my excitement for this event. I told George and Duffy last night that I felt like growing up I got a little bit snubbed, not having a PGA TOUR event here as a top player in high school and in college and not being able to play in front of my home crowd.

So for me this is so special, to be in front of you guys and ultimately play in front of my home crowd at a course I grew up playing. So I'm super excited.



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Then as far as everyone else, friends and family are so excited to come out and, one, support the PGA TOUR. Everything that the BMW Championship has to offer and see the best players.

But then also the players are really excited. Some guys -- actually, a lot of guys have never even been here. So for them, they're going to get to see one of the best courses in Colorado, if not the country. Colorado has so much to offer, as everyone knows. It's beautiful. We have the mountains, and people don't always think of the golf.

So I'm really excited people get to see how good the golf is here.

THE MODERATOR: That's such a good point. We missed a generation of good golfers who got to experience this beautiful course here. I grew up at the International, and that we're back here at a different tournament, it's younger golfers, younger kids at my age back then, get to enjoy what I enjoy.

But you actually helped with the marketing of this tournament. As a matter of fact, you shot a commercial not too long ago with John Elway and Peyton Manning, two icons of Denver sports, and you had a nice little role in that commercial. Let's roll the videotape, please.

(Video played.)

Well done, my friend. Acting chops, Wyndham Clark. Who told you about this? Who contacted you to shoot that commercial, and how long did it take? Give me the details.

WYNDHAM CLARK: They actually contacted me after the Wells Fargo Championship at Quail Hollow, and they said, hey, you're shooting a commercial. They kind of caught me off guard.

But it was really neat because they told me what it was for and who it was with, and growing up a Denver sports fan, John Elway is the GOAT, and you bring in Peyton Manning, and I'm a huge Broncos fan, so that was really exciting for me.

And to promote this tournament, to promote Colorado, to promote Castle Pines is really fun.

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THE MODERATOR: How long did the commercial shoot take?

WYNDHAM CLARK: Not as long as some other ones I've been a part of, which is eight, nine-hour days. This one was pretty quick.

THE MODERATOR: How many takes did it take you to get your lines down?

WYNDHAM CLARK: As you see, I didn't have too many lines. It still took me a while, maybe 20, 30 minutes.

THE MODERATOR: The BMW tournament will be the first tournament in your home state. We haven't had one for a while. Cherry Hills is the last time we had one. Now here you are with a chance to play professionally. How excited are you about that? You talked to your colleagues on TOUR. You get to get the home play now.

WYNDHAM CLARK: Yes. Very rare to be able to play in your home state. For me growing up, the first tournament I ever attended was the International. I actually sat on the 9th green, and I remember watching David Duval and Retief Goosen and Ernie Els at the time being some of the best players in the world. That's when I knew I wanted to do what they did, and that's 15 years ago, 15, 20 years ago. Actually, it would be more than that, 20 years ago.

Then attending the BMW at Cherry Hills where I grew up playing in 2014, I was in college, and I went out and supported my good friend Morgan Hoffmann, who ended up finishing second or third in that event, which propelled his career. It was his best finish ever on the FedExCup.

I've been very involved in golf in Colorado, specifically at this event and this venue. I'm so excited to be able to play in front of the home crowd. Hopefully it would be a dream come true, been praying a lot about it and manifesting that maybe I would be the champion.

THE MODERATOR: I know what your colleagues on TOUR are thinking, we're going to altitude, time to bring the calculator out, do some math. What is the one requirement necessary to play this course well? You played it a few times.

WYNDHAM CLARK: This is probably the most challenging course in Colorado because you do -- I mean, first the altitude, and then you have a lot of elevation change, which can be a challenge.

As George said, it's 8,100 yards, so it's very deep, long.

But it's very tough off the tee, and then around the greens you have to be very precise. At altitude where we normally don't play, that's going to be difficult. You're going to see a lot of us Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, spending a lot of time on the range with TrackMans and all the measuring devices on distance, trying to figure out how far the ball is going.

If you see us airmail some shots over the green by 10, 15 yards, it's not because we're bad. We're just not used to playing at this altitude. That's going to be the biggest challenge is distance control and making sure our 8-iron is flying the distance we want and so on.

THE MODERATOR: You've seen the rough here of late. How does the ball fly out of the rough at altitude? Is it different than humidity?

WYNDHAM CLARK: Sorry if we're getting a little technical with the golf stuff. Off a fairway, the ball spins the most. As you get into the rough, it spins even less. Then you get into altitude, and the ball actually spins less.

You'll see guys maybe adjust clubs, maybe sometimes even golf ball, and out of the rough it makes it even tougher because, if it's a really thick lie, it comes out pretty dead and no spin.

You can also get jumpers, and that's a golfer's worst nightmare, especially at altitude, because now the ball is jumping and staying in the air forever.

So there's a lot of challenges that this golf course is going to bring for us, but I think we're all excited. This championship for a lot of us is so big because it's the top 50 players. It's kind of the staple now for us to try to be top 50.

Obviously if you have a great week and go on to the FedExCup championship in Atlanta, that's kind of the added bonus.

Anyone that gets here, you're going to see a lot of smiling faces that are happy to be here.

THE MODERATOR: I'm curious. You're competitive, and there's certain secrets that you keep to yourself, but if your colleagues ask you, if they ask for advice here, do you give them everything? What do you say?

WYNDHAM CLARK: I give them restaurant recommendations. I give them where to go fish and where to spend time with their family.

THE MODERATOR: Good answer. Your life has changed



over the last year and a half. You burst onto the scene. You're one of the stars of the TOUR now. I had the privilege a year ago to watch you win at LACC, the U.S. Open. It was so cool.

When you look at your life the last year and a half, how much of a whirl wind has it been?

WYNDHAM CLARK: Yeah, it's honestly I'm so blessed to be in this position. I know what it's like not to be in this position and to not have your name be recognized and be one of the featured guys on TOUR. So now to be out here doing things like this, it honestly is a huge honor.

It's been a lot of fun. I travel a lot. I get to see a lot of great places, meet a lot of great people, and I get to represent my country again this year hopefully in two different ways in the Presidents Cup and the Olympics.

It's just little things like that. Honestly growing up here and hitting golf balls and playing golf courses like this and public tracks, you dream about those things, but you never really thought it could be this great.

So I kind of exceeded my expectations in my own career, which is pretty amazing.

THE MODERATOR: You'll be in Paris, and big deal for you too, you were featured on Full Swing. Was it tough? Because you have to show some vulnerabilities to do that show. Was that a tough adjustment for you?

WYNDHAM CLARK: You know, some guys in that show took the route of not showing too much vulnerability. That's just how I am. I'm kind of open up in sharing with people.

I know my story has a really lasting impact, and I think I could help and influence other people, so I feel like it's my job to share my story and hopefully help people.

So it wasn't too hard for me. I still haven't watched it.

THE MODERATOR: You haven't watched it?

WYNDHAM CLARK: No. I lived it, so I let other people watch it. I always feel a little weird watching myself on TV.

THE MODERATOR: I watch myself after every show. I don't know what the problem is.

(Laughter).

Wyndham, we're talking this year with the FedExCup, this is very competitive. How much more competitive is it than a regular tournament? Because it weeds down after every

tournament now.

WYNDHAM CLARK: Yeah, so you approach every tournament the same, and that's kind of my mindset. But as you get to the playoffs it's kind of like -- instead of being a marathon that the season is all year, it's kind of a sprint.

You start off in Memphis, and everyone's goal from there is to try to get to this event.

Then as you get to this event, there's some guys that already have their spot locked up for the TOUR Championship. But this event really is -- you want to get to this event. Anyone that's here, it's so big because the bonuses, the exemptions for the future years, being in all the signature events, getting into majors, world ranking points, and obviously the cash component that comes with our job, this is where we get a lot of those bonuses.

For us, it's a big week, and you'll see everyone have all their team out here from strength coaches -- I mean, it's like a major. That's why for us it's very important.

THE MODERATOR: My favorite part of this event, the proceeds go to the Evans Scholar Fund, guys like Logan. I get to learn so much about that organization, what it's done to change lives, change kids, change a lot of people's fortunes.

Let's talk caddies. What is the player-caddie relationship really like on TOUR? What's it like for you?

WYNDHAM CLARK: I am so blessed to have probably one of the best caddies, I think the best caddie on TOUR. He was my assistant coach at the University of Oregon for one year. He was a great player. He, for a while, played more majors and more PGA TOUR events than I did, so he was a very accomplished guy who just came short of really making it.

That's what I think has made our relationship so unique, is he has brought all the things he learned of why he didn't make it and helped me in my game. So in the first few years of coming onto the scene and on TOUR, I struggled with temper and with handling my emotions and all the things you need to do to be a great player, and he was there to say, Wyndham, I've gone down this path. Don't do what I did. I was one of the best that never made it, and I don't want you to be that person.

We have a very great relationship. He is older than me, so I look up to him, but yet I'm his boss and we're also really good friends. So we have this great dynamic where our families hang out and we have so much fun together, and then inside the ropes we're really business-like.



Caddies are such an important part in our game, and I'm so fortunate to have John.

THE MODERATOR: I understand you carried Logan's bag in the tournament. How would you rate your caddie skills?

WYNDHAM CLARK: It wasn't the first time I caddied. I grew up caddieing at Cherry Hills some, and Logan's dad, Justen Byler was in the crowd. He was my high school basketball coach at Valor.

I got to know Logan at a young age, so honestly to see him at a young age and going through the ranks in high school and college and now sitting up here talking to us is amazing.

I don't know how good I was as a caddie, but I really enjoyed that day and hopefully influenced his life.

THE MODERATOR: You were a high school hooper?

WYNDHAM CLARK: For one year.

THE MODERATOR: How was your game? What was your forte?

WYNDHAM CLARK: I was pretty good. I definitely have a temper, as J.P. knows. I was a pretty good ball handler, and definitely an aggressive player.

THE MODERATOR: Led the league in technical fouls then?

WYNDHAM CLARK: No. Maybe sometimes.

THE MODERATOR: Adam from Highlands Ranch asks what course did you spend most of your childhood growing up playing?

WYNDHAM CLARK: I started my golf at Family Sports Center, as everyone knows here what that is. That's where I really fell in love with the game. My dad and I used to spend hours on that chipping green.

Then around 10 years old, my dad joined Cherry Hills, which was a huge endeavor for him financially to do that, but it was honestly the biggest blessing for me. I remember saying, oh, dad, I have free golf balls, and he was like, yeah, they're free. Not really.

But for me I didn't have to go put in money into the ball machine to get balls.

Honestly, I think without Cherry Hills, I don't know if I'd be

here. I had such a great membership and great head pros in Clayton Cole and John Ogden, that allowed me to be there eight, nine hours a day and completely practice and do everything I can to hone my game. So I really am indebted to Cherry Hills and those guys.

THE MODERATOR: That golf ball story reminds me, for the fellow media who haven't been here before, they do have proV1s on the range. Please don't take the range balls.

**Q. Wyndham, I saw a quote attributed to you over the weekend about playing in Paris, and the quote was: This is a bigger deal, playing on the Olympics team, than the Ryder Cup. Can you explain why that stage for you is so meaningful?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: I last year had one of the greatest honors in representing our country. I love this country, and to wear the red, white, and blue was such an honor.

The Ryder Cup is probably in golf the biggest stage for an American to play on.

The Olympics is the biggest for sports and has been for thousands of years. Now that golf is in the Olympics, I think that trumps that.

I'm just so excited. I'm through the roof that I get to go and represent our country in Paris, and hopefully I'm up there here internationally with them and on the podium. I'll really excited.

**Q. I'm just wondering do you feel any additional pressure because you're coming home for this tournament? Do you think it's going to be any different for you than your competitors?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: I'm not going to lie, yeah, I do feel that. I haven't played here in front of a home crowd, and especially now being a top 5 player in the world -- and I've gained a lot of traction, I think -- yeah, there is a little bit of pressure.

But I go to things that have helped me in that. I got to defend my championship at Quail Hollow this year. Didn't do that great at that. Felt pressure there. Same thing with the U.S. Open.

So I feel like I'm learning to handle that pressure. So I'm hoping by then I'll be ready.

But if not, honestly, I'm going to look at it as just enjoying the week. I get to play in front of people that never see me play on just a course that I love. So I'm really looking

forward to that part.

**Q. Kind of playing off the pressure thing, you had a really honest quote before the U.S. Open a couple weeks ago, that you just wanted to get your game dialed back in to propel you. But when you win a major, it changes your expectations because you said you exceeded those. So now that the expectation has changed, how does that change your approach week in and week out because you're a major champ?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: That quote I said, I wasn't playing good going into the U.S. Open, and I knew it. Because I wasn't playing good, I wasn't going to fabricate where my game's at. I've learned so much that this is a marathon, not a sprint in my career. I used that week. I grinded so much that week not so much to have success in that week, but for the following week.

Last week I got better and better each day. That's what I was hoping the Memorial and the U.S. Open were going to do to propel me for the rest of the year.

So yes, there's added pressure. People expect you to play great all the time. But this game's so tough, and guys like Scottie and Xander are making it look so easy. I'm hoping, with a lot of focus and continue to do what I do, that I can get to that level. But I'm just out here trying to enjoy the game and be the best that I can be.

**Q. You've won a U.S. Open, you've won at Pebble Beach, you've won at Quail Hollow. Have you let your mind wander to what it would feel like if you were able to win here in your hometown, and how would it compare?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: Oh, yeah, I've thought about it a lot. I've thought about the celebration. I've thought about how fun it would be. Honestly, every year you look at tournaments that you're really excited for, and you named pretty much those ones, and this being one of those big events simply because it's where I grew up, and I would love to represent Colorado in a great way.

I'm really looking forward to it. The Olympics is amazing and everything coming up is super exciting, but this week is definitely close to my heart.

**Q. You said you were inspired by watching the greats, and Duval. Do you imagine seeing yourself through their eyes when you look over and see there's going to be a lot of younger kids in the audience looking to inspire someone so they can follow your path like you did to become a professional golfer?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: Yeah, I feel like that's a lot of motivation for a lot of us out there on TOUR. Obviously I want to try to be the best I can in my sport for personal reasons, but I also feel like I have a platform to inspire other people, especially young people.

I always feel like I have an ear for younger kids when they're out there cheering my name and saying that because I know that I was that kid one time, and I remember when guys like David Duval or top players would throw me a ball or give me a smile or sign something.

So I know how much that meant to me, so I hope I can do the same for those kids.

**Q. A couple weeks ago, you reconnected with Colin Prater, coach, teacher, who qualified for the U.S. Open. How nice of a reminder is that that this game can take so many paths to get -- whether it's a professional player or an amateur player or a teacher, coach -- to get to an event like that?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: First of all, Colin is a really good player. With the nine holes we played. I was very impressed with how good he was. It reminds me, one, of just how great this game is, that the top players in the world are playing with amateurs or professionals that are teachers, and it's so unique.

It reminds me when I was in high school, and Jason Preeo, who was the Coach at Valor, went and qualified and was 12th at the U.S. Open at Pebble Beach after two days.

It's amazing what people can do in the game of golf at the highest level. Honestly, I was really inspired by Colin's story. We actually knew each other back in the day and played golf against each other. So it was kind of cool.

**Q. How do you fix a smother hook slice?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: A smother hook slice, that's a lot of problems there.

(Laughter).

**Q. No, I'm kidding. What's your favorite part about this course right here?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: I think, when I describe this place to people I think it goes in with what their motto is, which is the best day in golf. I truly believe it is probably the best day in golf. The experience here is unlike anywhere else. The minute you come through the gates and the service, hitting proVs on the range, that first tee shot looking down

at Pike's Peak, the quality of the golf course, the milkshakes in the locker room afterwards, it's honestly second to none.

I think that's what's special about this place.

**Q. Wyndham, you talked a little bit earlier about kind of your mental approach to the game and how that helped you sort of reach a new level. We sort of talked a little bit about that. But when you reach that level, do you have to change your approach at anything you were doing? Or were the same things you were doing to reach that top level sort of the same things you do at that level?**

WYNDHAM CLARK: It's very fluid. I think obviously what got me to get to that level was very important, and I still work on those fundamentals and those things, but now I have new challenges.

My time is way more precious, and I don't have as much of my own time. I have to manage that. I have to manage expectations like he alluded to earlier of constantly always trying to be up at the top.

So I've had to learn new things, but as it's gone throughout the year, we were working on some things and now we've maybe gone back to some of the old things that helped me.

So in the mental game, you kind of always come back to home base. You try certain things, and it's a process. You see what works and what doesn't, and you kind of check those off. That's kind of what I've been going about.

THE MODERATOR: One last question. I'll leave you with this. I have a friend in the crowd here who's a 7 handicap. What's a good score for a 7 handicap sight unseen on this course today?

WYNDHAM CLARK: From his respective tees or our tees?

THE MODERATOR: What tees are we playing, two birds?

WYNDHAM CLARK: Two birds, 7 handicap, respectable score, I'd say today if he shot around 86, I think he would do -- I think he should be very excited.

THE MODERATOR: You're going to lose some money, pal. (Laughter.)

WYNDHAM CLARK: This course is tough.

THE MODERATOR: For all of you, thanks so much for coming, Wyndham. It's such an honor. You are the pride of Denver, Colorado.

