

# Travelers Championship 2015

Tuesday, June 23  
Press Conference

## Billy Horschel



**TRAVELERS**  
CHAMPIONSHIP



**MARK STEVENS:** We'd like to welcome Billy Horschel. Billy, you'll be making your third start in the Travelers Championship, first since 2012. Kind of talk about your thoughts coming back, and then we'll go into some questions.

**BILLY HORSCHTEL:** Yeah, I love this area. I'm not from the New England area, but my dad has three really good friends that I've been raised around my whole life and they were born and raised in the New England area. So I'm a big Boston area sports fan. So coming back to the New England area I get really energized. I've played in the CVS the last couple of years, and I'll be playing in it again on Monday and Tuesday with Jimmy Walker. But this area is just exciting. The fans out here are so electrifying. They make the tournament unbelievable. The last four holes you feel like you're in a big stadium. They're all up on the hills and you feel like they're all looking down at you. Either they're rooting you on or they're rooting the other guy on, so it feels like a really big arena the last four holes. So it's a great tournament. Nathan and Andy do an unbelievable job putting it on. I think every player can agree with me that they take care of not only the players, but they take care of our families, they take care of the caddies, which has become an issue at other tournaments. But they do a heck of a job. They've been first class taking care of the caddies for many years. And the fans love coming to this event. I felt bad that I've missed the last couple years, but I felt like I needed to come back. I felt like I played well on this course in years past. I felt like it suits my game. I'm happy to be back, and hopefully I can be standing on the green on Sunday with a trophy in my hand.

**Q. My first question is about Chambers Bay and Jordan Spieth. Obviously, he had a heck of a performance. What do you think? What impresses you most about Jordan Spieth?**

**BILLY HORSCHTEL:** You know what? I'm a huge fan of Jordan Spieth. I've said it for many years now, and obviously he's only been on TOUR for three or four years. But the kid is 21 years old. The maturity he has in his game, the way he understands his game. The way he goes about plodding around the golf course. He's just an unbelievable kid. He has that "It" factor in him. And he's so modest too. Obviously around

friends everyone's going to be a little cocky, and he has that in him, which is great, but he never comes across in a setting that would make him look bad, and he's not that way period. I'm saying he's a very humble guy, but he has that "It" factor that gives him that cockiness on the course when you need to. But as I said, if I had a 21-year-old daughter I'd be telling her, hey, trying to hook her up with Jordan Spieth, because I think he's an unbelievable player, but, man, he's making a lot of money right now. When he's done with the game of golf at 21, winning back-to-back majors, the youngest to win two majors, I know he's not the youngest, but the youngest in almost a century, in almost a hundred years to win the first two majors and this and that, I mean, it's just remarkable how good of a player he is. I don't see him letting off the gas pedal anytime soon. So I think we all need to buckle up and get to going to catch him.

**Q. Thoughts on the greens this week?**

**BILLY HORSCHTEL:** Greens this week? I have no issues with these. These are pure. This course is unbelievable. It's always in good shape. I remember coming here in 2002. It was the first time I ever played the golf course. I had an uncle that lived in the Hartford area, and he was a member here at TPC River Highlands, and I came here probably a month before the event. It was during U.S. Open week because it was at Bethpage. Played the golf course, and man, this golf course is awesome. Fell in love with it. Every time I come back, it looks great. Every time I watch it on TV it looks amazing. So no issues this week.

**Q. Did you have any regrets for what you said? I know you apologized on Twitter and about some of your actions and words and stuff a couple days later. Any regrets from it?**

**BILLY HORSCHTEL:** Yeah, there are a couple regrets I had. The actions I showed on six green weren't acceptable. I've done really well since 2011 at McGladrey with my emotions and controlling them and growing up and being mature. But it was something that I'm not very happy with. I wasn't very happy with. When I walked off the golf course I had a sickening feeling for what I showed on the sixth green. I will make myself clear again. I did not hit that green. I know better than that. I swear on my life. My caddie was there, he will swear on his life I did not hit that green.

But at the same time, it wasn't acceptable. It's not the role model I want to be to millions of young golfers. And I can understand that if people that were my fans that are turned off by it that are no longer my fans, I totally understand their reasoning behind it. The only thing I can say is that I promise I'll do better in the future, and I want to be the role model to millions of young golfers. The other thing that I wish I could do better -- I don't take back my comments that I said on Sunday, not one comment at all, but I do wish I would have done it in a private setting with Mike Davis and the USGA staff. To air some stuff out in public was not acceptable. But, like I said, I wish I would have done it in more of a private setting where I have looked back.

**Q. How much feedback did you get from your peers? I know a lot of them voiced similar, more low-key opinions. But you became the poster guy about the sentiments there. Just talk about some of the feedback you got from them?**

BILLY HORSCHEL: Yeah, I think my peers know that I'm a very honest person. I've been that way since day one. I may be critical of certain situations, but I'm the first one to give praise. Whether it's for a player for playing well, whether it's for the golf course and setting it up. Or whether it's for the staff for hosting a great event. But everyone, whether it be players, caddies out here on the PGA TOUR have fully supported me. I've not heard one bad thing. We're a family out here. I think the people that played that week have my back. I'm okay with standing up front here and voicing the opinions that needed to be voiced, and I accept the opinions of everyone else in the world, whether they are negative or positive. I read probably 20,000 tweets that have been mentioned about me, some are good, some are bad. That's the way it's going to be when you voice your opinion and you're honest about something. But my peers are very supportive of my comments.

**Q. You have a very unique sense of style. I was just wondering have you ever pitched any pants (Indiscernible).**

BILLY HORSCHEL: I've always had the sense of wanting to always represent myself in a fashionable way. I always thought if I looked good, I'd play well. Whether it's on the golf course or whether it's going out somewhere. I always wanted to make sure I felt good about the way I looked. And that's the easiest thing to do is dress well and felt good about the way I dressed. It makes it really easy that I have a wonderful sponsor in Ralph Lauren. They provide wonderful gear. It's the best in golf, and Ralph Lauren is the best in the fashion industry. I don't think anyone can even come close to stepping up to what they've been able to do over, what is it now, 50-plus years of being in the business. So I'm honored that they have me as an athlete. I'm happy

that I represent them. Obviously, I did not represent them or my other sponsors in the light I wished to last week with my actions on the six green. But Ralph Lauren, I love it. It's the best in the business, and have I pitched them on any pants? No, because they're the most innovative company there is. They're always a year and a half in advance of bringing in new stuff that no one else has. So they bring them to me, and I say, sure, let's wear them.

**Q. Billy, obviously last week was a grind. Really just trying to make par out there. This week it's a bit of a different story. So what is the transition going to be like for you this week?**

BILLY HORSCHEL: Good question. I would say this week you're going to have more birdie opportunities. You're going to have roughly 6 to 8 wedge shots into greens that you need to take advantage of during the round of golf. So I think the winning score is always around 13 to 17 on the par, and if it's really soft, I think Freddy shot 20-under or 22-under when I was here back in 2012, I believe. So it's a great golf course. You're going to golf your ball around to play well. It's not like it's a pitch-and-putt golf course. But I think the focus for me this week is on the putting green. Making sure I'm putting the ball well, rolling the ball the way I want, hitting my lines the way I want, and getting adjusted to these greens with the speeds and everything. That's what we did a lot on this morning, worked on my putting. I think if I'm able to keep putting well, then I hope to look forward to having a great week, because I've been striking the ball really well the last three or four weeks.

**Q. What are your thoughts and what do you like about the finishing holes here, particularly 15, 16, 17?**

BILLY HORSCHEL: I think those last three finishing holes, and even on 18 you can add into that, so much stronger. You can make eagle on one, you can make a hole in one on 15. You can even make a double bogey on 15. And you go to number 16, I think you've seen guys with leads on Sunday hit it in the water and wind up making double bogey. You've seen guys step up and make big, clutch shots on that hole. So it's exciting finishing holes that anything can happen. You can make a wide variety of scores. I think that's what the fans like to see. They like to see someone have a chance to come from behind and make a run. That's what Kevin Streelman did last year. He did 7 birdies to finish off and win. That's what fans want to see. They want to see exciting golf coming down the stretch, and that's what you get here at TPC River Highlands.

**Q. Do you think Mike Davis and the USGA will take some of what you said under advisement when they come back to Chambers Bay or just do what**

**he this want to do next time they go back?**

BILLY HORSCHER: I can't honestly say what they're going to do. I hope we do go back to Chambers Bay. I said it all week. I said it when I was there six weeks ago when I went out there to check out the golf course. I said it early in the week, it's the most spectacular golf course I've ever seen, the views and everything. I remember driving down Sunday morning and I said after my round, I took pictures, which I don't condone that either, in my car as I'm driving my car down the hill of the scenery out over the Puget Sound. So it's an unbelievable golf course, a great golf course tee to green. Obviously, the conditions weren't what they needed to be. I do think they understand what they need to do for later on at Chambers Bay if they go back there. The greens will be fixed. There is no doubt about that. They can fix the greens. I think the biggest issue I had, and I expressed it early in the week, is the fan experience. The fans are way too far away from the fairways. They're way too far away from the tees. There is a hole no fans can watch on number 8. I have a fan that lives out there in the Pacific Northwest that they've never seen me play tournament golf except on TV. So it was disappointing for them to come to the event and not get up close and watch me play golf or have a tough time seeing me play. My parents come to every U.S. Open, and they had a tough time. My wife came out only one round, and she walks every round that I play, just like all the other wives out here and family members. It was just a disappointing because I felt like because the Pacific Northwest hasn't had a major championship since the late 1996-97 at Sahalee, and you go back there and the fans sort of being told find a seat in the stands and watch golf. Well, they want to watch all these great championship-level players, and for them not to get up close to us and see the shots we hit and see the course the way that we're seeing it, it was just disappointing. So I think that's the biggest issue. They go back there in 2025 is the next available day. I hope they figure out some way to look at the fans. Because it doesn't matter what sporting event it is, you want the fans to have a great experience, and I'm not sure they had the experience that they were able to have. Obviously the finish was great, but there were four days of a better fan experience that could have been had.