

Travelers Championship 2015

Tuesday, June 23
Press Conference

Bubba Watson



DOUG MILNE: Welcome, Bubba Watson to the interview room. The Travelers Championship certainly a place near and dear to your heart. Got your first PGA TOUR win here in 2010, and have since had two top 5 finishes here at TPC River Highlands. Looking for your second win of the season this week, and certainly a wonderful place to do it would be right here. So with that said, just some comments on being back here?

BUBBA WATSON: Yeah, I'm excited to be back here. Obviously, great memories here. 2010 was great memories and sad memories about my dad. But overall it's a great golf course. It's always in great shape. It's always a good test as long as the weather holds up. As long as the weather is not too windy for us, we can always score around this golf course. So hopefully we'll see some red numbers go up by me and just make me feel better and have a good chance on Sunday to go for the win.

Q. One player who has had a great year so far, and you've actually seen up close and personal was Jordan Spieth. What's impressed you most about him and his game so far this year and maybe do you have any story about coming up the stretch with him at Augusta in 2014?

BUBBA WATSON: His game is impressive. It's all good. Right now he's hitting on all cylinders. His driver is good, irons are good, obviously his chipping is good and he's making putts. The key is making putts. If you look and watch every week, you're going to watch the guy. The guy's making putts. The guy's making the ten-footers, five-footers, those are the guys that are going to be there on the weekend, week-in, and week-out. What's impressed me is as young as he is, and even though he's played on the TOUR as an amateur at 16 years old, what's impressed me is how he's grown and developed his mental game, his mental focus and his preparation. That's what's impressive. At that young age, when I was that age I was still in college, but when I was that age I was nowhere near where I'm at now, and I'm not even close to what he's at. As we all know I've got mental issues, and I'm still working on it. But that's what's so impressive about him is his mental focus and drive is what is so impressive. We watch the elite athlete. We watch the mental focus

and the preparation and the drive to become the best. That's where he's heading. Who knows if he'll ever become No. 1 in the world, but he's trending in that direction pretty quickly. Then '14, yeah, I'm just glad I got to beat him in '14 before he went crazy the next year.

Q. This tournament gets a really nice field every year even after the U.S. Open and that sort of thing. What are some of the things in particular that they do to make things easier?

BUBBA WATSON: The charter from Seattle was nice. That makes it a little bit easier instead of multiple planes to get here. You can tell, the first time I met Andy and the Travelers crew, you can just tell that they were excited for us to be here. This is their hometown. This is where Travelers has most of their employees are here. They were telling me 7500 in this community. That's a lot of workers. That's a lot of people. I mean, that's Bagdad by like 20, times 20. So when you look at it from that perspective, they're involved. Workers are here volunteering. You can tell the energy behind their company. You can tell the energy behind they want to be part of this golf tournament. So that's going to excite the players obviously a lot of players take time off a big major like that, so it's hard for them to get here. But the field that's here has always gotten better. Over the last two years it's done better and better. But that is the key. The key is the sponsor showing the energy behind it and Travelers has always done that. Travelers has always wanted to be a part of this. And you can tell by the community. All the fans that come out, community support is very huge here, and that just shows that everybody's appreciative that we're here and we're doing some great things on and off the golf course.

Q. You closed your opening remarks with something like feel better again. Is that in reference to last week?

BUBBA WATSON: Feel better again?

Q. Yeah. Or play better again, sorry.

BUBBA WATSON: That wasn't even about last week. But last week I played really nicely. Just the ball bounces one way or ball bounces the other way. Mine chose to bounce the other way. I mean, that's just how it is. That's golf. Some days you play good, and you don't score well. So now I'm just looking to have a

chance on Sunday. I took five weeks off before the Open, so for five weeks I didn't have a chance on Sunday. Then I missed the cut, so I didn't have a chance till Sunday. This is my Saturday outfit, and I wore it today.

Q. What do you like about the closing stretch of holes here? What are your thoughts on those holes, particularly 15, 16 and 17?

BUBBA WATSON: Well, 17 in 2010 I made double bogey, so I hate that hole. Then 16 -- but I still won. Then in '11 or '12, maybe '12, maybe '13, I made a triple bogey on 16, and lost the tournament. I had a two-shot lead at the time. So I hate that hole as well. I really don't like these holes. I birdied 18 to get into the playoffs. I birdied 18 in the playoffs. So that was okay. 15 is really tough. 15 and 17 are two tough holes. 15 because the water sticks out over here on the right for me. So I'm trying to hit a club that's going to -- I leave my shots to the left. My misses to the left so that's water. 17 I don't know anybody that's comfortable on that tee shot, even a right-handed person that likes to cut it. So that tee shot is very difficult for me. It's a tough stretch, but at the same time you can score on them. I've seen Kevin Streelman last year. He went nuts on the whole back nine. So you can score on them and you can also mess up as I've done both. So, yeah, it's a very tough stretch. It's a very scary stretch, especially for a head case like myself.

Q. You mentioned about Travelers, very complementary about that. The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp was named the Charity of the Year by the PGA TOUR. I know you visited up there, correct me if I'm wrong. How often have you gone up there, and what does that mean to you to know the Hole in the Wall Gang Camp was named Charity of the Year?

BUBBA WATSON: That's a special honor. The I've been there, donated some money there, donated some time there. Then also the reason why I went there, I checked it out. When I had a house in North Carolina there is -- it's the same kind of camp, but it's like NASCAR, maybe Richard Petty. I'm not sure. Victory Junction, there you go. So I supported that one for a couple years when I had a Junior tournament there. We donated some money there as well, and it's the same concept. But more race car themed. So I looked at it to see what Victory Junction was going to be all about, and I've just partnered with different charities over the years in different places I've lived. So those are some of the things I've been involved with and helped with time, energy, money, whatever is needed.

Q. Going back to Chambers Bay for a second. Would you like to see the U.S. Open go back there? And if so, what, if anything, would you like to see

differently about it?

BUBBA WATSON: Yeah, I don't mind going back there. USGA, the thing we haven't talked about the most is USGA wants you scared, wants you nervous, wants you to have to think. They want you to have to play different shots, and it might be a shot away from the hole just to make par and it's a tough up and down. So I didn't see anything wrong with the course except that I missed the cut. So the change would be me making the cut. I grew up on a golf course -- if you want to say the greens were bad, I putted bad on great greens. I've putted bad on good greens. I mean on bad greens and good greens, so that didn't affect anybody. We're so used to lush golf courses, so we have expectations. That's going to be the perfect golf course like Augusta. We have these thoughts and ideas in our head and then we get there and don't see that and it changes everything. So I don't see it. I mean, I played terrible. It wasn't because of the course. It was because of me. If I missed my target by ten feet, that's ten feet I missed my target by. So made it bounce off a double bogey on the first hole, not that I'm trying to bring up the first hole of the tournament, but....

Q. People talk about on TOUR one week can make a great year. For you, what would be a great year? What would be a good year for you?

BUBBA WATSON: My whole goal this year was not to miss a cut, and that kind of backfired last week. So for me, obviously, every year there is a team event. So making the Presidents Cup this year, Ryder Cup next year, that's really what we're looking at. Even though it says I have a win this year, I don't have a win this year. I don't care what the TOUR schedule is. I'm looking at calendar year. I always look at calendar year, and I don't have a win in the calendar year. So I need a win, and I need to make the Presidents Cup team. That would make it a good year.