

# Travelers Championship

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TPC River Highlands

Cromwell, Connecticut, USA

## Xander Schauffele

Press Conference



**TRAVELERS**  
CHAMPIONSHIP

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Xander Schauffele to the interview room here at the 2024 Travelers Championship. Xander, you're an Olympic champion, we've just learned that you've just qualified again for the Olympics in Paris in a few months. You're back here ready to make your sixth start at the Travelers where you won in 2022. I guess first is, what do you like about coming back here and what's your fondest memory of victory here?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I mean, just winning in general is obviously a nice memory to touch back upon in your own brain. It's just a nice -- coming to Travelers is awesome. They do such an amazing job for ourselves, but caddies and our support team. If you look at the range it's got the little umbrellas, we have a coffee stand, a lounging area, there's the green truck's there with the pizza. So it's such a relaxing week coming after the U.S. Open and I think all of us really appreciate that.

THE MODERATOR: You've been out and seen the golf course, there's been a few changes made, what did you notice the most and what do you like?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I just played the front nine so I noticed those moguls there on 6 on the right. If you throw your ball in there you're going to get lost up in the fescue. Hard to find just tossing one in there shortly after. So, and then it seemed like some of the green surfaces -- or Austin told me the greens on the back nine they kind of made a few areas a little bit smaller. So I think overall the rough is up and the course might be playing a little bit harder than people are expecting.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. We'll take some questions.

**Q. Another top 10 in a major, but how would you kind of assess how the week went for you in Pinehurst?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it was really kind of a weird week. I hit the ball the best probably on Sunday, which was nice. Played well. 2-under is a good score around that property.

Thursday, Friday were pretty like gritty rounds that I had to play. I wasn't hitting it very good, I was missing a lot of fairways that were supposed to be sort of forgiving. Putted pretty well.

Then Saturday I kind of turned it around and ended up putting horrible. So overall I couldn't really get it going, any, at any given point for more than six to 12 holes at a time. Nice to finish on a good note playing well on Sunday and really just had didn't really feel like I had a chance to win the tournament at any point.

**Q. I know you were playing but at any point on Sunday did you look as a fan just to watch what happened and maybe entertained by it or any thoughts on it?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I mean, kind of just like everyone else, I got done and went back to the rental that I was staying at and turned it on. I think my brother was there watching it already, so caught a few holes of the drama that was unfolding there on the Sunday. So, yeah, I mean it was pretty wild, seemed like it was wild. As a fan, I'm sure it was a very exciting and for me it was just a crazy finish, for sure.

**Q. Going back to the Olympics, I know this has kind of been in the cards for a long time, but what does it mean going back after having the gold medal?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it's super special. It's always an honor to represent your country in any given tournament or event, so it was a really cool thing I was able to share with my family after winning the gold medal and qualifying was my first goal this year, it's a very hard team to qualify for, as you guys have seen on this U.S. side. That was a really big goal of mine to get back and really looking forward to competing again.

**Q. How much empathy do you have for Rory and the tough finish and just him stepping away for a couple weeks, just it's tough every week, how much empathy do you have for what he went through?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, as a competitor all of us



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have had our highs and lows to a certain degree. It's a tough spot. It for sure is a tough spot. I'm sure him and his team are discussing what happened and sometimes you just need to step away from it all and really try and be as objective as possible, because you're very much in the moment there and it obviously didn't go his way and he's just, you know, he needs some time away to figure out what's going on.

**Q. Did you take away from this tournament last year that there was a need for changes to the course? Did you think that that was a good idea, would you prefer the course stay the way it was, do you support the idea of changes as well as the changes that are made?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Typically, I mean, I wouldn't call it like a course redesign. I mean, for the most part, it feels like most courses that have been redone are worse, to be honest. It's been -- you know, I would love to sit here and -- I don't know if I'll be able to sit here and tell you a course that's been redone that I'm like, wow, this is way better. Usually there's some courses that people try to redo and they make 'em worse. So that's just kind of how it goes, unfortunately, just trying to cater to modern golf and, you know, putting bunkers 350 yards and turning, any time you turn a par-5 into a par-4 it makes the hole worse because the hole was designed to be a par-5 and then you're hitting a 4-iron into it. So out here it seems like visually it's a little bit more intimidating, some of the fairways are tighter on 1 and 6 -- and I only played the front nine so that's all I could see -- but the course looks the same for the most part. The green on 11 is a little bit smaller, which is fine because it's a wedge or 9-iron or something of that nature. So, overall, I think the course is still outstanding and the small upgrades to it are a good thing.

**Q. Bit random, but you were in some Bob Does Sports YouTube videos recently, did a Good Good video. I'm just wondering what you enjoy about being on in kind of participating in YouTube golf content?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I mean, it's brought to me by my team. I'm not super big on social media, to be completely honest, but we have a thing called the PIP and it's important to participate in things like YouTube and other things of that nature to keep your relevance. You either do the Scottie Scheffler route and you win every tournament you play in or you got to sprinkle in some YouTube stuff every once in a while. Both the guys, Good Good guys and Bob Does Sports, they're really nice guys and it's a really chill atmosphere that you kind of hang out in, and I think that's why fans or people like to watch it. So every once in awhile it's cool, but I don't see that being my sort of everyday thing.

**Q. Players are trying to get their game to peak for the major championships and play their best in that particular week. Does competing in a tournament like the U.S. Open take that out of you so that the following week for example as you come here your game typically isn't as sharp, or do you find that it carries over the preparation maybe from a major and then you're as sharp when you come to someplace like this?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I think it just depends on how your week goes, to be honest. Golf's a weird one. You play a lot of -- I was actually talking to this with someone. I was in a little bit of denial, it seemed like, at the end of the conversation. I just, I don't feel super tired just playing Memorial and the U.S. Open, but at the same time they're two pretty hot weeks, and as you know golf, there's chipping, putting, driving, so you're out in the sun pretty much all day for two whole weeks. And then you're competing for eight of the 14 days that you're out on property. It takes a lot more out of than you think. So I think mentally, mental decisions -- and that's on your caddie as well, because your caddie is the guy carrying the bag right next to you during all those hours of work, those 10 to 14 hour days you're putting in. So that starts to track. And so when you get to a property, hopefully you know it and then hopefully you and your caddie are making the right decisions during crunch time.

**Q. Does coming to a course where typically scoring is pretty low, is it refreshing coming to place where you can make a lot of birdies?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I think the most welcoming thing here is the hospitality, how nice everyone is treated and how sort of comfy everything is here. Our caddies have courtesy cars this week, and that's the extent, you know, Travelers has gone to to make everyone feel comfortable, and I think it's an awesome thing. I think just because it's easy scoring you still have to be precise and you still have to hit really good shots and hit your number, so just because it's easy scoring doesn't mean it's an easy thing to do, you still have to be sort of on the button and focused to do those things.

**Q. With Patrick being in contention last week I'm curious the last month after you won at Valhalla, has he picked your brain atmosphere all on getting back into the winner's circle or is there a way that you've been encouraging him the last month?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I mean, typically any time I'm not in the hunt in a tournament myself as a competitor I'm going to pull for him. I was pulling for him to pull through on Sunday there. No, I mean, we compete and practice a

lot, so we haven't really talked too much about it. We had a little celebration there back in Jupiter together, which was nice. But kind of just head down. We sort of take care of our own business and try to get ready and compete at a high level every week. I'm sure it's been motivating though. He plays with me all the time and he beats me all the time, so I think deep down he knows he's going to do it too.

**Q. In this game you fail a lot more than you succeed. Obviously everybody's talking about what happened with Rory on Sunday and the aftermath of that. Can you just talk about the difficulties of dealing with those things and how long has it taken at times for you to get over something like that?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It's different for everyone. It's hard to for me to compare my losses to his losses. I would say his, he's under a bit more of a microscope. When things are going really well people are all over him, and unfortunately when things don't go your way people are all over him. So, there's a microscope on him on why he didn't win and things of that nature and he's going to have to answer those questions at some point and he will, because he always does. So, for me, I wear 'em pretty hard, but sometimes it's nice to just get back on the horse and compete. Like I said, everyone handles those situations differently, and it's those times where you just lean on your team and everyone around you that supports you that whole time to give you that confidence to get back on the horse and keep chugging along.

**Q. The positive question, how long did it take after Valhalla for you to kind of like lose that winning feeling and get back to normal?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I woke up happy. I mean, I feel like I always wake up pretty happy, at least I choose to be. It was a few days. I had media Tuesday, Wednesday after I got back on Monday. So I was talking about it for a lot of the day. And I put the trophy in a really nice spot at the rental there so when I would wake up I would look at it. Then come Thursday I was practicing and didn't really think much about it. A bad shot out on the range was still a bad shot. I wasn't sitting there telling myself that I was a major champ, I was telling myself that I had to get better because I just hit a really bad shot. So for me I didn't really bask in it too long. I know there's so much important golf and I was trying to win a U.S. Open and that was -- I missed that opportunity, so I'm looking on to more tournaments here and we have one more major this year, so really excited for that one.

**Q. Curious, just real quickly on the changes again and I know you only saw the front nine, but from a players'**

**mindset will that change the way you attack, let's say the 6th hole, or are you still going to play it just as aggressively?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I mean, if you hit it in the fescue, yes, you can't hit a 3-wood -- you can't cut or like hit anything around the corner, because you're going to be in the junk there with a tree right in front of you. So if you do blow a drive right out on 6 you're going to hack out with a lob wedge and then you're going to have like a 4-iron or hybrid or 5-iron into the green depending upon how far you can hack it up the fairway. So, I don't think really, it doesn't really change your strategy it's definitely much more of a penalty though.

**Q. Even off -- like, I assume it was more off the tee that they were like they're going to make these guys kind of think about it more, but it's not going to change your mind, is it?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: No, on 6 you're just trying to hit the fairway. It's usually into the wind, so you're trying to hit the fairway. I think maybe some caddies might give -- your sight line might be a little bit further left. But the rough is four inches or three inches or however long it is, so if you hit it in the left rough it's no good any ways, you're going to try and hack something up there just so you can have a wedge in. So the hole is definitely going to -- I'm curious to see the stats at the end of the week, but I imagine it's going to play a little bit harder.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Xander. Good luck this week.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Thanks.

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