

The Memorial Tournament Presented By Workday

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Muirfield Village

Xander Schauffele

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Xander Schauffele into the interview room here at The Memorial Tournament presented by Workday. Xander's making his first start on the PGA TOUR since winning the PGA Championship.

Xander, congratulations again. Just describe the emotions of coming off of that win and now looking forward to preparing for a busy stretch on TOUR.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I really tried to enjoy it as much as I could, knowing that tournament golf is right around the corner. So I feel really lucky to be able to win and have two weeks off after. Not everyone's so fortunate to be in that position where they can kind of unwind, decompress, and look around and kind of take it in a little bit more versus sort of -- it's pros and cons to both. You win, decompress, or win and just keep winning. So for me, it was nice. I was really tired after that Quail Hollow loss and then winning, I was pretty exhausted.

Yeah, I'm excited to be here. The course is in great shape. It's really hard. The rough is like the most dense I've ever seen, so a lot of work to do.

THE MODERATOR: All right. We'll take some questions.

Q. (No Microphone.)

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I don't know what you guys are up to, honestly. I think you can ask amongst your brethren, you know, on how that would work.

Q. What was your biggest moment of reflection, either immediately or within the last couple weeks?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Greatest moment of reflection? I don't know, maybe I didn't give myself enough time to sit and really take it in. I mean, I was at home and I guess I woke up one of the mornings and I looked at my wife and I said, you know, it's great. Like, nothing feels different. You know, like our life feels the same, and that was a really



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nice feeling. I was really away from golf. It was, like, my life at home was really nice and we did kind of everything of normal and I was really appreciative of that.

But in terms of golf, I mean, I didn't really look too much into like reflecting on -- I was really satisfied and I was really happy, but I was pretty motivated to get back to work.

Q. Where is the trophy?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: The trophy is here. It needs to make its way back to the West Coast, so I'm babysitting it right now, until I have to hand it off to people to drink out of it.

Q. We're in the midst of starting three big events in a row. Obviously a major in between is the crown of that. But do you like that idea? You mentioned being tired after two events. Do you like this idea of these -- you know, these big events being bunched together like this?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I mean, me being tired means I'm doing my job. Typically, when I'm practicing and putting my head down, I'm pretty ready to go to bed at some point that day.

Yeah, it's going to be a lot. I mean, come Travelers Monday, I would be curious if guys are just sitting there beating golf balls on the range, what that scene would look like, you know, maybe some light putting and chipping.

But I hear the rough is up over in Connecticut as well, so I feel like this is a really -- it's going to be a really interesting stretch. Actually, the U.S. Open might have the least amount of rough out of all the places we're playing the next three weeks, which sounds wrong. (Laughing.)

Q. I'm sure you had a great exchange with your dad afterwards or maybe when you got home. But was it a little odd that he wasn't there? Any bittersweet part of that for you, having him been such a big part of your career and then you accomplish this great thing and he's not, and he's really a long way away, actually?



XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, we FaceTimed him from the clubhouse at Valhalla. It was nice. It wasn't obviously the same as him being in person. But, yeah, a little bittersweet. Obviously I would want him there. He's been through pretty much everything with me. But yeah, he was a man of his word. He really wanted to get me set up correctly, make sure there's really good people around me. Obviously, he's always in my ear and a phone call away or a flight away. But he felt like I was in a good place to just sort of let go of the steering wheel. And, yeah, I mean, I'm sure it will be really nice to see him in person once I get back to the West Coast.

Q. You talked about this some, but was there any difficulty in parting, you know, going another direction with a different coach, so to speak, and did you resist maybe longer than you should have?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: That's a good question. I'm not sure. The way I feel about it or felt about it and me trusting Chris, obviously comes from my dad trusting Chris too. Chris has been an awesome communicator. He'll call my dad every once in a while just to talk to him about certain tendencies I have of overdoing something or something of that nature. Whether he's just including him in making him a part of it or not, you know, that's sort of on Chris to make those calls.

But my dad tells me that, you know, he'll talk to him every once in a while and I think just keeping that open line helps, and everyone's sort of flowing the same direction, no one's sort of trying to get up on anyone else. So I feel like their relationship has made it easy on me, and for the most part, ever since Chris and I worked, I feel like we've pretty much just had our blinders on and we've just been charging in one direction and everyone's been rowing that same direction with us.

Q. Listening to you speak right now, it feels like you're freed up. Do you feel freed up after getting that final win -- or that win?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I don't know. I just played nine holes and probably shot in the 40s, to be honest. So I don't feel super free, to be completely honest. If I look like big picture, sure, but this is -- it's going to be -- this is a stressful week. But, yeah, I mean, it's nice going to events and sitting in here and probably the only time -- you know, everyone close to me always told me I was good to go do it, and I believed that too. So yeah, freed up in the media room with you guys probably.

Q. Is there any shots that have stuck with you from PGA or moments just that you really have looked back on the last two weeks?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I think if I look back to that week, I felt like I handled the Sunday of -- which is so funny. I'm just lucky to be -- I'm lucky to have an experience where I did win, but I felt like I handed the Sundays close to the same, just obviously much different outcome. But no specific shot, to be honest. I felt like I really was focused on what I was doing and things slowed down for me. I stated before that in the past, when I was getting ahead of myself, I felt like moments really sped up and not that it was a blur, but three, four holes would go by and I would sort of lose track of what I was doing, I wouldn't really be in my feels and focused. I felt really present on every shot that I hit on Sunday, a little bit more than Quail Hollow, but for the most part, I feel like I did a really good job at both those tournaments doing that.

Q. Every year the champion here gets greeted with a handshake from Mr. Nicklaus. With everything that he's done for the game, how special would it be to have that moment and win his tournament?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it's a dream. I think any TOUR pro would tell you that if you're looking at sort of the non-Majors, this is definitely at the top of 'em. You know, you're trying to win Jack's, you're trying to win Arnie's, you're trying to win Tiger's, you throw THE PLAYERS in there, but these are a little more unique obviously with -- like you said, with what Jack has done for the game of golf and grown it and us just being a small part of it. So, it be would awesome, yeah, it's cool to see the highlight of you walk off the 18th and you get to greet Jack and it would be really special.

Q. Do you ever look or did you ever I guess look back much when it comes to your golf, and as it relates to the majors, was there any of the close calls that stood out to you, bugged you, or do you not look back?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I mean, I look back when I have to. Yeah, I think it's important to. You don't want to fail and then just say, Screw it, I'm moving on. I think it's important to understand everything that happened and address it so you have some closure to that moment.

I look back to sort of Carnoustie would be a really big example of me feeling like things were -- that front nine Jordan and I played, I mean, we played terrible together. We were feeding off each other in the worse ways. It felt so fast. Like I remember the front nine, like I can't even remember the shots that I hit on the front nine, but I just remember the feeling of, like, we got to 10 and we're like, what just happened to this tournament-type feel. And then I remember I sort of took a really deep breath -- the nerves were all gone because I was shooting 45 on the front or



whatever it was -- I put my head down and was able to sort of salvage almost having a shot at coming and winning the thing, which was really cool. But those spots are, it's really interesting how -- a tale of two nines -- and to me that just was, I was really immature at that time, and when I look back at the event, that's like a big example in my head of sort of like, Okay, this was a time that it got away from you, a time that everything felt really fast, a time that you felt like you weren't in control of anything you were doing.

Q. Not sure if you've looked, but after next week the Olympic field is set and obviously you're going to be part of it. The field is actually looking really good, when you look at all the different countries. I just wonder how, now that you've won a major, how the feeling compares. Granted, it was different with no spectators and all, but is it the same pressure? Do you kind of remember it feeling the same way in that sense, and how do you think it's going to shape up? I realize two more majors before that even is played.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, for me, just personally, it's so different with my dad and the way he brought me up and the advice he was giving me and where that came from, with him wanting to be an Olympian himself. For me personally it's, it feels like it's, I mean, unique maybe, but different than other people competing in the Olympics just because I was sort of raised on sort of this advice from a person who wanted to be an Olympian, and his dad's dad and things of that nature. So, it was an unbelievable experience and I think it's going to feel, I think we might feel more of it this year, just with people being, like available to attend without it being COVID. But, yeah, I think it's shaping up nice and people are wanting to compete in it and it's going to be a great tournament.

Q. Have you been able to see the 16th hole yet?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Out here? Yeah.

Q. You have. What are your general thoughts on it?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I think it's more fair now. I think it is. I think taking that bunker out allows you to be as defensive as you would like without sort of laying up with like a 50-yard pitch shot. So I think you're going to see a lot of balls end up in that little area there, especially those front two pins. I think it's more fair.

Q. Cool. Then one more question. As you prepare for this year's Olympics, so how do you plan to defend your title and what new strategies or techniques are you putting in before this year's Olympics?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I mean, similar to -- I'll

apply some sort of the experience on overseas golf. Fortunately, I'll be over there for The Open Championship, so the time change won't be too drastic. A lot of guys play the Scottish to prepare for The Open Championship just to get on the same zone. So I'll be over there for a few weeks already. I'm going to stay over, overseas, not too sure exactly where I'll place myself, but somewhere where I can sort of decompress a little bit after a major championship, but also get ready for an Olympics. So, it's a lot of big tournaments there, so I feel like being sharp for it shouldn't be too difficult coming off a major shortly before that.

Q. Obviously we see you a little differently because you won a major, and I'm sure your peers to some extent some of them see you a little differently because you won a major. So the question is, do you feel like you've made a step forward, are you on a different plateau now than you were before?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: You know, I think winning a tournament's just truly a result, it really is. I think what separates guys out here are the ability for them to hit certain shots. I think when you look at someone like Scottie or Rory or you just run through all the top players, when they're playing at a really high level, they separate themselves from the field. They either do it by putting like Wyndham, when Wyndham was making 200 feet of putts, or driving it like Rory, hitting it way up in the sky and out hitting every golf course and everyone that you're playing. Scottie, just wearing out all his irons and every fairway. So, I feel like I've entered a little bit more of that space just playing. I feel like my game has definitely become a little bit more elite just the way I was able to work my way around Quail for starters and then Valhalla under a little bit more pressure that week. The major really is just a result, it doesn't really change how I feel about myself or anything like that. I think the quality of shots you're able to hit is what determines that.

Q. The other stuff that is -- so next week you go to the U.S. Open. Do you see yourself thinking majors differently now because you won one or do you just see them as they were the same as before?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Kind of just rinse and repeat, to be honest. You get yourself in the best place possible mentally with your game and everything, make sure you can hit every shot, and then you just run it. Not like a simulation, obviously, that would be too easy, but there's a lot more emotion and things involved like that, but you just keep rinse and repeating it until hopefully you come out on top of a few of 'em.

Q. Couple things. How often have you watched the winning putt and if you have and seen various angles,

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did you ever train your eyes on Austin?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Sorry, what was the last part?

Q. Did you ever train your eyes on Austin on the different angles they showed of your winning putt?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: No, I haven't put my eyes on Austin.

Q. You should.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: (Laughing). I should actually, yeah, I did a little bit of media after winning, had a few Zoom calls and they were replaying the putt and it looks dodgy at best. So, I'm good for a crazy lip-in every once in a while.

Q. Secondly, we're a year out from the June 6 announcement, and one of the, I guess, talking points now is, what's the end game, what do people want to see. So, I wanted to ask you, not as a board member, just as a player, what do you want to see as an outcome from all this?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I imagine hopefully, I don't know what the timeframe would be, but four, five years or I guess it might even be longer than that, who even knows, but this will just be a small blip, everyone will laugh about, remember when golf was really fractured and everyone was talking crap about golf and where it is and all that stuff, you'll laugh about it in five or six years, it's funny how media and people will behave in certain environments when you kind of take your self out of it. So I imagine golf will be back together, everyone will be playing golf again together. I don't know what that will look like, but I imagine people will be competing against each other again and the fans will have what they want in that respect.

Q. Is that what you want to see is everybody back together?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I think most sports that have been fractured, for whatever reason, historically have always come back together at some point. Just stronger, you know, strength in numbers when it comes to that kind of stuff, especially if you don't have a Tiger Woods, you know, driving everything for you.

Q. I'm curious about something, I mean, your game over the years has been built for venues like this. Yet this is one of the few where you don't have a top 10.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Thank you.

Q. So is there --

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I think I do have a top 10, don't I?

Q. So I'm just curious at the end of the day --

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I don't know, man, you got to fact check this one. I think there's a chance I have a top 10. I feel like one year I scrambled really well. Go on, sorry.

Q. All right. At the end of the day, like is there something about this place that doesn't suit your eye or whatever, because, I mean, from my perspective it would seem like this place is in your wheelhouse, but for whatever reason it hasn't happened yet; and then maybe a little confidence from a couple weeks ago you feel better about it coming in?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Could be a perfect -- yeah, I'm picking up what you're putting down. The type of golf I was playing those past two weeks is definitely the golf you need to play on a property like Muirfield, no doubt. So, I think it's just a really penalizing golf course if you're slightly off, and there's a chance that I was either not in the right head space or I was maybe a little too aggressive at times around this property. I remember just not being able to put four rounds together on this golf course. I remember I've kind been close after two rounds and then I'll play a weak Saturday and then you just -- you really have to be in position, it's a tough golf course to come from behind and win, I think, if you're not sort of within touch of the leaders come the weekend. So, I think just getting off to a better start would be a good thing and -- what you got? Nothing?

THE MODERATOR: T-11 in 2021 is your best finish. You also have a T-13.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: You're right. I apologize. That's on me. So now you know how I think. I'm so positive. I would have lost so much money on like a top 8, tied 8th or something.

Q. (No microphone.)

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, (laughing). Tough. You and I both. Here we are together. But, yeah, I think, yeah, tapping in to some, you know, believing that I can play to that high level that you need to play really good golf around here it's probably helpful that I've done it just recently.

Q. When you were answering the other question, which was a tremendous question by the way, it made me think about the fact that one of the reasons why it

seems so compelling a couple weeks ago when you won is because Bryson was in the mix, and he's got his own personality. It also seems like if you could bring some of those guys, if they actually were more successful in majors, because that's the only time you're going to see them, that might actually force things to go quicker in regards to the process.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: You know, for guys to think -- there's -- I mean, I can think of like one guy who would really move the needle, in my mind, that's still kind of playing, only plays like four times a year or five times a year, but, like, that guy moves, really moves the needle, in my opinion. But for guys that think that, you know, an individual will make this whole thing go faster is probably thinking a bit high of yourself, to be completely honest. So I think it's just going to run its course. I think there's a lot of things people don't realize that need to occur for things to go back together, for everyone to sort of shake hands and move along. There's been so much damage that's been done just in, you know, it feels like we've been in this mess for a couple years, it's only been a year. So things have been moving around for, you know, not quite that long, but it feels like it's been forever. So it's a really interesting feeling, but I think that it's just going to take -- it's going to run its course and everyone needs to get on the same page at some point, and that may take awhile.

Q. So you think it -- there's other people that are saying, like Jordan, Jay -- Jack was talking about how he talked to Jay he said things are in a good place. Jordan, same thing.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I mean, he has an inside line to what's happening. I have no clue what's going on. So, to me, I'm just being as patient as possible. I'm patient with my golf, so I figure why not be patient with this stuff, let it run its course. I hope Jordan's right and everyone's right and Jay and all of 'em, you know what I mean, that would be great.

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