

# BMW Championship

Sunday, August 21, 2022

Wilmington, Delaware, USA

Wilmington Country Club

## Patrick Cantlay

### Press Conference

MARK WILLIAMS: We'd like to welcome Patrick Cantlay, 2022 BMW Championship winner for the second time in a row. That's never been done before in the history of the FedExCup Playoffs, a champion to defend a Playoffs title. How meaningful was that to do that today and achieve that feat?

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, definitely. I think every time I've tried to defend, I don't think I've been able to do it, but it's something that you definitely circle on your calendar as something you want to do. These golf courses, like I said earlier this week, reminded me a lot of each other, and I was glad not to go six holes in a playoff today.

MARK WILLIAMS: With a victory you move to No. 2 in the FedExCup, and now you'll go to East Lake next week with a chance to defend there, which is another feat that's never been achieved. This year it's a little different. You'll be starting two back instead of ahead. Just talk about having the opportunity to achieve that feat next week.

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, I'm in a really good spot. It'll be a little different type of a challenge this year, obviously, being two behind Scottie. He's played a lot of great golf this year, so I expect the same. But it's a golf course I really like, and I'm looking forward to the challenge.

**Q. That shot on the last, coming down the last, driving into the bunker, that bunker shot was really impressive and almost made the putt, too. Just talk us through that shot on the last.**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, it was not the spot I wanted to be. Ball was above my feet. I had about 160 to the hole and I tried to slice an 8-iron about as hard as I could and went to about where I thought I could get it, and it was one of the best shots I hit all week.

**Q. If you could take us back to 17 for a minute, your thought as the ball was in the air and were you surprised by it?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, very much so. I thought



**BMW**  
CHAMPIONSHIP

hitting it on that line, it would for sure be in a bunker. Got an excellent break. Maybe one of the best breaks I've gotten coming down the stretch, and when you get a break like that you need to pay it off, and fortunately I did.

**Q. What was it like sharing the 18th green with Xander there?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, I'm glad to return the favor after Travelers. It's always fun being with Xander, and we were paired together all four days this week. I think we fed off each other, but we both played really well, and it's obviously a really comfortable pairing for both of us.

I think we played Monday, Tuesday, and then Thursday through Sunday together this week, so it was nice to spend time with one of my best buddies out here.

**Q. Do you realize that if Xander had made that putt, you would have gotten the No. 1 seed? You probably didn't know that, did you?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I didn't, no.

**Q. Do you still like him?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Very much. I was rooting for him.

**Q. If you could -- I know they're totally different courses and everything else, but you talked about getting a nice break on 17. You probably got a couple of breaks I would think last year. You made a lot of them yourself. Do you see any similarities in terms of the drama or intensity?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: It was a different feeling type of tournament than last year. Last year the fans were so loud and raucous, and then that arena coming down the stretch, and obviously I was behind playing the last few holes, which felt a lot different than playing with a one-shot lead on the last hole.

But the golf courses reminded me of each other. Definitely drawing on past experiences is something I've talked about, so I'll draw on a bunch of experiences from last year going into next week, as well.

**Q. Do you think one of your skills is figuring out a way**

**ASAP** . . . when all is said, we're done.®  
sports

**to win, whether it's golf or whether it's gin or whether it's any other game you like to play?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I think I'm very competitive, and I always have been. It definitely grinds my gears if I don't win, and I'll do everything I possibly can to win.

**Q. What did it do to you when you had a tough day in the final round at Travelers?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, it stung. That's nothing that you want to do ever. I've had a bunch of close Sundays this year and not all of them have gone my way, as opposed to last year at the end of the year where I felt like all of the Sundays went my way.

I think it just drives you to practice a little harder. I've been playing great golf all year, so I knew that if I just kept knocking on the door and kept staying in a positive frame of mind and trusting myself that I'd knock off a few victories.

**Q. How do you feel about the TOUR being able to expand to another different part of the country?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, I think it's great. We saw how excited the fans were this week. They were amazing all week. This golf course provided great theater, especially coming into the last hole where it's that amphitheater feel.

They were cheering me the whole way, and I had a bunch of friends and family out here this week, so it was just a great feel and great energy all week.

**Q. How will leading last year at East Lake and being the eventually champion inform the way you'll approach next week now trailing by two?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I remember last year just trying to stay really in the moment, day after day, and thinking that with that couple shots' advantage, depending on how you look at it, I'll be two behind this year, just trying to shoot under par each day and not losing sight of that. I'll definitely draw on those memories from last year and try and stay as focused and in the moment as possible.

**Q. You're usually a pretty stoic guy. We could see you licking your lips on the approach on 18. Once you hit it did you know you pulled something -- I don't want to say out of your butt, but something that had a high degree of difficulty?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, I knew it was a tough shot, obviously, when I saw it. I thought if I could get it anywhere on the green, it would be a really, really good

shot.

I actually had a good number for the 8-iron that I hit out of the bunker. The biggest challenge was trying to cut the golf ball enough with the ball above my feet in the bunker.

But it came off almost exactly how I would have pictured it, how I visualized it, and I thought more than likely I'd be on the lower shelf there.

**Q. You said the other day that you felt the format at East Lake was still a little strange to you after a few years, and yet you seem to handle it just fine last year and now obviously this year it's a little bit of a different situation. I wonder if you could talk about putting that aside just to be able to get the job done.**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, I think how I feel about something doesn't necessarily affect my performance one way or the other. I try to be as objective as possible, and that tournament especially with the staggered start I think rewards somebody who doesn't lose sight of the fact that they're still playing a four-round golf tournament and they need to lay down the best 72-hole score possible, and then you can start to look at the leaderboard on Sunday on the back nine. But until then you're just trying to shoot under par every day, and for me, a mantra of mine last year was to stay in the moment.

**Q. Why do you think no one has defended the FedExCup?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Good question. Maybe a Tiger injury. I expect him to have almost every record, so it's kind of surprising even -- I knew that, but surprising that he has never defended.

But I think with it being a year-long race, it's a difficult goal to achieve because it's not just one tournament. You have to put yourself in position for the whole year, and then that week you have to perform, as well.

**Q. Does it add something to it to be the first to do something?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I think it's a nice pat on the back or carrot at the end, but never anything I'm ever thinking about too seriously when I'm out there doing it.

**Q. Just wondering, any similarities between Caves Valley last year, Wilmington this year, and is there something about BMW Championship courses broadly that really suits you?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I think I really like the bentgrass golf



courses, and both those golf courses are bentgrass all the way through. It's just a grass that I feel really comfortable on.

In general, I like the northeast tree-lined golf courses, and I think this golf course in particular this week rewarded driving the golf ball in the fairway, and I did that really well.

**Q. Players talk, and I think you have, as well, of learning from losses or the experience of what have you. You also need a few breaks or good things to go your way when you win. How do those two square up? How do you take away from the loss while at the same time you need a few good bounces here and there?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: The thing I always remind myself of when I finish second or I'm close is Jack Nicklaus had more seconds in majors than he had wins. That stat will shock you considering he has the most majors ever. No one would ever say he couldn't close or no one would say that he wilted under pressure, and yet he had more second places than anybody else.

With that being said, I think putting yourself in position is maybe the thing that you can control in golf. You can't always control what other people around you do or where you get the right bounce or the wrong bounce. But putting yourself in contention time after time after time, the bounces are going to go your way and you'll get your fair share of wins.

**Q. You've gone head-to-head against Xander a lot over the years. Who do you think has the edge overall?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I'll tell you what, I like being on the same side as him a lot more than going head-to-head against him. I'm already looking forward to Presidents Cup, playing with Xander. We play head-to-head every practice round all year when we're in the same events. We definitely play a lot of golf against each other, and he's gotten the best of me and I've gotten the best of him, it just depends on the day.

**Q. After the Player of the Year last year, what do you think you and your team do better this year compared to that?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I'll have to say my team is really solid. Every person to a man is working as hard as they possibly can to achieve the same goal, and I'm very lucky to have people that not only are on my team but are good friends. I spend a lot of time with them traveling, a lot of times we'll stay in the same houses together on the road, and I couldn't do what I do without them. They definitely make me better each and every day.

**Q. As a player, is there anything you do better this year than last fall?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I feel like my body feels a little better. I feel like I'm always trying to work in the gym to try and get a little more range of motion, a little more control at the end ranges to just incrementally try and hit the golf ball a little farther, a little farther. I would say my body has been a little more resilient this year. I've played a lot of golf the last couple months, maybe the most golf I've played in a couple-month stretch since I came back in '17, and I feel good. That is a testament to the hard work I've put in with my team to get there.

**Q. After the bogey at 10, you're two back, what are you thinking at that point and how likely did you think it would be you'd be sitting here right now?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: You know, my head wasn't even there. I tried to stay as focussed and in the moment as possible. Obviously from 120 yards I was pretty pissed to have made bogey from the middle of the fairway on 10, which you would think would be a birdie hole. The wind kind of fooled me.

But the story of the week for me was when I made a bogey, I birdied the next hole quite a few times, I think both times yesterday, and at least one of the times today.

Being able to bounce back like that and get the momentum on your side I think was really key for me to make that putt for birdie on 11.

**Q. My apologies for asking you so much about losing, but I'm kind of fascinated by what you said a minute ago. I'm sure everyone takes pride in closing; what kind of a blow to your ego is it when you don't, and how long does it usually take before you find some satisfaction from what you said, of putting yourself there?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I do my best to try to remove my ego from the equation as much as possible.

**Q. You do have an ego --**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Of course. I would say I usually try not to be -- I try not to really totally digest what happened right away, so I'll try and give myself a couple days so I can try and systematically look back and see what I could have controlled to do better the next time.

But if you put yourself in contention enough times, I mean, you're going to -- you're not going to close the deal every

time.

You have to be cognizant of that going in, and once you accept that that's a reality, I think it makes it a lot easier to play as free as possible coming down the stretch.

**Q. Were you free today?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I thought so. I was very in the moment, and I didn't really get ahead of myself at all. Being able to play the last six holes or so a couple under par on the type of golf course in the shape that it was in today I think was fantastic.

**Q. What do you consider the most significant shot you hit today before you got to the 17th?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Before the 17th? I would say, like I said, rolling in that birdie putt on 11 after bogeying 10 to get the momentum back on my side. It was a putt that you kind of had to keep your speed up because it broke quite a lot to the right. Especially after the bad bogey on 10, trying to get that momentum back on my side for the closing stretch was key.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports