

The American Express

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La Quinta, California, USA

PGA WEST Pete Dye Stadium Course

Patrick Cantlay

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Patrick Cantlay to the interview room here at The American Express. Patrick is world No. 6. Patrick, thank you for joining us for a few minutes. Making your sixth start here in the American Express with good success. I think top 10s in three of your last five, highlighted most likely by the 61 in 2021 to get the runner-up. Just, with that said, just some thoughts on being back here to a place that you're comfortable and familiar and good with.

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, sure. A tournament that I played a lot. A place I really like. It's only a couple hours from where I grew up. By now, golf courses that I feel very comfortable on. I know it will take quite a few under, similar to Maui, so we'll see how many birdies I can make.

THE MODERATOR: You finished last season strong with top-5 finishes in two of the three playoff events. Then, I think top 15 at Sentry. Were you able to put the clubs down and enjoy some time in the off-season a little bit, and are you feeling good coming into this season?

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, definitely. Like I've said before, being at home is like a vacation. It's been nice to have some time off, but now that we're starting the season, I'm ready to go.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. One last question from me, when you come to an event like this that's got multiple courses, is there any kind of a multiple mindset, for lack of a better term, or do you just take what's kind of in front of you at the time and play that kind of Patrick Cantlay golf on that particular course at the time?

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, I think it's important really to be patient around these tracks. I think you can make two, three, four, five birdies in a row out here, but when you're making pars you're feeling like you're falling behind. Sometimes you just have to wait for your stretch of holes. Especially on Nicklaus Tournament and La Quinta, they feel like courses that you've got to shoot 3-, 4-under a side. So, I know that, but at the same time play my normal golf and stay patient.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, we'll take a few questions.

Q. Sometimes you'll hear somebody say they don't want to come here or maybe even Kapalua, because you do have to go low early in the year, and maybe they're not as comfortable with trying to make that many birdies so fast. You clearly don't have that problem. 61 is still an amazing score. You're comfortable with the idea that 25-, 26-, 27-under is where you need to be this week, right?

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, definitely. It's just the way it is. You could change all the pars to 70, take the par-5s that are the hardest, and every day for the tournament the scores would be more around 20-under par. So, it's all the same. It's just, you got to take advantage of the par-5s out here. Those are the scoring holes on all three golf courses. If you play from the fairway, you'll have tons of wedges on the rest of the holes.

Q. The three courses are kind of different in their character, but seems like they have leveled out in terms of their scoring average. It used to be La Quinta was so easy. You're starting at La Quinta tomorrow, do you feel like that's an advantage or does it really matter to you?

PATRICK CANTLAY: I don't think it matters much. I think they have all become golf courses that you need to score really well on to have a chance at winning. Even Stadium, a lot of guys will shoot 5-, 6-, 7-, 8-under par at Stadium these days. I think La Quinta before was maybe easier, but also people had a different mindset playing Stadium than they do the last five years. The mindset now is everyone knows you need to get into the mid 20s to have a chance. So, I think that's just kind of the nature of people getting better and learning that if they want to have a chance to win they need to be more aggressive and make more birdies.

Q. What would you deem a successful 2024 season?

PATRICK CANTLAY: Good question. I think two things, consistency, and then also winning golf tournaments. That's really it.



Q. Has how you defined success changed as you do rack up wins and you look for certain tournaments and things you want to pick off, has it changed over the last couple years?

PATRICK CANTLAY: I don't think it's changed. I think my mindset has been to put yourself in contention at as many tournaments as you can. By way of doing that, you should close a number of them. So, that's what I mean kind of by that consistent play, having lots of opportunities to win, and then winning. Because, really, that's what we're all out here to do.

Q. Tiger said at the Hero that he was up until like way late in the night trying to handle all these negotiations. Are you busy right now like that? Are you still, are you balancing golf with trying to get this deal over the finish line?

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, well, take a step back. I mean, I have a responsibility to the membership, to represent them as best as possible, and I care deeply about that. So, doing a good job there is not only what I want to do, but also my responsibility. Seeing through this deal, as best as possible, to set up the PGA TOUR players both now and in the future, is a priority for me. That aside, as far as my golf goes, that is my primary job is my golf. Doing everything I can, time management-wise, to have enough time to prioritize both things correctly is important and a challenge, but that's life.

Q. You're not finding -- Rory spoke last year about how it put so much stress on him. Are you finding that you're able to compartmentalize?

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, I think it's one of my strengths is compartmentalizing, and being as focused as I possibly can be at the task at hand. So, I think there's a little more effort to try to focus solely on golf while I'm golfing, but I'm able to do that.

Q. With the new signature event model and how they're kind of stacked in consecutive weeks or in between majors on either sides of it, how do you -- do you think you'll plan your schedule accordingly in terms of how you're leading up to those events or which ones you prioritize heading into the signature events?

PATRICK CANTLAY: I think I played a very similar schedule for the last two, three, four years, so I don't see that changing very much. I think last year I played every signature event, which most likely will be the same this year. In general, I try to pick golf courses that I like. So, it ends up being a lot of the same golf courses year after

year.

THE MODERATOR: All right, easy enough. Patrick, thank you for coming in, we appreciate it.

PATRICK CANTLAY: Thanks very much.

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