

Waste Management Phoenix Open

Saturday, February 6, 2021

Scottsdale, Arizona, USA

TPC Scottsdale

Xander Schauffele

Quick Quotes

Q. Overnight lead coming into today, and I think that we expect so much, you look shaky out of the box with a couple wayward drives on 2 and 3. How did you feel about the start to your round?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Shaky. (Laughter.) You said it. Yeah, I tried to hit a fade on 2 and a fade on 3, and I pulled one on 2 and overcut it on 3. So tough call. It's very normal to sort of overcorrect.

Kind of had a good number into 4, hit a good shot, and that settled the round.

Q. Yesterday's round was all about patience, I thought. Made a birdie on 3 and didn't make another one until 12. Looking at that round yesterday, was there anything you thought about that round that you were like, Hey, listen, I didn't get off to a great start yesterday either. Just stay patient.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I mean, you're kind of killing my interview right now. It's exactly that. I got off to a bad start. The yesterday wasn't a bad start. It was more solid than today. I had more looks. Only made one birdie on the front nine yesterday; I think I made two today.

I know I'm playing well. My motto for -- trying to be the motto for the week is just hang in there, hang tough. I knew there was some squirrely early, but glad we were able to do that.

Q. When you're watching the leaderboard and you see a player like Jordan Spieth going out there and it's just birdie after birdie on the back nine, has to motivate you.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it does. You know, the thing for me is to try not to get too far ahead. I knew all the holes coming in he was kind of just right ahead of me. He making a ton of birdies coming in. So I tried not to get too excited, stay in the moment, worry about my holes in front



of me.

Every time I get too excited I always seem to look too far ahead and stupid things happen for me, I'm glad Austin and I were able to stay in the moment and capitalize when we need to.

Q. You've been on the cusp of winning for a couple years now. What would it mean to get the win tomorrow?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: A lot. I think just a sense of accomplishment, relief. You know, it's good. This is sort of what I needed to do. I've been talking about how consistent I've been playing, and I just need to put myself in this position more often.

So I'm excited. I played well today. Jordan and I will hash it out tomorrow.

Q. I thought you drove the ball beautifully. After a little bit, maybe a choppy start, I thought you were looking for a swing on the first maybe three holes; bogey at the second; disappointing par at the third. Was there an on-course adjustment you made to drive it so beautifully? You averaged 325 off the tee.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, just shaky. I hit a good tee shot on 1, 5-wood; and then 2 I tried to cut a driver and kind of pulled it; 3 I overcorrected and kind of just sliced it right.

So normal, a normal trend for myself. I wish I could have fixed it in one shot, but it took a few extra holes. I stayed calm and patient. I know 3 was -- if you had a good drive there you were kind of licking your chops with on iron coming in.

But I just kind of hung in there and sort of capitalizes on the holes I needed to on the back nine.

Q. Everybody is making birdies all around you. We may not have the roars that we have with 500,000 people, but you knew people were making birdies. For the second day in a row you showed some patience as you head into the inward nine.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I knew I had to hang



tough. I've been one to look too far ahead and sort of what could happen, what can happen. Austin and I sort of stayed in each hole on the front nine. Could have slipped up and made a few extra bogeys there, but were able to capitalize on a few good iron shots.

Yeah, I think just patience is a big thing for me. It's easier said than done, and I think we did a pretty good job today.

Q. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, could have birdied them all. Birdied four of them.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it's just sort how it plays out. If you're kind of hitting your ball on a correct line you'll have a bunch of good looks, and if you're not, those holes can penalized you.

Just really important. I did look up at the board. I saw everyone was kind of running away, and just stayed calm and patient and knew if I hit some good shots I would have some good chances.

Q. Been almost two years since you posted a victory. What's is your thought process going into the final round?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: This is good. This is what I need as a player. I have not won a lot in my career. Got off a couple quick ones on TOUR early and kind of lost my way for a second there.

So this is sort of what my team and I want, to be in contention, right there in the final group, and see how I can handle it.

Q. 1-over through your first three and finish 6-under. Describe the ebb and flow of the round.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, choppy. Just normal. I mean, I don't think that I was nervous. Probably be more nervous tomorrow. But just stayed really calm. Everyone sort of looks at 3 and wants an easy birdie. That's exactly what I wanted.

But kind of weird drive on 2; overcorrected on 3; I was happy to bounce back on 4? Could have easily dragged along on the front nine kind of in a poor way. Kind of bounced back quickly, which was nice.

Q. Mentally and emotionally how important was today to begin with a lead?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it's big. Jordan played unbelievable golf. I looked up and I saw 61. I knew there were a lot of birdies out there, but I didn't know there was

that many.

I knew I needed to hang tough and kind of birdie the holes I needed to coming in. Fortunately we did that.

Q. Heading into tomorrow, I know you want to win just as much as Jordan, but is there a comfort level that you've been paired with him and he's trying to do what you're doing and get back the form that you had?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, you know, it is, it's nice. I think I was very happy to see the 61. Obviously I'm a competitor, but everyone out here has been pulling for him to play well. At least I have.

I think the game of golf is better with him in it. I think tomorrow will be fun. The last time we played together was at the British Open on a Sunday and got off to a horrible start, so hopefully that's not in our heads at all. I know I just said it. Jordan is a great guy. I'm not sure who our third is, but I am sure it'll be a fun day.

Q. Finally, how prepared do you feel like you are to win this championship?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, just need to get off to better start. I think I can take some pressure off myself if I do that. Obviously 18 holes left of this tournament, and today I was worried. I got off to a bad start today and I knew I had more than 18 holes so that kept me calm.

No matter what happens tomorrow, if I can just stay patient, I'm playing good enough golf to make up poor shots and kind of collect my thoughts. It'll be fun. I'm really looking forward to it.

Q. You and Jordan are the same age, class of 2011 and all that. When was the first time you guys played together? How old? Were you junior golfers.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: No. Jordan was always way better than I was growing up, so I did not see a whole lot of him, to be completely honest. I saw his name, but that's about it.

Q. He also mentioned the Open Championship. He was hoping you guys would both play a little bit better. Got to be a pretty comfortable pairing. You see a lot each other.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it is. I think it'll be fun. We're both trying to do the same thing. We both have a lot to prove. He's accomplished so much in his career. I'm still trying to push forward and do kind of what he's done in a short time.

I think it's cool that we'll be hashing it out tomorrow.

Q. When do you feel like you turned the corner in the round today?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I never really felt a corner, I think. I just hung in there. I just stayed patient and worried about -- whenever I'm playing really good golf I really have no idea what my score is at. Just kind of worry about every single shot, and what's on I get lost in my zone or whatever you want to call it.

I was able to sort of get back to that quickly today. I think I turned the corner off 4 our 5, so maybe then.

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