

AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am

Tuesday, February 9, 2021

Pebble Beach, California, USA

Pebble Beach Golf Links

Patrick Cantlay

Press Conference



DOUG MILNE: Patrick, thanks for joining us for a few minutes prior to the start of the 2021 AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am. You are coming in making your fifth start here and coming off a tie for 11th last year. Just some thoughts on being back here, obviously, to a pretty special place.

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, I always like being up here in Monterey. Even though it's cold this time of year, I like playing Pebble Beach. I like Spyglass. So I'm excited for this year. It looks like we're going to get some rain, which isn't uncommon, but I always like being here and I like the golf courses and I like the California golf.

DOUG MILNE: Coming into the week you're still playing quite well. Three top-10s in seven starts, obviously highlighted by the win at the Zozo Championship, and most recently you finished the American Express with that incredible final round of 61. Just kind of assess the state of your game as you're heading into the week.

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, my game's been good. Obviously how I played my last round on TOUR was unbelievable, even I was a little surprised I was able to shoot 11-under on that golf course. But I think it bodes well for the future, and my game's in a good spot, my processes are all really good, and if I can make a bunch of putts like I did on that Sunday, look out.

DOUG MILNE: We'll open it up to questions.

Q. Did you do anything special the last two weeks?

PATRICK CANTLAY: Excuse me? Can you say that again?

Q. Did you do anything special the last two weeks?

PATRICK CANTLAY: Oh, no, just kind of relaxed a little bit and then prepared for this week. It was pretty mellow. I've been staying down in Newport Beach and it's been nice.

Q. Do you think it will make much of a difference that

there's only two golf courses in play this year?

PATRICK CANTLAY: I think scores may be a little higher to par or a little worse to par, just because Monterey Peninsula usually plays the easiest of the three. I may be wrong there, but it feels like it definitely does. So it might play a little easier. The par-5s at Monterey Peninsula are so easy it feels like you can make a bunch of birdie. But other than that, not really. Rounds might be a little faster with the threesomes.

Q. What's the largest change you've made in the past year?

PATRICK CANTLAY: Largest change in the last year? I can't think of much change. The biggest change really in the last three or four years has been moving to Florida from California and I've enjoyed that, being on the East Coast. The last year, I can't think of anything in particular. I feel like I have stuck to things being pretty much the same and I think that's part of me being so consistent. So I'm not quite sure. I'll have to think on that and get back to you.

Q. What was the benefit then of Florida for you personally?

PATRICK CANTLAY: What about Florida?

Q. Yeah, especially it takes you away from Jamie, I guess, but what are the benefits then?

PATRICK CANTLAY: Oh, the benefits. Well, I think being on the Bermuda grass all the time, and it's so windy in Florida that playing that different type of golf there and getting used to that only helps me when I go out on the road. And then not having to take those cross-country flights losing that whole day with the three-hour time change and five-hour flight. That's a big timesaver at the beginning of weeks.

So I've enjoyed Florida and I feel like I'm getting more and more confident on Bermuda all the time.

Q. You mentioned the rain in the forecast. How does that change the dynamics of this event? How does it



affect the competition if it gets wet this week?

PATRICK CANTLAY: Well, I think it will make everything just a little tougher. It's already cold, so it might feel a little colder even, and I think that will make scores just a little worse, especially if the wind were to blow.

And then depending if they play lift, clean, and place or not, mud on the golf ball always adds a little bit of unpredictability and that would make it a little harder. And then the golf ball will go a lot shorter. It already goes very short here compared to the rest of the country, so if it rains, it will go even shorter.

Q. You guys are obviously used to no fans, but how weird is the vibe going to be this week with no amateurs, no celebrities? I mean, obviously, that's the identity of this event and you've played in it several times. What do you expect in that regard?

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, it's a little bit of a let down. I hope the fans are able to come back soon and it may be the only time they play this tournament without the fans in my lifetime. So it will be interesting for sure. It will be a little less hectic. It does get a little crazy out here with 300 or so competitors playing. So it should be okay if it's just one year, and we'll see how Pebble and Spyglass do with no Monterey this year.

Q. With Dustin withdrawing last night, you're now the highest ranked player in the field. I'm curious, are you surprised at all that so many of the top guys are not playing this week and why do you think the reason for that is?

PATRICK CANTLAY: That's a good question. I think maybe weather has a big part to do with it and then also the upcoming schedule, I think, maybe has the biggest issue to do with it. I think the next three tournaments are L.A., which is obviously a big tournament, then the WGC, and then Bay Hill, and then maybe THE PLAYERS Championship, I think is right. So those are four big tournaments all in a row and you just can't play all of them.

So for me, I decided to play here and I'm not going to play Bay Hill, so it worked in my schedule for that reason. But if I was going to play Bay Hill, it probably wouldn't make sense for me to play here. So I got to imagine that scheduling and weather, probably more scheduling than anything else had the biggest factor to do with that.

Q. How do you decide where you're going to play? When you're looking at this, I mean, if you looked from, say, Kapalua onward, what determines where you go?

PATRICK CANTLAY: I would say the biggest things for me are golf courses and then scheduling. So I don't usually like to play anything more than three in a row, and so depending upon what golf courses I like and where I feel comfortable, usually places I've played before, I'll go to those places and then try and figure out the schedule around not playing more than three in a row. Every year it's a little different, depending on how the schedule changes. I feel like every year it changes a little bit. So every year that's kind of fun and the tournaments I play maybe change a little bit, depending upon where and what order they fall on. So that's kind of the recipe for me, just where I feel comfortable playing and then not playing too much.

Q. What's your policy on places you haven't played? Now, Concession is probably -- are you going there, the WGC?

PATRICK CANTLAY: I am, yeah.

Q. Okay. But I mean, that's kind of a one-off, but a course you've never played before and let's go give it a shot, what's your philosophy on that?

PATRICK CANTLAY: I wouldn't say there's too many golf courses on TOUR that I haven't played, that I haven't, golf courses I haven't gone to or haven't played. So there's a few. I haven't played Phoenix. It just always falls in a weird spot on the schedule for the West Coast. I like playing L.A., I like playing here, and so if I were to play, to have played Phoenix that would have been four in a row, so that's kind of why that didn't get on the schedule.

But most places, just places I've played well. I really like Hilton Head, so I'll play that the week after the Masters. It's all about going back to places where I've had success before and golf courses that kind of fit my game.

Q. If you go back early days when there wasn't a lot of courses you had played, what would you consider an example of a course where you got to and you quickly regretted your decision?

PATRICK CANTLAY: I would have to --

Q. You can name the course if you want.

PATRICK CANTLAY: I didn't like the Houston course that I played. It's not the new Houston course but the old Houston course. I remember I played and thought that it didn't suit my eye. That one sticks out. I think I played it my first year. I wasn't in the Masters and thought I might as well try and play the week before the Masters, try to get in. But that tournament didn't float my boat.



Q. Did you figure that out like Tuesday, Wednesday?

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, Wednesday or Thursday I probably got to the course and realized I still had a week left there.

Q. You mentioned that the ball goes shorter this week. How much shorter on the driver and then maybe a 7-iron and then is it ever hard to trust that number when you're used to hitting it so much further?

PATRICK CANTLAY: It goes considerably shorter this week. And then also wind, if wind's into you, it goes even shorter. I feel like the wind affects the golf ball more here. I think that's two reasons: The ball actually is going shorter, so you can put the same amount of force into the golf ball and it goes shorter. Then second, it's so cold that it's hard to move your body as fast or as big or make your swing as long. So you're actually putting less force into the golf ball.

I would say, especially with the greens being soft, you can hit low shots, so there's really no advantage to trying to step on an 8-iron and get the most out of it. You're better off hitting a three quarter 7-iron and for the most part it's just going to sit and stop.

So, for example, if I'm on the East Coast and it's the summer, I could hit a 7-iron 185 or 190 and I hit 7-iron from 157 yards today in my practice round at Spyglass. So it's a considerable difference.

Q. Curious, at any point in your life have you ever received media training?

PATRICK CANTLAY: I have not. No, I went to -- well if you count rookie orientation my first year on TOUR, if that counts then, yes. If not, then no.

Q. Do you remember anything from rookie orientation that you can apply today?

PATRICK CANTLAY: Not that I could apply today. But I do remember plenty of things.

DOUG MILNE: Thanks, Patrick.

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