

# WGC Dell Technologies Match Play

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Austin, Texas, USA

Austin Country Club

## Xander Schauffele

### Press Conference

STEWART MOORE: We'd like to welcome Xander Schauffele to the interview room here at the WGC-Dell Technologies Match Play, I think making your fourth appearance here at the event. Just some thoughts on returning to Austin Country Club.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It's always good to be here. I love playing match play and I really enjoy the city of Austin. Haven't really had a lot of success and always look forward to the opportunity to change that, so excited to be here.

**Q. Not to put it on you from the start, but the three times you have been here, I believe it's true you've had your fate in your own hands Friday and not been able to close that deal to get out of the group. Does that burn on you a little? Has it given you unfinished business to get something done here?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Thanks for the reminder. I actually wasn't aware of that, so thank you. To answer that question, no, it has not been wearing on me because I didn't even know that.

Yeah, I think it's just match play. You kind of -- your fate is always in your own hands. If you play better than the guy you're playing against, doesn't matter if it's blowing 50, you'll win. Just I've come in here in good form before, I've come in here in mediocre form, and I've gone against Sergio, I remember, and kind of ran into a buzz saw there. I've also played bad golf and someone played -- I played worse, I guess, than someone else. It's just a fun week and a fun format and something, like I said, I always look forward to.

**Q. I think last year you had that weird scenario where you had a tie and had to keep going to get out of the group.**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, Scottie and I, we played a couple extra holes and I think he ended up making a 15- or



20-footer on the 20th playoff hole, something like that. I remember that.

Yeah, looking forward to getting off to a better start.

**Q. Do you feel like you're in a good spot? You obviously enjoy this format. I've seen you play well in it before.**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I do, yeah. You can really get a read on an individual when you play against them in match play, and I enjoy the competition. I do a match play thing with Patrick pretty much every week. I feel like he's a good person to get ready against. Yeah, just been really -- I've been playing some really good golf, just haven't really put any scores together or making enough putts, but stats are stats. But I'm starting to play some really solid golf, so I'm excited for the rest of the season.

**Q. What's your favorite game to play back home on off weeks or on the golf course?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Anything for money. Doesn't really matter how much it is. I think the exchange of cash amongst guy to guy just hurts more than anything else, and us competitors hate to lose. I guess handing someone or any of my buddies money sucks. That's pretty much what I do at home. Match play typically, though.

**Q. Do you ever play Wolf or one club or anything like that? The reason why I'm asking is do you see any kind of room maybe in the fall or anywhere on the calendar to maybe do something like that like a Skins or a Wolf or something that's even more different than just match play?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I don't know. I don't know if that's ever going to get a grip in terms of with World Ranking points and something like that. I've played Wolf at home with my friends and shot 66 and I've lost money. If that happened to a bunch of TOUR pros out here, I don't think they'd be very happy, either. Wolf is a game probably just for your buddies. You have to make a handicap and make adjustments of that nature. But it's a fun game.



**Q. You often hear people in match play, players, say well, don't even worry about the opponent, just play your game and it'll take care of itself. I had spoken to you before about the moment at Presidents Cup where you noticed Adam Scott might be a little frustrated for reasons beyond the match, and you kind of found that a moment to take advantage of. I wanted to ask you about essentially how much are you looking at other players, how much are you noticing the psychology of your opponent and trying to pick out little moments where you might be able to gain an advantage?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: You do it. I mean, it's mainly -- there's always opportunities and sort of swings in the span of 18 holes, even in nine holes, where you can kind of feel momentum go your way. You make a long putt or you make a birdie -- a guy hits it to two feet or six feet and you make a 30-footer or a chip-in and then he ends up missing the 6-footer, you'd call it a big emotional swing in a match. You can kind of build off of that.

But there's other moments, too. You alluded to the Adam Scott situation there. A player that good is always going to go on a run, and you just need to take as much of an advantage as possible of that situation, and that's sort of what Austin and I talked about at that moment.

**Q. Going beyond that, if somebody came to you and said, generically I need one or two pieces of really good advice about match play, whether that's the psychology or anything like that, what would your answer to that be?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I mean, probably worry about yourself more than the other person for most of the day and then always expect the other person to hole out or do something crazy so you're never surprised.

**Q. What do you consider your single greatest act of gamesmanship in match play?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I don't know.

**Q. You're smiling so you're thinking of something.**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I don't know. I've given my buddies at home a putt, I guess. Like today I played against Patrick and I lost 2-down, and I pressed on the last hole and I tried to make my 30-footer for birdie and I ran it like five feet past, and he told me it was good. That was a very nice thing of him to do. And then he ended up missing his 15-footer for birdie. He still won the day but didn't really want to see me miss my 5-footer. But I've done that with friends at home, too. You never really want to take money from your friends, but competition is always

a good thing.

This is an office environment to me. We're not back at home playing with friends. This is more I do this for a living.

**Q. Kind of a similar question. When you play Patrick at home, do you talk trash to him, and more to the point, does he talk trash back to you?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: We live in different states, so we don't really play a whole lot at home. We just get our rounds in during tournament weeks. I guess him and I are the epitome of sort of let your clubs talk. There's nothing we really say to -- we talk about other things far away from golf when we play and then kind of play against each other golf-wise. It's very competitive, and yeah, I've lost the last couple times, so I'm a little bit sour about it.

**Q. When you're in an environment like this or when you're back home in a match with your buddies, what particular shot gives you the most angst. Is it a putt? Is it a difficult short game shot? Where do you feel the most pressure?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It's kind of all -- every shot means so much that it kind of -- it all kinds of blends together, in all honesty.

I think if you have a putt to continue a match or a putt to win the match, I would imagine if you're wearing a heart monitor, your heart rate would have to go up a little bit in that moment unless you're just dead inside.

When I play golf and try to execute shots, I try and just not worry about the outcome and do my best in that moment. With that being said, it kind of all blends together.

**Q. Is there a lot of trash talking in golf?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: You know, I don't know. Probably. I think any trash talking that would go on, the mics would pick up. We'd probably get fined for it. So no one really hears it or knows about it.

**Q. It would be great for ratings, though, right?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: That's a discussion you would have to have with the TOUR.

**Q. Who's the best you've ever encountered at it?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I don't know what really makes someone a good trash -- I guess it's more so who's the easiest person to pick on. It's more in that nature. I don't

know if anyone is really good at trash talking. We all play golf and it's a gentlemen's game, and we try our best to be as gentlemen as possible. But if there's low-hanging fruit, I think in any sport someone is going to go after it.

**Q. Do you ever find yourself playing this tournament like it's stroke play or are you always conscious that it's match play?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It's match play. Yeah, it doesn't really feel -- I've never been here and felt sort of a stroke-play mentality. You really don't look at anything except the person you're playing against and yourself.

**Q. And the wind, you're concerned with the wind here?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It really doesn't matter. That's the beauty of match play. You can get a gust that your opponent didn't get, but over the span of a day, your opponent is probably going to get a gust that you didn't get or vice versa. Match play's a beautiful thing. It's as fair as it gets, and all you've got to do is be better than the guy you're playing against.

**Q. A couple of guys are skipping this week, not terribly unusual over the years, but do you think it would be more a case of the format, just given match play not getting any flow in your game that you normally would, or just the spot on the schedule as it's coming off THE PLAYERS, getting into the Masters?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Probably the scheduling thing more than anything else. I'd say -- who's not playing? I know Cam --

**Q. Rory, Cam, Sam Burns, Phil -- I'll stop at the third one.**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Who did you say?

**Q. Nothing.**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I can't get in trouble. I guess you can. I didn't hear what you said. All those guys have played here before, and I'm sure they all love playing match play. It's just a matter of scheduling. Sam just repeated last week, Cam won THE PLAYERS, Rory is gearing up for a very important major. I think it's just a scheduling thing.

**Q. What did you take out of last week because it was a very quiet -- you were always there and it's like no one was paying attention to you and you made a nice run. Did that feed into your belief that things are coming**

**together?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Just the creepy guy in the back of the room? Yeah. That's kind of how I felt last week. Just never really stepped into the spotlight. (Smiling).

Yeah, it was my first time playing there. I hit it great. It's been really promising, starting to hit some shots that I haven't been able to hit in a while, or ever. Just didn't really putt very well. The grain grows opposite of the slope. It's overseed. It would have probably helped to get a few more rounds in, which was impossible to do with THE PLAYERS the week before. Missing a cut, usually you do that on Friday, not on Sunday. It would have been nice to have a couple more days in Tampa to get used to those greens. Like I said, I'm striking it beautifully and looking forward to playing some more golf.

**Q. Given the nature of the event, what can you get out of this week that kind of gets you headed in the right direction for the first major of the year?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Just playing. I feel like I'm at the state where I need to kind of keep playing and giving myself opportunities, which is entering tournaments. I alluded to it earlier, just I really -- each shot is its own shot and I try and do my best with that thing and then move on. The more golf I can play, the better position I'll be in.

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