

THE CJ CUP Byron Nelson

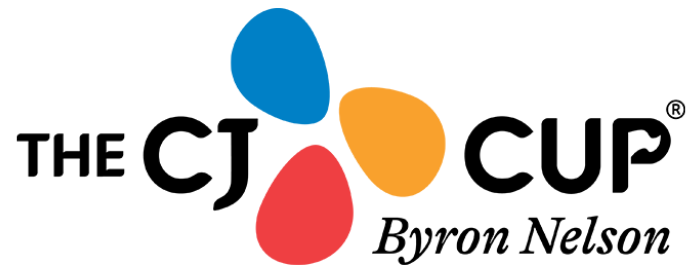
Sunday, May 5, 2024

McKinney, Texas, USA

TPC Craig Ranch

Taylor Pendrith

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome the winner of the 2024 CJ CUP Byron Nelson, Taylor Pendrith, to the media center.

Taylor, congrats on capturing the win. How does it feel to be a PGA TOUR winner?

TAYLOR PENDRITH: Yeah, doesn't feel real yet still. All a blur the last hour. To hear that sounds amazing.

And it's been something that I've been working towards my whole career and to finally get it done feels unbelievable.

Q. How was it sleeping on the lead and contending with the final group all the way to the end on 18?

TAYLOR PENDRITH: I slept pretty good. I was a little disappointed that the Toronto Maple Leafs lost last night, so that was mostly on my mind.

Yeah, slept good. Morning was good with my wife and son. You know, everything was pretty normal. I felt really calm all week. And all today I felt really calm, too, until the end where things got a little interesting.

But, yeah, I've held the 54-hole lead before and haven't got it done. Learned a lot from that and tried to be a little better today and stay in my own lane and just put my head down and go to work. To come out on top feels unreal.

Q. Sorry about the Leaf's loss; getting your first victory make it better?

TAYLOR PENDRITH: Makes it better, yes.

Q. What were your emotions from the time you were crossing the bridge onto the 18th green? How did you handle the fluctuation from what you were planning, maybe having to make an eagle, compared to you have a birdie putt to win it all?

TAYLOR PENDRITH: Yeah, it was wild. I hit a really nice shot in there 35 feet probably for eagle and Ben was in a

little bit of a tricky spot.

He'd been playing so good all day. I expected him to have a putt at birdie, so I was fully prepared to try and make that putt.

I didn't hit the best putt. I was a little disappointed that I left it short, but then when he missed his par putt and I realized I had a putt for the win, it was all a blur really.

I've never had a putt to win a PGA TOUR event, so my caddie said this is the straightest putt we've had all year and just knock it in. It managed to slip in the left.

I'm pretty happy.

Q. Knowing it's difficult to watch your fellow competitors go through what Ben was going through, how do you sort of keep yourself in your own moment and focusing on what you're doing while that's going on?

TAYLOR PENDRITH: Yeah, you know, I had a long time before I hit that eagle putt. By the time I marked the ball to the time I hit the putt was few minutes for sure. Wasn't really trying to pay attention to what they were doing, although it really mattered obviously.

Just focused on trying to hit a good putt, put good speed on it. If it doesn't go in, go tap it in and put the pressure back on Ben. Left myself a little bit more than I wanted to. Pretty simple putt.

But, yeah, I feel for Ben. He played really, really good today, especially down the stretch birdieing 16, 17. I've been on the other side of it a couple times and it sucks, but it's golf. It's a hard game.

Obviously I'm thrilled to birdie the last and get it done. But feel for him.

Q. You talked earlier outside about how quickly everything happened on the 18th green. Just wondering with everything that was at stake, how do you slow yourself down over that putt and get in a good mental place to hit it?



TAYLOR PENDRITH: Yeah, I feel like in the last few months my mental game hasn't been great. Maybe mixed with a little bit of physical side. My shoulder hasn't been great and I've been working with my mental coach Adrian for the last six weeks probably, and just working on acceptance.

You know, everybody wants that opportunity to have a putt to win a PGA TOUR event. I was nervous for sure. My caddie, we been working on our communication as well and he said, this is the straightest putt you've had all year. Just knock it in. Was able to do that.

Yeah, it was a mix of emotions for sure with everything happening so fast. But I'm very happy that it did go in. Just tried to stay in my routine. Felt like my routine was really good this week, which I've been working on the last few weeks, so just did the same thing that I did over every other putt.

Q. One other question: After Ben made the putt on 17 did you have to give yourself a little talk walking to the 18th tee?

TAYLOR PENDRITH: Yeah, obviously he made an unbelievable putt there with that much on the line, and I thought I hit a really good shot off the tee and just spun back a little bit and I was in a tricky spot.

Hit an awesome chip shot right where we were talking about and tried to give ourselves something inside ten feet for par.

You know, I wasn't expecting him to make that I guess, but he did, so I knew that I needed to make that putt to have some sort of chance on the last.

Hit a nice putt and just slipped in at the end. That was a huge save and ultimately is why I'm sitting here.

Q. You said you had a lead before going into Sunday. What did you learn from that situation to what happened today?

TAYLOR PENDRITH: I think I learned that I need to stay aggressive, play my own game, not worry about what others are doing and go out there and win it and not let it I guess be brought to you.

So that's what I was trying to do today, stay aggressive. I hit driver on the first hole, which was maybe borderline. If I hit it a little right would be in the hazard. Hit a nice wedge shot and made birdie on the first. Got off to a good start and calmed the nerves a little bit.

Yeah, felt like I was driving it good and there was no reason for me not to hit driver on most holes and stay aggressive, because obviously needed to shoot low today to get it done and somebody from the back could have shot 7-, 8-, 9-under to contend.

So, yeah, that's what I learned. Just go out there and play aggressive and go and get it.

Q. I know one of the first people to greet you on the green was your family; Mackenzie was also there. All the Canadians have such a tight bond. What was it like when you looked up and saw him for the first time and what was that celebration like?

TAYLOR PENDRITH: Yeah, it was pretty cool. We're very close, all the Canadians on TOUR, for sure. Me and Mack played together at Kent State with Corey as well. I was there for Mack's first win when he won in Sea Island. I was living in Charleston and drove down. It was a Monday finish.

Me and my caddie at the time drove down at 3:00 a.m. in the morning to get there, and so I saw him win his first one. It was pretty special for him to be there with a beer waiting for me. It was pretty nice.

Q. (Regarding food service this week.) Can you share your experience the whole week about the food and the player dining?

TAYLOR PENDRITH: Yeah, player dining was fabulous this week. Best of the year I think. You know, the lunch was phenomenal. Can't thank them enough for providing that.

I love that kind of food so felt right at home. Yeah, it was very delicious.

Q. Do you consider yourself a history buff with the TOUR history, I mean, considering Byron Nelson's name attached to this? What do you know about him and the fact that your name is going to be tied with him forever now. What does that mean?

TAYLOR PENDRITH: Yeah, I'm not a huge golf history guy, but Byron Nelson is a special name, and for my name to be on that trophy is super special.

You know, it feels unbelievable, and to see some of those names on this trophy, it's crazy. I still can't believe that I'm a winner of this tournament.

But I'm sure it'll kick in soon. Yeah, feels great.



Q. You talked earlier in the week about the shoulder injury and some of the nagging things you've been dealing with. How much confidence does that give you to get back in there and do things the way you have been?

TAYLOR PENDRITH: Yeah, it's huge. I feel like my game has been close the last few weeks. Starting to feel better physically after a long time.

Have not been driving the ball well this year statistically and feel like it's coming along. This week really clicked. I felt super confident with the driver in my hand. I was swinging hard. Ball speed was how it used to be. All my distances were back to what I'm used to.

But, yeah, it's been a grind for the last little bit. I got off to a great start in the year with two Top 10s and missed a bunch of cuts. Wasn't playing great. Mentally wasn't really having fun.

And then the last couple weeks was a good prep for here I guess, and everything kind of clicked this week. I think all aspects of my game were very solid. Yeah, so it gives me tons of confidence moving forward.

Q. You've battled injury. Does it make this win a little bit more satisfying knowing you've overcome those injuries?

TAYLOR PENDRITH: Yeah, totally. Yeah, I've had three different procedures to try and fix this pain that I've been dealing with, and the last one was the week of the Waste Management. He said it could take some time and I feel like the last couple weeks it's start feeling better.

It was super frustrating for a long time and just lingering, and I didn't know if it was going to feel great or bad. So, yes, it's very much more rewarding dealing with all of that to come out here and feel good and know my game is good enough to win out here.

THE MODERATOR: Again, congratulations, Taylor on the win.

TAYLOR PENDRITH: Thank you. Thank you guys.
(Applause.)

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