

U.S. Open Championship 2021

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San Diego, California, USA

Torrey Pines Golf Course

Bryson DeChambeau

Media Day



Q. I believe you were 14 years old when the U.S. Open was held here at Torrey Pines back in 2008, and I'm curious what you remember about that championship and your thoughts about playing here as the defending champion on a golf course that hosted one of the greatest championships of all time.

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Well, first off, it's an honor to be the defending champion. And second, I love Torrey Pines. I played Junior Worlds, and ever since I played Junior Worlds I've loved that golf course.

One of the most impressive things that I remember from that is the fact that Tiger, being Tiger, having fractured a leg and all that, literally still going after it and playing the full 72 holes and then going out and playing another 18 holes after that. It's something that I can't fathom doing and how much pain he went through, how much struggle and strife and agony he went through, all that pain, and to come out on top is something that is unfathomable, something that allowed me to say, hey, if he's going through that much pain, through that much trouble, that much strife and still able to come out successful and win a golf tournament, win the U.S. Open, it has inspired me to work even harder. It's inspired me to almost say, hey, if he can win off of a broken leg pretty much, what can I do if I work hard. It's inspired me to a whole other level.

Q. This course has not been terribly kind to you, at least recently, missing the cut at the Farmers Insurance Open in 2017 and 2018, but what we learned back in 2008 is not necessarily success at the Farmers Insurance that turns into success. You can be successful in the Open Championship having not been successful in the Farmers. Tell us about your experiences this year, why maybe you skipped it in January, and how any of that correlates to how well you will play here in seven weeks.

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Yeah, you know, look, I finished -- I've played well there before. I finished third in Junior World and I've gotten -- no, it was second in Junior World actually. I've played well there before. The times that I was there for the Farmers Insurance, my game

wasn't on point. I wasn't comfortable with how I was playing when I was there for those years. I wanted to play this year. I had too many things going on with my schedule and ultimately just didn't work out for me to play this year.

But look, the golf course will play completely different when the U.S. Open comes around that time. The golf course is going to be really firm, fast, long enough, I'm sure, and I think that the Farmers plays a little bit different.

But I love the golf course. I love the tournament, and I'm sure I will be back here come soon.

Q. At the Masters, Xander said, he described you turning the Winged Foot and the U.S. Open setup into a pitch-and-putt and said they played right into your hands with the course setup. Do you agree with that assessment, and how do you think you might see a different course because of how well you played there?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Well, look, I don't think it was a pitch-and-putt for sure. I still had to hit shots. There was a shot I hit on No. 5, it was a 6-iron out of the bunker. But for the most part, yeah, I was able to hit pitching wedge out of the rough where people were hitting 6-irons and 7-irons out of the rough just laying up.

So for me, starting out the week, I was like, there's no other way to play this golf course than hitting it really far and just wedging it out to the green. So it really wasn't a pitch-and-putt because I still had 40-footers that I made, 30-footers that I made.

But for the most part getting the fairways that tight made it very easy for me to make my decision to hit driver off the tee as far as possible.

Q. And then a question about rough. Obviously the U.S. Open is known for rough, Torrey Pines is known for its rough. What has your research told you about rough and how you play out of it, what kind of clubs you can play out of it, what kind of swings you can take out of it? What have you learned specifically about thick rough?

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BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Yeah, it really depends on the type of grass. So for example, if I'm hitting out of kikuyu, there's almost no club you can get it out with hitting it really far. If it's deep down into the rough in kikuyu, it's almost impossible to get out of. If it's ryegrass, that's a different situation. It could be down to the bottom, base level of the ground and you can still get it out for the most part. But pitching wedge or 9-iron, about 45 feet of loft for you to get it out and have enough ball speed to get the ball up to a green.

I mean, we go and practice that week to see if it's feasible to hit 7-irons out, if it's feasible to hit pitching wedge out of it, if it's feasible to hit 4-iron out of it even, and if it's not, then we literally have to change our dynamics and our course thought depending on where long rough is, where I can essentially hit it.

Q. How do you feel Torrey suits that style of game? You mentioned kikuyu since they have that here. How do you feel that suits your style and your approach?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Well, I would say for the most part -- look, any type of rough -- it depends on how wide the fairways are. That's what I'll say. If the fairways are super tight, no matter what, we're all going to be hitting out of the rough, and whoever can play out of the rough is going to probably (indiscernible).

Kikuyu, it just depends on the lie that you have. If you're rolling it into the rough versus flying it in and hitting it down into the rough, (indiscernible) it depends on how much the golf ball is going to be going into the ground. You don't want that golf ball going to the ground in kikuyu.

So definitely it depends on the golf course we're playing and the type of rough that's out there.

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