

# U.S. Open Championship 2021

Thursday, June 17, 2021

San Diego, California, USA

Torrey Pines Golf Course

## Xander Schauffele

### Flash Interview



**Q. 2-under 69, extra eyeballs on you this week. How good does this hot start feel?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it's cool to have friends and family watching. I have high expectations for myself in big tournaments, so it's always nice to start off hot.

**Q. You know this course well. How did it play today especially?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, firm, fast, different. Rough is much longer. You really had to -- it was touch and go based on where you were off the tee and a lot of positioning. I felt like it was fair, the setup, but being in the fairway obviously gives you a distance advantage because the ball is running more, and firmness of greens protected a lot of the pins. I thought it was a fun day.

**Q. It looks like you were really strong off the tee today. How good did you feel about that? And then flipside, you had a lot of putts, makeable putts. What did you think about the putting?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I was strong off the tee. It's something I look forward to maintaining all week.

And with the putting, I felt like I didn't really hit a bad putt. I lipped out a few. I made a few. But overall I felt really comfortable. I'm getting more comfortable with this arm lock thing. And yeah, pretty solid.

**Q. The getting down on the ground in the push-up position, forgive me if I haven't noticed or seen that a lot, but how long have you been working with that?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I figured I could just fill out my shirts a little more, so if I could throw in a few push-ups on every hole it would be good for me.

**Q. How long have you --**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: A couple days.

**Q. So there's got to be some kind of strategy or**

**thought behind it.**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I think I'm a real green reader and sometimes when I get even lower I may pick up something that I missed just kind of hunched over or crouched over. Just like the arm lock, I'm trying to find any way to get myself an advantage.

**Q. Is this a Derek idea or a Xander idea?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It was a -- I think you see P-Reed's caddie, Kessler, do it a lot. It's been done before. I just try to make sure I don't really damage the green in any way, shape or form or I'm in anyone's line. I think I just started doing it on a few putts and then I kind of liked it and now I'm stuck doing 50 push-ups every day, so it's great.

**Q. Just want to make sure you hadn't injured yourself yet.**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I'll jump in an ice bath and I'll be fine.

**Q. In a U.S. Open that means a lot to you on a number of different levels, how much today you went out trying to score and be aggressive and how much you were conscious of just not screwing anything up?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It's a fine line. I felt ready to go on Monday. I played 64 holes last week. I felt prepared. I saw both my coaches, my dad and Derek, and everything was good. And I think I told them on Tuesday, I'm ready to go. Like we don't need to do anything else.

It was more so me staying patient, knowing that I'm playing good golf and just doing it.

**Q. Why 64 and not 63?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I started on 9 when I caught Pat, I think, playing the back nine on Friday. There was the 10 holes there.

**Q. Brooks says he doesn't like putting on poa. Do you**

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**think growing up on greens like these gives you an edge?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It's just a mental thing. You're so used to seeing the ball bounce around. Brooks grew up on Bermuda, probably Champions Bermuda, which is really pure, it's really nice. And if I grew up on that I also would be bothered by poa annua. I'm just used to bumpier greens. It's just a mental thing. I'm sure he putted fine.

**Q. You know Phil so well and coming off the PGA yesterday, it was his birthday, there were about a dozen reasons people were paying attention to him. What kind of reactions to him today did you notice?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I mean, people were very happy about his birthday. They wished him a happy birthday on just about every hole, every 50 yards. I don't know if he enjoyed that, but I'm sure he felt the love from the fans.

**Q. He mentioned that he had to step away from his ball three times on 13 because of cell phones. Did you notice a lot of --**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Oh, yeah, I had one go off right in my down swing on 14. Fortunately, I kind of just sacked up and hit the shot and was laughing shortly after. If that ball was going left, I'm pretty sure I wouldn't be smiling. I think we'll give the fans a little break. They haven't been out in a while either, but if they could silence their phones and the photos and everything, that would be great for us.

**Q. Is it challenging for you to play a course you know so well like Torrey Pines when it's set up this differently for a U.S. Open?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yes and no. It's a quick adjustment. I'm used to playing it in January where it's really slow and soft and wet and the ball isn't going anywhere. And now it's kind of weird, it's firm, it's fast, ball is going a mile if you hit the fairway. You've just got to pick slightly different lines off the tee and different landing angles or different landing approach numbers coming into greens.

**Q. Is there any adjustment with the arm lock beyond just getting used to it?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Slightly more upright from a technical standpoint. Besides that, more mental than anything else.

**Q. Is it a big mental advantage?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I wouldn't say it's a mental

advantage. It's me mentally getting comfortable with it. I think it's an advantage, like I've said before, but mentally it's more so me getting comfortable with it in tournament golf.

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