

The 152nd Open

Press Conference

Tuesday, 16 July 2024

Bryson DeChambeau



LIV MCMILLAN: Good morning, everyone. I am delighted to welcome U.S. Open champion Bryson DeChambeau to the interview room.

Bryson, welcome to Royal Troon and welcome to The Open. I believe you played the back nine yesterday. Can you give us your thoughts on the course from what you've seen so far.

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: First off, it's great to be here. Second off, it's a tough golf course. That back nine has some teeth, and you've got to drive it straight, you've got to control your golf ball.

Greens are pretty fair, but driving it straight and controlling that golf ball underneath the wind is going to be super key this week.

Q. Bryson, I know that you haven't played the Postage Stamp yet, but I'm sure you've heard about it. I'm sure you've looked into it a bit. What are you feeling when you come to that hole?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Well, it can be diabolical for sure. Don't know too much about it other than hit the center of the green and I'll be good. Every day, that's going to be the goal this week.

Q. Bryson, a lot of pros talk about wanting to see their ball fly into certain windows after they hit it. I'm just curious why that's so important during a week like this and, like, what your tendencies are that you're always on alert for?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: I hit the golf ball really high, so it's always been a bit of an -- not an issue. It definitely is helpful in certain situations.

Out here in the wind this week, I've got to learn to control -- not learn, but keep the ball under the wind a bit more, keep a lower flight.

Most people try to see it through windows. I do too, but not that specific. It's more of, if I take it back a certain distance and go through, it will come out with a certain launch just based on the loft. So I'm really focused on accomplishing that task, just swinging the way I want to swing, and the results will speak for

themselves hopefully.

For me it's going to be about controlling that height through just length of backstroke for me this week. It's going to be tough. It's always tough, right to left into the wind, left to right into the wind, and down. It's very diabolical, and just trying to keep it low underneath the wind is key for me this week.

Q. Bryson, I'm wondering now with a little bit of hindsight how maybe your feelings during your two major wins were different.

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Well, there was a crowd in 2024, and that was fun. I think they were just different in their own right. 2020 was a bit of showing that I could do it, and obviously not winning a major, it's difficult to get that first win, first major championship win.

Then the second one was more of -- for me personally, it was more cementing my own comfort levels of I know I can do it again and again, and I can give myself more runs at numerous majors. Obviously I've played well in a lot of the majors this year, but I pulled it all together for the U.S. Open.

So just giving myself that comfort and knowing that I can do it pretty much with any type of game I have is really cool.

Q. It's pretty clear from the article in Golf Week that your relationship with Mike Schy has hit a bit of an impasse. Is that relationship irretrievable now, or is it distracting, as well, all that stuff going on?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Look, it's an unfortunate situation. I've loved that man for all of my life, and it's a private matter that went public, unfortunately. We tried to figure it out and make it make sense for everyone, and it just didn't come out that way.

I've said all I've said in the Golf Week article, and to be honest, like I'm moving on and looking forward to a great tournament this week. Not going to have any of that in the rear view mirror. History is history, and things will work themselves out. They always do.

Q. In the last 12 months there seems to be a big kind of shift in the perception of you. What do you think that is down to?



Is that down to you being more open on YouTube and stuff like that? And did it hurt you in the past when maybe people saw you more negatively?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: I think I've always been who I've been. I've definitely matured a lot. It's been a growing process for me over the course of time. YouTube has massively helped, I can tell you that, being able to just release the emotions in the way that I know I can. When I was a kid, I was super emotional obviously, but I got frustrated on the golf course, I got really excited on the golf course.

Then when I got on TOUR, it was like everybody had to, hey, no, come on, just be in control. Control yourself. Control yourself. There were times where I got frustrated, but also times where I realized, hey, no, I should be expressing my emotions because that's me. I don't want to be someone that I'm not.

Just really defining that and refining that to a place where I am today has been a lot of work in progress. It's just taken time for me to have a better, bigger perspective on life and also having a platform where I can showcase that and refine it to a really cool, cool level and give people some great entertainment.

Q. Did it bother you in the past when people probably seen you negatively?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: It wasn't like -- I mean, you could say it's bothered, but it was more of like, dang, I'm disappointed that people don't see who I am. It's cool to get people to see who I am now.

I'm just going to keep entertaining and showcasing to the fans what this great game is all about.

Q. Bryson, do you enjoy this kind of golf? Like have you learned to embrace links golf? Is your length at all a problem in trying to figure out where to dial in drivers when the ball rolls out?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: It can be a difficult challenge. I wouldn't say it's a problem. It's a challenge. I think that's what's so great about links golf and Open Championship, and what it provides is a different test and different -- yeah, a different test to try and figure out and get an A on, I guess you could say.

For me, I played well at Royal Lytham St Annes when it was firm and fast in the Walker Cup. Played well at St Andrews. Played well at other places. But it's always been a difficult test for me because I wasn't great at putting early on in my career. I've gotten a little bit better. My wedge game has gotten better. I've learned to flight the ball a little bit.

So slowly it's getting there. Just a couple more reps. Shoot, if I play well this week, I think I can give myself a good chance obviously. That's all I'm focused on. I just think over the course of time I'm going to get more and more comfortable with this golf course.

Q. Obviously you've had a great year in the majors so far. Just wondering where your confidence level is headed into The Open compared to previous years.

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Very confident, obviously. It all depends if I'm striking it well. I can come in here with the most confidence, obviously, off of a major championship win. Played decent last week, as well.

Really what matters is if I can continue to drive the ball as well as I have and ball strike my irons the way I know I can and putt the way I know I can. If I do those three things well, even four things with chipping and bunker play and on the greens, I'll give myself a chance. I know how to get the job done. It's just a matter of if I'm as consistent as I was at the U.S. Open last week and a few other venues as well.

If I can play the golf that I have been, I think I'll give myself a great chance.

Q. Your U.S. Open win really resonated with the fans at Pinehurst. I'm wondering if you could envision a similar situation if you win Sunday here.

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: For sure. It would be awesome to let everybody touch the Claret Jug. That would be a dream come true. I've got to get the job done first. I can't think too far ahead. I've got to focus on executing the shots under the right conditions and just take account of everything that's going on and stay in the moment and execute the right shot.

That's the most important thing this week is giving yourself the best chance, taking into account the wind, the rain, the slopes, the bounces, the greens and just making sure you're doing the right thing in that moment because it's so variable all day long. The winds are shifting and moving and gusting.

So just making sure you're hitting that right shot at the right moment is key.

Q. I know you've only played nine holes here, but I'm assuming you are formulating a game plan. Do you anticipate driver being taken out of your hand here on this course maybe more than normal?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: I think there's a few holes, 11 is a great example, just get that one on the fairway. It's a very difficult, difficult hole.



If the wind picks up, it may be driver. There are times where it has to be driver. You can't hit 3-wood or 5-wood; it's just too short. I could hit a 3-wood, and if it's 15, 20 miles an hour into the wind, it could go 250 yards, 240 yards depending on the height.

If it's raining too, that plays a big factor, as well.

So there are times where you may be forced to hit driver, and you've just got to suck it up and hit a good drive. For the most part, I hope it doesn't take too much out of the bag, but I'm good with my irons too.

It's going to be a fun and interesting challenge this week.

Q. Bryson, just following up on the golf course, does it fit your eye? How important is that to you? I know you get very into your numbers. How important is it that you get out there on the golf course and look at tee shots and get comfortable with the visual?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: It's very important being out there and getting comfortable with the lines, making sure that G-Bo is giving me great information on left edge of fairway, right edge of fairway with this club and whatnot is key. Especially when you have blind shots, it can be very interesting.

10 is a great example. I got up there my first tee shot of this week, and I was like, whoa, where do I go? But over the left center of that bunker and getting up there and getting a good feel and being comfortable with the visuals is one of the most important things. Even as technical as I am, I still need to see and feel things as much as possible. So it's important.

Q. Bryson, you're a player who's been known to overpower golf courses at times in the past. I'm just wondering specifically with regards to the back nine at Troon, is that stretch of holes possible to overpower? How do you plan to tackle that?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: I don't think it's possible to overpower it. There's too many hazards around the fairways, even in the bunkers. You've got to be very strategic out here.

Look, I've played well on strategic golf courses in the past, whether it be RBC Heritage, I've played well there in the past. Valderrama, I played pretty well. I had two top 10s there, finished 2nd last year and 9th this year. Those are pretty strategic golf courses and very placement-oriented golf courses.

So I think I'm pretty solid at it, but overpowering this golf course, I don't know if it's possible.

Q. Bryson, on Sunday you guys were on the edge of

celebrating and ended up losing. Can you just talk about your conversations with Lahiri afterwards, I guess more as a manager and owner and coach and how that is different than maybe the Bryson of a year ago?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Yeah, we went from thinking we were going to win and celebrating Baan's victory. Obviously I wanted to win and didn't play my best that final day, and Baan was playing well and gave himself a great chance to finish it off. Missing that putt was difficult for all of us to see and feel.

Then we had to go into a playoff, and he had to go into a playoff too. It was quite an interesting dynamic going from the super high emotion feeling like you're going to win and not having that occur.

The only thing that I could say to him was that, Baan, you've improved so much as a player. You've gotten better since being on LIV, and the team that you have around you is here for you in full support. Don't let this define you. This should only be a springboard platform for you to just continue to grow.

We all have our downs. He's seen my downs. I told him about my downs, Paul's downs, and Charles was unfortunately not there, but John Catlin was there. He's been playing some great golf. He shot in the 50s this year. So just having him there just talking about, hey, this is okay; you're playing the best golf of your career. Do not reminisce, move forward. It was the best piece of advice that we could give him.

Just consoling him, I mean, it was -- we feel for him. He's finished second numerous times, just barely missed out on qualifying for this Open. It was incredibly emotional for all of us.

Considering a few years ago we didn't have that opportunity, it's awesome to be able to not only feed off your teammates, but when you have those highs, you're also going to have lows. That was a low moment for all 6 us. We understand and realize that impact, how it affects us. It doesn't affect us in a negative way. It affects us in a positive way, realizing how much better those wins are going to be when we do get those team victories, or when someone does win individually, it just means so much more.

We're playing for more than just ourselves now, and it's really cool. I think that's an awesome aspect of it. There's a time and place for it. Last week was a difficult week for Baan. He'll get through it. He's a strong man, great family man, great husband, great father. That's what we kept assuring him on is everything is going to be okay.

It was a big putt. It was a tough putt for him to miss that.

Q. Bryson, who have been your mentor figures in your



personal growth, and what have they taught you?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: I'm not going to disclose the people that I'm close with just because it's kind of private. It's something that I respect their privacy on.

There's been some celebrity head figures that have come up to me and talked to me about my faith and also how they deal with adversity, how they deal with strife and public perception and whatnot. It's been a two-, three-year process of them just continuing to give me support and then having a great team around me.

My social media team has been fantastic. They're my best friends as well. So I have a great relationship with them. My agent, manager, caddie. My caddie has been super influential. He's definitely helped me through the past couple of years, and being a massive family man, and him just helping me understand there's more to life than just golf.

Those have all contributed to some perceptual changes in my own brain of how the world works and what the world is about and what the game of golf is about.

Q. When's the last time you felt you had success in bad weather?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Actually, the PGA Championship, not this past year, but the year before. When I played with Brooks on Saturday, I played really well in some super adverse conditions. That's the last one I can remember right off the top of my head.

I believe there's another windy place that I played pretty well this year. Vegas, I played pretty well. It was super windy, and I think I shot like 62 or something like that.

So there's a couple moments, but I've got to hunker down and play a strategic game out there this week.

Q. I'm just wondering, after what happened last month with Rory, have you spoken to him in the time since the U.S. Open? What do you expect from him this week? Obviously he's a huge favorite here. How do you think it will affect him?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: I said hello to him yesterday, and we talked. He said congrats. So everything's great there.

He's a fierce competitor. I know he's going to give the fans, give everybody as much as he can this week. I'm going to be doing the same. We're going to be competing. Hopefully it will be another good battle.

Q. (No microphone.)

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: I'm not one to make assumptions on someone's golf game and how he feels, but I certainly am going to try to play the best I possibly can.

Q. We're obviously all aware of how unique your golf equipment setup is. I'm curious whether you'd like to see your setup stay unique to you or whether you'd like to have it impact more into mainstream manufacturing? And just following on that, once your playing career is complete, would you like to move into equipment design itself, like Mr. Hogan did, or are you content?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: You might be seeing something later today or tomorrow on that. I'll give you more when I can. Certainly we're working on some things.

Would I like to see it more in play around the world and across different amateurs, different levels? Absolutely. That's the main goal. It's not just going to be unique to me. It needs to be built for the individual.

Everybody's game, everybody's swing is different. That's what makes this game so amazing. You can have somebody that looks completely awful with their golf swing just absolutely pure it. And then you have somebody that has a perfect golf swing just can't hit the face at all.

So really building a golf piece of equipment that works for that individual is incredibly important, and that's what I've personally realized, and I hope to transition over to the public golfer. We're working on that. It should be soon, should be sometime soon.

Q. Bryson, of the things you want to accomplish in your career, how high do you rate growing the game? Do you think it's a role of every top player, and what's the best way to do it?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: For me personally, it's probably number one on my list, besides continuing to win tournaments and giving my best to do that. I think they go hand in hand.

I would also say that not everyone has to have that vision. It's not my place to tell others what to do, but personally for me, what I can speak to, I would love to just continue to grow this great game because it develops character, it develops amazing character, and I've obviously had issues in the past. Over the course of time, it's developed my character.

You see that perceptual change happen, and hopefully it's an inspiration to others that this game can really do wonders for individuals.

Whether you're struggling or in a great place, it's awesome just



to play for fun, or it's awesome just to see who the person is and how much they can grow from it.

Q. Do you see yourself as an athlete or an entertainer? If it's both, what's the balance?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: I would say I'm -- well, it really depends. Like when I'm out here, I would say it's more of a golfer than entertainer. When I'm filming YouTube content, I'm definitely more of an entertainer compared to a golfer, but I still try to play the best I can.

So it flips. It's not like I'm this percentage golfer, this percentage entertainer. It really flows depending on the situation I'm in. Major championship week, I'm focused on playing the best golf I possibly can.

There's going to be moments where I hopefully can showcase the fans a little something fun, but in YouTube I'm really trying to showcase everything that I've got entertainment-wise.

Q. Bryson, you're very good at talking about yourself.

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Thanks. I don't know if that's a compliment or negative (laughter).

Q. Are you as happy in yourself in July 2024 as you have ever been?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Yes. With my father passing, and everyone's father at some point passes, and we've all had some struggles and strife in our life, the relatability of time is more prevalent than ever. I think that relatability has allowed me to understand the game of golf and what it is and what it's for, and also from a being happy standpoint, yes, you just realize that this great game is not always going to be here. I'm not always going to be here. I'm going to move on at some point, and I want to do as much as I can in the short time I've been given.

So, yeah, I'm as happy as I ever have been.

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