

PGA Championship

Tuesday, May 13, 2025

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

Quail Hollow Club

Xander Schauffele

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everybody. We'll go ahead and get started. We're pleased to be joined now by defending PGA champion Xander Schauffele at the 107th PGA Championship.

Xander, welcome to your ninth PGA Championship. How are you feeling about your game as you look to defend your title this week?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, game's coming along slowly but surely. Just getting as many reps in as I can. It's already been off to an interesting week with the weather. It's definitely one of the hurdles everyone's going to have to overcome this week.

Q. Xander, looking at the major parts of the game, where you talk about driving, approach, putting, and around the green, if you were forced to trade one of those for somebody else's game who plays currently, which would you trade, and who would you choose to inherit their skill?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: That's a weird question, considering we're getting ready for a major where we're just trying to be the best at all those things.

If I'm nitpicking myself, I would probably give up my short game for someone else's. There's a big group of guys who are what I would call elite chippers. I don't know, there's probably five or six guys I can think of that do that really well. That would probably take a little bit of stress off my putter at times.

In all honesty, I probably wouldn't -- I like the challenge of trying to get better at that too. So I'm okay with what I got.

Q. Xander, in your practices and places you're very familiar with, what are your impressions of the golf course in the time you have been able to see it so far this week?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Fortunately, I've been here a few times. Delays and rain and things of that nature, they

can kind of fool you a little bit on this property just because they haven't been able to get the mowers out on the fairways, and the greens are exceptionally firm for getting a few inches of rain the last three or four days.

I heard the SubAir going on the greens, and I imagine this is our last sort of batch of rain coming through, at least for the next 24 hours. Tomorrow afternoon and Thursday morning, I see these greens being -- I mean, who knows, a foot and a half faster. If we can get some sun and some wind out, they're going to dry up really quick and kind of get to that Quail Hollow that we're all used to seeing.

Q. Just wanted to say, your 72nd hole -- one thing that Austin, your caddie, mentioned to me was that your shoulders never slumped when you got up to that shot there, the ball above your feet on the 72nd hole last year at Valhalla. You stayed in the moment. What do you attribute that to, and what was your big takeaway from that finishing hole?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I think when you're in a position to win, you sort of forget -- you don't really hang your hat on anything that can kind of bring you down. I think when -- like coming back from injury earlier this year, I'm nitpicking myself around every corner versus when I'm in sort of midseason form, I'm hitting similar quality shots or bad shots or good shots across the board.

The difference really is, when you're in the moment, I think you don't nitpick. You're just on a mission. You're on a mission to do one thing, and that's to win. It's sort of a whatever-it-takes mentality, and you're not sitting there nitpicking yourself on the small things, or if you mis-hit it or you miss your line by a little bit, or things of that nature.

It's been a process for me to get back to that point where I'm okay with hitting bad shots or hitting it out of place and just making the best of it and sort of moving along from there and allowing myself to get a good nine-hole stretch in and go low. That's been a process coming back, and thinking back to the 72nd hole there, I was just in a good state of mind. All I was trying to do was win that tournament. If I had to hit a shot lefty on the last hole, I wasn't going to be rattled.

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Q. Having the caddies on the last green waiting for you, you had Joe Greiner, Dave, a lot of people celebrating and happy for you. What did that mean to you?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, had a few buddies fly down from New York, my friend and his girlfriend and Chris, my new swing coach, sort of freshly new swing coach at the time then. My wife was there, my uncle was there, my brother. It was cool to see everyone sorta huddled up. It was nice to be able to share that sort of emotion with everyone that's close to me.

Q. Xander, the story we keep hearing about Quail, the narrative that's come through, is that fans and architecture critics don't necessarily love it, because it's pretty simple, but players like it because it's pretty simple. Do you kind of agree with that? Statistically, what we're seeing is it puts this huge premium on driving where it kind of seems like driving is maybe -- not the only important thing, but so important that it takes over everything. Do you agree with these kind of takes? Basically, how do you feel about Quail?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I think, when you look at just the statistics that way, I think you'll just point -- there's probably an emphasis or a certain weight that driving carries if you're able to hit it in the fairway and hit it a certain distance.

Shoot, you can hit it in the fairway all day and miss a lot of greens, and you're going to have a really tough go around. I think it's a really tough golf course. I think everyone knows what they need to do. There's no sort of trick to play this golf course. A lot of people will hit it to the same spot. A lot of people will miss it to the same spot as well, and it's about who -- it's not bad because it's like who can get up-and-down better when they're out of position, and who can capitalize when they're in a good position.

It seems to be pretty fair. Yes, maybe it does err -- or if you do hit it far, it does help, but for the most part, I think it's a pretty fair property.

Q. The conversation last year before the PGA was how many times you have to be close to get there. I think after winning twice, two majors, does that count start from zero? Do you feel in a different position? What does it bring to your game or to your attitude?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I don't get asked that question anymore, for starters. It was going to be that conversation until -- if I didn't win one ever, it would have been that conversation that would have haunted me until I was done

playing probably. That's just how the game goes.

Luckily I was able to rattle that one off, my first one at Valhalla, the PGA, which was awesome. Yeah, I feel similar. I feel like I've done it before, but at the same time, I feel I'm still trying to prove myself as well.

I don't look at it too different or feel too different as a whole.

Q. This morning we were talking with Jon Rahm. Somebody asked if he had to choose somebody to putt like this week or to get him to win this week, he chose Xander for the best part of the week. What does it mean about your putting? Does it mean something to you? What have you been working on?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: If you look at my statistics this week, they're terrible across the board. I had a few bad samples come through returning from injury.

But I feel confident with my ability and what I can do. Yeah, I've played with Jon in San Diego at the Grand a few times. I do feel like -- even when he was back on the PGA TOUR, and we played East Lake a bunch of times together and just throughout the year. We got paired a ton.

I always did feel like I would play well when I played against him, and I would putt really well too. So it could be a little bit skewed because of that.

Q. Would you like to see more spots for the best players of the national opens in these majors, in all the majors, and at the Signature Events?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: More spots, like should there be more players in the field?

Q. Exactly.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I feel like it's been an evolving thing. I honestly haven't thought a lot about it. I've just been trying to get myself back into some good golf, sort of some good form.

Thinking about it, depending on where we're playing, depending on the weather, depending on a lot of things, yeah, I think we can afford to have a few more spots potentially. There's a lot more that -- just in the last couple years, me being out here for eight or nine years, I understand there's a lot more that goes into everything when it comes to having a certain size field, whether it's parking, food, accommodations, you name it, across the board. There's so many small things that happen.

But, yeah, could we afford a few more? Probably. I don't

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think it would hurt.

It's an evolving thing. We've had elevated events. We've had Signature Events. They've changed names in the last two or three years. I don't see why we wouldn't sort of keep tweaking it until we think it's perfect.

Q. And would you like to see more commitment from your colleagues to the national opens?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: For example?

Q. For example, there are a lot of rumors for the participation of Rory in the Australian Open.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Are you saying do I think that would be better?

Q. Yeah, exactly.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I think at some point -- like I said, I'm not aware of how golf markets work, to be honest. I don't really know. It's not something I'm educated on. I think, in terms of growing the game, at some point making it global -- it's always been a little bit global, but making it a global sport -- you know, I'm sure that's something that the Tour is looking at. I would be shocked if they weren't.

Having big events in Ireland or in England or somewhere in Europe or in Asia or Australia, I think there are certain markets for it. It just needs to make sense, and the timing needs to work. Then I think, if you make it make sense for everyone, then I think you'd see a lot more players doing it.

Q. I know you talked a little bit about this, but you know I need to ask you about food and why all that stuff. Tell us a little bit about your choices for dinner tonight and why you chose some of the things, including your cigars.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: The cigars I had input on. I'm not going to lie, I trusted -- I've been at Quail -- I feel like I've been here more than five times for sure, maybe six times, seven times. The food's always been amazing. The chefs here do a great job.

The only thing I said was sort of steak -- and I didn't even look at the menu, to be completely honest. I just trusted what they had. I knew they'd do a good job.

I saw a lot of bleu cheese on there. I think we're kind of tweaking it a little bit, from the last of my knowledge, or making it a little bit more customized; you can have some on or not because it's sort of a really strong, you either like it or you don't thing. My thought was I wanted everyone to

enjoy the meal and have a nice time.

The cigars, apparently there will be someone rolling cigars tonight. Maybe I might tuck some for later. We'll see if I smoke some tonight.

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