

# CME Group Tour Championship

Wednesday, November 17, 2021

Naples, Florida, USA

Tiburón Golf Club

## Patty Tavatanakit

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right, welcome everyone inside the virtual media center at the CME Group Tour Championship.

I am pleased to be joined by Patty Tavatanakit.

Patty, welcome to your first CME Group Tour Championship. What does it mean to you be able to make your way into this event after the season you've had?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: You know, it's always been the goal for I feel like most of the players out here to make it to this event. Means that you definitely have -- keep your card and get a chance to play and win \$1.5 million, which is, I mean, pretty big for women's golf.

**Q. Women's golf in general and then also for yourself, what does it mean to you and the achievements you've had this past year to be able to wrap it up at an event like this?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: It would mean a lot for me to win this week, but at the same time, I feel like I've been kind of beat up, and so like emotionally trying to be in contention, be in contention, try and close it out.

Just kind of keep not succeeding in that after ANA, but I'm just looking forward to countdown each round and then I off-season.

So I don't want put myself in a stressful situation where I have to make putts or do certain things.

I just want to enjoy it as much as I can.

**Q. What are some of your first impressions of Tiburón?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: They're grainy. For sure I feel like we've been playing out like north and kind of west side a lot. We've been having a lot of bent grass, and this is just like a true Florida bermuda.



Which I practice at Isleworth, but just playing in competition mode, we haven't really had this. It is different, and I feel like I need to make a little adjustment around greens.

**Q. What are some of those adjustments you've made in your practice and leadup to this week?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Hitting different shots. I really haven't been anxious going into events. Like I did really well last week just being really chill for the whole week and not really, you know, put myself in the situation where like I'm -- like just I want to be chill and just keep it light out there.

**Q. Now that we are at a season-ending event, does ANA still feel kind of forever ago, or is it still fresh in your mind after what you were able to achieve?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: A little bit. I feel like I had that break where I had to pull out from Dow and couldn't go play Evian, and ever since then I just feel like my scoring hasn't been there that. That momentum, I lost that a little bit after ANA.

And then Asia, you know, and that stretch where I did really well. It's a long season. There is -- golf is just up and down. There is ebbs and flows to it. You just got to accept and just keep looking ahead of where you can improve and do better.

**Q. You were tied for second for most Top 10s this past season. Coming off a strong performance last week at Pelican. What did you learn about your game that you're excited about moving into this week?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: I actually talked to my caddie a lot about how we think we overachieved. But, I mean, realistically speaking, we feel like we haven't had a week where everything like has come together. Ball-striking is great and putting is not there or putting is great and ball striking is not there.

Just kind of on and off. It's a good sign that I'm able to have high finishes and not my A game. It's good to know I have that ability.

**Q. Just a few of the Patty stats here. Ten Top 10s, win**



**the Chevron Championship, T5 KPMG, T7 AIG, seventh in rounds under par, Rolex Rookie of the Year, seventh in average driving distance; finished T6 last week. Is there a time when you're not chill?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: I would say yeah. I mean, before that -- we want to talk about the whole season you got to talk about like Lake Nona, Ocala, Kia. Those three events are just me building up to becoming that point.

I mean, if you ask me am I ever not chill then I would say yes because golf is a stressful game and you go out there and you're not trying to make mistakes.

It is stressful. But when you can do things repetitively it takes stress out of play, and so I was pretty chill last week.

But No, I was not chill at ANA or Kia where I missed the cut and had to find a caddie. U.S. Open I was not chill. There was a lot going on.

There are weeks like that, so...

**Q. It's unusual for someone to reach this level so early because of all the things other than the golf? Have you found that you are distracted at all throughout the year by the travel and the new courses and how do I get a car?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: I wouldn't say it's a distraction. When you look into traveling, I mean, at this point I come to events on Tuesday. I give up trying to like overprepare or use my energy and then lose it all on Sunday or the weekends.

Just focus on keeping it fresh and keeping my motivation going throughout the week. I really like being home. And, I mean, I was in Tampa last week. I drove home, stayed there for two days, and just come here yesterday morning and play a practice round and then just -- I keep it light, keep it easy, because I learned over the time less is more.

That's what my coach Grant Waite would say, too.

**Q. (No microphone.) Curious how you balance trying not to get wrapped up in results but the determination to win?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Yeah, I mean, I like to keep it that way, because at the end of the day, like if I were to tell you, look, I want to win this and if I don't, then it's like I fail.

I don't want to set myself up to failure. So it just kind of like, yeah, I win, great. If I don't, I have a great finish. That's just a better way to think and make yourself happy.

Weeks after week if you think you're going to go win and just keep not winning, that's just a lot of -- like you're not going to feel good about yourself. Just the perspective.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: I think I really did blackout that week. Like everything was going so well, and, you know, I wasn't distracted. I was really focused for the whole week.

Honestly I didn't really feel like myself. I felt like I was like kind of empty and dead on the inside, which for golf sometimes you need that. That's just not really who I am.

I don't know. You guys could see for the whole week I didn't really have that liveliness in me, and that's just not who I am.

For some reason I played well in that situation. There is some things you have to manage on and off the course and there is stuff going on that you just got shut it out and just keep focusing on what's in front of you.

**Q. You ever wonder if there was a correlation....(no microphone.)**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Oh, for sure. That's why I want to keep it more chill. That's just kind of the balance. I'm still searching. This is only my second year on tour and I'm still searching.

It's my first time really being kind of like a top player that everyone is kind of paying attention each week. It's not the easiest thing to manage all that.

I feel like I'm doing a good job.

**Q. You are doing a very good job. You talked a little bit about this only being your second year on tour. I don't think a lot of people realize that you were one of the rookies that got a second shot. How much did that second shot mean to you, to your career?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: I'm thankful for it. If you look back and would've wrapped up the rookie results last year, it wouldn't have been me at all. That was like my learning year.

I'm just grateful that -- I mean, it sounds funny, but I'm thankful that we had that pandemic year for this to happen.

But it's just -- that just sounds selfish, I guess. But, yeah, last year was a big learning year, and especially with the pandemic going on. New protocols, a lot of things, testing

and all that stuff to do every week.

You have to get to events on Sunday almost, and it's just kind of like dragging. I feel like I didn't really do well off the course mentally and just kind of dragging on.

I didn't like it honestly, but this year when we adjusted and kind of go back to the new norm on the tour, okay, have to get testing, you have to do that, you have to follow protocols of not eating. I love uber eats now. I just don't want to go outside as much.

So you just get adjusted to things. I think that's really big to being a professional golfer and travel every week.

**Q. What's something that you have learned about yourself over the course of we'll say 2020 and 2021?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: I feel like I learned a lot. More as a player. When I'm on the course I just focus -- I want focus to be a better player every time I'm on the course from last week, from yesterday, from the front nine or from the last nine.

Just always focus on what's ahead of me. I learned that you don't really have to be perfect to play well and you don't have to be perfect out here to play the golf that you want to play and be who you are.

That's the most important thing. If you try to be someone else it just gets tiring and really frustrating.

**Q. Not only is this your first season-ending event here on the LPGA Tour, tomorrow will be your first Rolex Awards. Being able to nab some of these pretty prestigious awards, to clinch them before the season ends, what does that mean to you and the way that you rate the way that the season has gone?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Like I've said in my interviews that I feel like I've overachieved a lot this year. Yes, I really want to be Rookie of the Year. Same way I go into college freshman year and I wanted to get the freshman of the year award because you have one shot to get it.

If you get it it's kind of like, okay, no one else can get it in your class. It's a really nice feeling to be able to close both of them. I only get two years to get both of them and I got both of them, so I feel like I'm pretty lucky on that.

But at the same time, I feel like the execution needs to be there. It's just an amazing feeling. Yeah, I'm really thankful that I'm able to do that.

**Q. Having gone through kind of a normal-ish year, one**

**that that wasn't interrupted - I know we lost some events in Asia -- have you learned into in these two years in terms of you how you're going to go about setting a schedule for next year, the places you liked and didn't like?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Yes, for sure. I feel like I've been doing that ever since my win. I remember going into ANA I was like, okay, maybe if I play well I don't want to go to Hawaii. I live in Orlando now so that's like 10 hours flight and six hours time distance; then got to come back to L.A. and Asia. That's like four weeks straight not being home and being in different time zones.

Then I won ANA so I was like, Okay, being Hawaii is out. And then went to L.A.; still missed the cut. Flew home to see my coach. That's how much I love being home.

Scheduling-wise, yes, I haven't played much this year. No, and next year probably going to be the same. Max is a probably three weeks straight. Four is like my max, max. I did the four week stretch. Ended at Founders and I was exhausted. I mean, literally after that I went home and I was not doing good for two weeks.

Physically, too. When you're on the road you can't really get stronger. All you do is maintain. For me to swing my best I have to be kind of like fit, strong.

So it literally took me two weeks to get my body back to where it is when I swing my greatest. I feel great. This is my second week and I'm just striving and my body feels great.

**Q. And you have nothing next week.**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Yeah.

**Q. Patty, how would you describe your temper on the golf course?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: It gets -- I mean, it gets pretty mellow for the most part. When it gets fiery it's just like, Okay, that's passion for me.

Because I need that to play well. If I'm just flat and just kind of like, yeah, whatever, I don't like that.

I feel like there is no passion. I want to keep it interesting. To myself, too. Just kind of like it's a challenge. Like if you -- it's like you're playing games almost. I'm addicted to adrenaline especially, so there is a lot of ups and downs. I just got to learn how to manage it.

**Q. You mention the word passion. I meant more**



**emotion than temper because the game will drive you crazy.**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Yeah, that's what I mean.

**Q. When it does drive you nuts, when you three putt or miss or whatever and get angry, does that channel in your favor or go the other direction?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: It's not aggression for me because for me it's just the way of letting it out. But at the same time, it's like, yeah, you know, I can do better than that. Come on, Patty. Something like that.

It's not -- just like I don't want to be down. I don't want to be flat. Like just that fiery, I need that to play well.

**Q. Any good club throwing stories as a kid?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Oh, plenty. When I was young I was very, very up and down, my emotions on the course. Always been like that. I feel like my personality is kind of like that, really up and down.

Bubbly as well, but at the same time, could be straight down. You can ask my college coaches for some great stories. They probably have a bunch.

**Q. I know it's been a few years, but I want to talk about Q-Series. This year there is seven current college players teeing it up in a couple week in Alabama. What do you remember from those two weeks and having to wrestle with that decision on what you were going to do?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: You want like my honest answer, or like do you want it to look good, sound good for...

**Q. I love honestly. Honestly is better than the opposite.**

THE MODERATOR: I don't know where this is going.

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Well, I thought like it was the longest two weeks of my life. And I was in the middle of midterms and stuff, too, so I was not having it. And it was raining, it was cold, depressing.

So yes, I hated it. And obviously I didn't make it to top 45 to get my card. At that point I was like, yeah, I'm going back to school. I'm not doing this any time soon.

Until -- things change. I feel like those two weeks were just tough. Like Q-School is just tough. I've had friends who are going through first and second and now going to third

and they're just so stressed.

It's just one week and that will kind of justify where you are in your career for the year. It is really stressful, and I don't really like it at all.

But at the same time, I got lucky again because I was Top 5 in if the Golf Week Ranking for college and then I got into Q Series not know I have Symetra status until like March of the following year.

**Q. Do you think it's tough to leave your team? Or what's the toughest part about it?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: It is tougher. I leave on a good term because I finished out the year and played Symetra half the year. But for people who leave the team in the middle of the season, I mean, I have -- like I have nothing against them, but like it's a decision making.

Do you choose your career or do you want to finish out college and help your team? It's just kind of -- I mean, golf is an individual sport where you kind of have to base on what you want to do in life.

You can't really just choose over that. But it is really tough.

**Q. No, you're good. And lastly, on the men's side of the college game they have something called PGA TOUR University now where your performance in college gets you that status as soon as you graduate. Do you think that could be something that could help the women's college game so that you guys don't have to go to Q-Series middle of the year?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: I would have to not really agree on that because I feel like I went through Symetra and it was the best experience as a pro, prepping for LPGA. If you go straight from college and come to LPGA, that's a really big change for me I feel like traveling rounds after rounds and just the whole -- like the whole thing.

As you mentioned, the distraction and everything, it's a lot for someone who just comes straight from college and do this.

I really think that if girls coming up to this tour played more on Symetra or just go through that for the whole year, I think we will have a better tour. We would have better product into the tour and just way more quality players that actually knows how to be a pro.

**Q. So what are you most looking forward to doing in the off-season?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Nothing. (Smiling.) Nothing really. I just love doing nothing. I love just doing nothing. Yeah.

Thank you, Patty, for joining us.

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**Q. Okay. Will you put down the clubs right away?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: No. No, I actually like golf. Like I get -- I itch sometimes when I -- I'm like, oh, I want to be out there. I kind of go out there for two hours just to keep things fresh and then come home.

I don't over practice. I just keep things very like minimal.

**Q. Is it practice or do you play golf for fun sometimes?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: For fun sometimes. I literally just goof around and not even care what I'm doing. Just goof around in tough conditions. In Iowa during winter it's really tough so we have really good prep coming into the year.

**Q. What kind of food or drink that you could not have during that season that you want most?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Coffee. Yeah. I need good coffee.

**Q. So we move onto the next. What kind of TV show, what TV show are you most excited to watch?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: I really like Gray's Anatomy, but it's really long so I'm just kind of watching -- killing time on the road, so I watch that. Yeah, I love Gray's Anatomy.

**Q. Who are you mostly excited to see?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: In the off-season? I don't know. I was going to say my boyfriend but we literally see each other all the time.

**Q. So next. Last question. If you were going to compete in the winter Olympics sport, what would you choose? Are you excited about watching?**

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: I would just watch.

THE MODERATOR: As an Olympian that's an interesting question.

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Yeah, I grew up in Thailand so winter sport for me is very, very new. It's very like far out of my reach.

I don't know. Skiing. Yeah.

THE MODERATOR: I think that will wrap it for us here.

