

Travelers Championship

Wednesday, June 21, 2023

TPC River Highlands

Cromwell, Connecticut, USA

Xander Schauffele

Press Conference



TRAVELERS CHAMPIONSHIP

THE MODERATOR: All right, we'd like to welcome our defending champion Xander Schauffele into the interview room here to the 2023 Travelers Championship.

Some great memories from your win last year. What is it like to be back in Cromwell?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It's awesome. Just getting some local support, eating some good pizza, and like you said, coming back to a place where we played -- where I played really well and we had some success.

Always nice to be back.

THE MODERATOR: Nine Top 10 finishes so far this season. Coming off T10 last week at the U.S. Open. Talk about the state of your game heading into this week.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it's been pretty steady. I wouldn't say it's been spectacular, but kind of failed to put myself into any sort of I guess really exciting positions on Sunday, which is sort of what we thrive for.

Looking to get back in the winner's circle and give myself a chance coming down the last stretch there of nine holes.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. You have a pretty decent record in the five times you've had a chance to defend a title. When you come in as a defender, do you come in with a little more swagger, a little more, you know...

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: As much swagger as any golfer has, I guess. Yeah, you have good feelings and memories, and for whatever reason, us pros, you know, play well on courses or, you know, certain courses.

So I've played pretty solid. Never been able to defend a title, so that's obviously something I'm looking forward to doing in my career. When you have good memories or good thoughts of putts going in from certain spots and you can tap back into that, it's always a good thing.

Q. Do you have a good vibe? I think you lead 27 straight cuts.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Commentator's curse. You had to do it.

Q. Do you feel that way?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I've just been trying to sharpen the game up over my entire career to be consistent. You know, probably a testament to that.

But, yeah, I mean, a lot of us try to come into tournaments or I would say every TOUR player comes into a tournament to win. You're not thinking about a cut at that point. Obviously a nice thing to have, but really just want to put myself in position on Sunday.

Q. Coming from the U.S. Open obviously in Los Angeles last week, all the way across the country, pretty quick turnaround. What do you do or intentionally not do to try and recover and get yourself ready to compete? It's an elevated event.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, yesterday I just practiced. Didn't play nine holes. It was a last-minute decision not to play. I pushed my pro-am time back today a couple hours to get a little bit more rest. Small things like that help us just kind of sharpen up and get fresh.

I would say a lot is just being able to focus, click in sooner rather than later is sort of what wears on us as we play or after we travel across the country.

Q. Does it make it a little bit easier on a course where you know there is particularly a lot of birdies, very low scoring, or does it really not even matter?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: That might even be harder, to be honest, knowing that there are a lot of birdies. You know, you have a lot of high expectations when come to a place and you look up at the board and you're expecting a 60 or 63 to show up.



A lot of good things need to happen for that to go your way. You need to be sharp, making putts, reading putts correctly, making the right decisions, reading the wind correctly, all kinds of stuff. You can't just walk your way -- for myself at least -- I can't walk my way into ten birdies in a round. I'm trying pretty hard when that happens.

Q. Are you one of the golfers that was contacted by the senate committee that is investigating the LIV merger?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Fortunately, not, no.

Q. Okay. Do you know any a lot of them here, golfers here who have been -- has that been talked about at all?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Not really, to be honest. The ones that were, their phones were taken or connected by the senate, I would say they probably don't want that to be known.

Q. Got you. Is there anything you can share in terms of the tone or content of the meeting and how it went?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I had an obligation with Travelers, so quite the bummer that I wasn't able to attend the meeting.

Q. You talked about making putts and reading the wind as being important qualities for making birdies. Any other qualities in your game that you feel are key to scoring and scoring really?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Around this property you have to be in the fairway. So last year it played really firm. Looks like it might rain a little bit in the next couple days, but for the most part, if you want to be successful around the course and give yourself lot of good looks you have to be shooting from the fairway a majority of the time.

I say first things first is hit the driver as far down there as possible or keep it in the fairway and you can go from there.

Q. I know you said you weren't in the meeting, but what would you say the biggest question that you have is about the PGA TOUR/PIF alliance and the unknowns?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, you kind of just said it. The sad part is I probably don't even have a question they can answer. There just isn't a whole lot of information out just yet. Some sort of the agreement still needs to be written up or agreed on, I should say.

Everyone wants transparency and I'm sure in their eyes they are being as transparent as they possible can be, and all of us players would like to think they are taking acre of us, but if they're not able to give us any answers, that means there aren't any.

Q. Adam Scott was in here and he said emotions have cooled down a bit after the announcement two weeks ago. Is that an accurate assessment?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Probably wouldn't be too hard to re-heat the soup, but, yeah, guys, TOUR pros typically are pretty good at compartmentalizing and blocking out stuff and getting ready for game day.

I'm not sure what the temperature of the room is to be completely honest, but I would say guys are trying to focus on playing well and moving up the FedExCup list.

Q. On a lighter note, out following you during the pro-am today and it looked like you brought up a young kid under the ropes, had him walk with you. How cool is it to be able create some of those lifelong memories for the youngsters out here?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I was too shy. This kid was confident. His name was Zachary; he's eight years old. Had a brother named Zander, spelled the wrong way, with a Z.

But, yeah, he walked up to me and asked me if he could walk with me. I wasn't gonna say no, so you kind of got to read the pro-am group and the guys were really nice and most were with Travelers there, so he just came for a walk and we kind of talked a little bit about what he's doing during this down time, summer break. His love is baseball and stuff like that.

It's obviously really cool. When I was eight years old I was too shy to ask for an autograph, so kudos to Zach for being so confident.

Q. When you spoke on media day you talked about having to talk to the younger guys about staying true to the TOUR and the belief that things work out. What has your range of emotions been since the announcement in the two weeks since you heard about it?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I guess there is a wide range of emotions to say the least, but I don't really remember what you were saying about me telling the young guys on...

Q. (No microphone.)

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I mean, yeah, I yeah, I guess it sounds like something I could say. You're probably right. I think it was more from a performance standpoint. I think good golf always takes care of everything.

That's seemed to be true my entire career. Just let your clubs talk. That's was what I was trying to touch upon. I don't think that was relating to any merger of any sort.

Q. How shocked were you?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I was shocked obviously. Yeah, like I said, I'm not one to speculate. My range of emotions was from day one to now, you know, pretty wide, I would say. (Smiling.)

THE MODERATOR: All right, appreciate the time as always. Good luck this week.

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