

Travelers Championship

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TPC River Highlands

Cromwell, Connecticut, USA

Keegan Bradley

Press Conference



TRAVELERS CHAMPIONSHIP

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome eight-time PGA TOUR winner and two-time Travelers championship winner, Keegan Bradley.

Keegan, congrats on the win. Take us back to on the 18th hole with the birdie. What was it like standing over the putt and watching it sink?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Well, it was really strange, actually, because I didn't really expect to have it to win, so all of a sudden I had a putt to win the tournament. I hadn't led ever until the last putt, so really what dreams are made of. I'm really proud of myself for -- it's a lot of energy on that last hole with the crowd, and I did a great job of sort of staying in my own little zone and doing what I do best.

THE MODERATOR: What was it like seeing wife, Jillian, and Logan and Cooper, Mom and Dad, in-laws, family, friends, and the whole community support around you?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Pretty great. The support I get here -- the support I get everywhere with the Ryder Cup captain and the USA chants, but especially here, it's pretty incredible. And to have my family here, I've been fortunate enough to win a few times with my family and other members of my family around, which never -- doesn't happen a lot for guys, and what a special thing to be able to experience.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. We'll open it up for questions.

Q. How gutted are you for Tommy?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, listen, I know how hard it must be for him. He's just an unbelievable player, and he's fighting so hard to get his first win. It's a weird thing to be on the other side of that. I do feel bad for him, but I got to go out and do what I need to do. But, you know, he battled today and I really hope that he gets his win soon.

Q. If the six automatic qualifiers and the assistant captains feel that you should be a captain's pick,

would you reconsider?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, I mean, listen, this changes the story a little bit. I never would have thought about playing if I hadn't won. This definitely opens the door to play. I don't know if I'm going to do it or not, but I certainly have to take a pretty hard look at what's best for the team and we'll see. We still got -- it's still June, so we still got a long ways to go. This definitely changes things a little bit, and we'll all get together and figure out the best way to do this.

Q. Just to get back to golf just for a second, are you plugged behind 14?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah.

Q. When all you can do is blast out to 40 feet and you see Tommy in there tight, how do you keep hope up at that point?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Well, I felt like I was chasing all day. Like, I would get within one, and then I'd bogey the next hole. I'd go to get down two. I would get within one, get down two, and then all of a sudden I'm down three after 14. But him missing that putt definitely helped me. But I kept reminding myself that so many things can happen on these last four holes from birdies and eagles to bogeys and doubles. There's water on almost every hole, and I knew this was going to be tough to come down the stretch for Tommy to get his first win, and I just tried to keep my head down, try to hit good shots. I made that long putt on 15. Obviously, without that putt, I don't think I would have been where I was coming up 18.

Q. When you accepted the captaincy, did you kind of have in mind that it is a possibility that you could play your way onto the team or play well enough to be deserving of a captain's pick? And when moments like this happen, how do you feel when people are constantly asking you about the possibility of being the first playing captain since 1960, I believe?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, so I got the call at 8 o'clock tonight a year ago today. So I've been getting these



questions for a year. Whether I play well or play poorly, it's something that I have become used to. To be honest with you, I never really planned on playing. I really wanted to just be the captain. I really felt strongly about that. I want to serve the guys. They asked me to do a job. I want to do it to the best of my abilities.

Now, with the amazing vice captains that I have, and I have a better perspective of playing in the Presidents Cup and being around a lot of the guys, I feel a lot more comfortable if I went that route. I'm really proud of the guys that are vice captains and -- you know, obviously, you got Jim Furyk, one of the greatest players to play and also an incredibly great captain at the Presidents Cup.

Q. When you're getting ready for that putt on 18, were you looking at the hole as -- it appeared you might have been looking at the hole on the putt, the winning putt?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, I was.

Q. How often do you do that and what's the inspiration for doing that?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: 5, 6 feet and in, I -- 6 feet's about my cutoff. I've been doing it for years. You know, I talked to some players, like basketball players. MJ would say you never look at the ball when you shoot a free throw. You look at the rim. So I started doing it. I started to putt a lot better doing it. I actually extended how far out I do it this year, so I probably wouldn't have looked at the hole last year from that distance. But I've been doing that for, you know, five, six years, at least.

Q. Your wife kind of described it as still kind of like out of a movie, just, like, what happened today. Obviously, you're still in the moment and a lot's happened, but are you able to appreciate what just happened at your home event, the winning -- the upcoming Ryder Cup captain just won this event, like, a once-in-a-lifetime situation?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, well, I was on the 18th tee and I looked out, and I couldn't believe how many people were up there, and then I hit my drive, I hit a perfect drive, and I saw it land in the fairway, and I heard the crowd, like, really cheer when it hit the fairway, and I thought, well, I've never heard that before when I've hit a drive.

Then, you know, when I was walking up to the ball, they're cheering me on, and then when it was my turn to hit, the crowd really started to, like, cheer. Like, I couldn't believe it. I had to take a second to, like, get it together here because I needed to hit a shot. Then when it landed and

hit the green -- because I can't really see where the ball is, the crowd really went crazy. Then when Tommy hit his putt right behind my coin, they went crazy again.

Then when I had the putt to win the tournament, they were cheering, and I really felt -- I'm not a very calm guy, and I felt, for me, very calm over that putt, which was strange. I had a putt to win the tournament, and I just went through my routine, all the stupid cliches that we all say. I just went through my process, my routine. Tommy's -- sometimes I don't like when you see the players hit the putt. I saw his break a ton and then when I went and felt it with my feet, I felt it at a half degree, and his broke more like a one or maybe more. And I just decided to trust my read because I didn't feel it, and I played mine left center and it went in right in the middle, so what an incredible memory.

Q. Your wife's support just in general throughout this process of, I mean, the last year and in your career as a whole, what has that meant to you, just her being there by your side?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, I feel so lucky to have the support group I have around me, but for my wife, especially, is really the hero of our family. Like, last night my 4-year-old was throwing up all night. I didn't know until I woke up today. So you know, she plays a major role in me doing what I do, and she allows me to be the best that I can be out here.

You don't always get that in sports or in business or in life, and she allows me to be the best that I can be, work on my game, practice as hard as I can, and I'm really grateful for that.

Q. At the beginning of the day, there were really three or four of you that had somewhat separated yourselves from the rest of the pack. From the outside, it looked like there were some tough starts for you guys. Are you surprised, given how this course oftentimes plays, that one of you didn't sort of go on a run, make three or four birdies and create some level of separation, or did you think, given the circumstances and the pressure, that keeping things sort of bunched up was going to be the way it was going to be today?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, certainly that's the possibility here, is -- you know, I knew when Scottie was leading -- what was that? It might have been yesterday, like, he could have gone out and shot -- it wouldn't have surprised me if he shot 8-, 9-under, and then that's tough for me.

But when this course gets windy like this, these shots get extremely difficult, especially on the back side because

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

there's water everywhere, there's out of bounds, and you have to hit perfect shots. If you don't -- you know, on 13, you can make 13 for me is the hardest tee shot that I hit all year. I am just so grateful when it lands on grass if it does because it can be there for awhile.

But there's a lot of really, really tricky shots. And the rough was a little higher, so when it gets windy like this and there's a lot of crosswinds, it's difficult to hit these little fairways and these greens. But there's always the possibility that someone could go out there and shoot low, but when it's playing like this, this is a tricky little track.

Q. You've been hearing a bunch of USA cheers for one year now, probably, every tournament you've played. Does it sound different here?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: It does. It was louder, yeah.

Q. Why?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: I've always gotten really great support here, but I don't know, today was insane. It's something that I didn't expect when I got this job. It just never crossed my mind. I get it when I'm playing good golf, I get it when I'm pumping gas, I get it in restaurants, people are saying it, but I never expected this sort of support for the Ryder Cup captain. I had this epiphany at the PGA Championship when I was getting these loud USA cheers that I don't think any player in the history of the game has experienced what I'm experiencing in that I'm a Ryder Cup captain, in my eyes still one of the best players in the world trying to win majors and tournaments, and not a lot of people have experienced coming down the stretch of a tournament as the Ryder Cup captain, of big tournaments, and I've tried to embrace that and tried to feed off the energy, but they were really loud this week.

Q. Is this the closest you've experienced anything like Medinah?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: 18 was really closing to a Ryder Cup. You couldn't get many more people on that hole and there was like an almost like when you're in Fenway Park some, there's like, it never got quiet, it was still people cheering and pretty incredible.

Q. Have you played at Fenway?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Not baseball I haven't played at Fenway, I've been to Fenway.

Q. If you would have been told a year ago when you accepted the job that at this point you would be number 7 in the world, would that have surprised you?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Well, not -- I don't know. It's the lowest I've ever been in the world. When they called me and told me that I was being the Ryder Cup captain, the first thing they said was, We want you to be the first playing captain since Arnold Palmer in 1962. And I mean my head was spinning, I didn't know what they were talking about, but they knew that that was a possibility and that we would have things in place for that. But you know I'm always trying to be the best that I can be, and I feel like I'm playing the best golf of my career right now. A year ago I don't know if I would have thought I would be 7th in the world, but I certainly thought I would be, you know, contending in tournaments.

Q. Who wanted you to be the playing captain?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Well, when the PGA of America called me, and Zach Johnson was on the call, and Seth Waugh was the person who called me. And he mentioned that he wanted me to be -- because when I get the call I'm thinking I really want to be on the team. And the first thing he said was, We want you to be the first playing captain since Arnold Palmer, which is a heavy burden. But, you know, I'm also fortunate, if Tiger or Phil or these guys got a captaincy at my age they would have done it the same way. I've just been lucky enough to be asked to do this at a younger age.

Q. Is there something that you have developed over the course of the last year that you either tell yourself, like a mantra, or some type of a ritual that doesn't let you then get swept up in the energy? Like as you're standing up there on 18, the chants are going on before you're hitting putts, I would imagine it would be really easy to get swept up in there, what do you do to not let that happen?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Well, I've been on the TOUR for 15 years, I've won big tournaments, I've won a major, I've been in these situations before, maybe not quite as extreme with the crowds, but I really genuinely enjoy it. I think sometimes when you're trying to win it's not enjoyable, it's terrifying. I've had that as well, and it doesn't feel comfortable and you feel like -- I think Berger said at the AT&T one year it feels like you're going to have a heart attack every hole when you're trying to win a tournament. Sometimes it does, and then sometimes you have these weird moments like I did on 18 where I felt very comfortable on each shot. I can't explain to you why, but I've practiced, you know, thousands of hours to do this, I practice breathing techniques that help me stay calm and I think they help.

Q. What was the club on 18?



KEEGAN BRADLEY: It was a -- I had 139 and it was a 9-iron and I played it 146, which is an ear-to-ear swing that I practice, I don't know, about 100,000 times. It was just a shot that I've hit so many times in practice at The Grove and it was a perfect number.

Q. Ear to ear?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Ear to ear.

Q. When you're playing with Russell, or it could be anyone, but today, kind of for example, do you evaluate -- like in your mind is there anything like, oh, about the Ryder Cup and what could be, whether they could fit on the team and what type of stuff they do on the team -- I guess you don't do it in the moment but like do you think about it after when you're thinking about the round?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: I think about it after, but not with a player like Russell. Russell's way up high on the points, won Bay Hill this year, consistently contends in the majors, finished in the top 5 at U.S. Open, world-class player this Russell Henley. I wouldn't want to play him if, come Ryder Cup time. He's just -- the chip on 18, like he's just nasty, and I love it because he's like the nicest guy ever, but he's an amazing competitor. If it was a younger player maybe, but not a guy like Russell.

Q. The emotion on 18 you take it in, you go over to the crowd, what's going through your mind and just what are you feeling today after holing that putt?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Well, sometimes when I watch guys win tournaments and they don't do anything I don't get it because this is your chance to explode. We work so hard to get to these moments, and we work so hard on pushing all of our emotions down. For me it's like that's tough, like I'm holding that in, I want to do that on the second hole, so for me to be able to let that out is really fun.

Q. Since I can't read lips what were you screaming?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Some bad words. I probably shouldn't. After I did it I was like, Oops, my mom's going to be upset, so you can figure it out.

THE MODERATOR: On that note, again congratulations.

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Thank you.

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