

John Deere Classic

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TPC Deere Run

Silvis, Illinois, USA

Chris Gotterup

Press Conference



JOHN DEERE
CLASSIC



THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome the winner of the 2026 John Deere Classic Chris Gotterup to the interview room. Chris, you clearly were emotional earlier. Can you just talk about today and what it means to you to get a win with your brother on the bag?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, it's such a cool moment. Obviously Brady, who caddies for me normally, had a kid last week, and we kind of planned this out a couple of months ago. We were just planning on having a fun week and obviously try to come win, but to have it actually happen is cool and just a special moment that we'll never forget.

THE MODERATOR: You entered the final round five shots back. Did you ever expect this result today?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: No, not before I hit my first tee shot, that's for sure, but got off to a great start. Put myself in the mix, and then obviously kept it going. Yeah, just a great way to finish, and to come out the champ at the John Deere Classic is awesome.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up to questions.

Q. Chris, you talked about earlier in the week that you felt this was a good warmup for your defense next week. You seem pretty good and warm now.

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, I'm warm, temperature-wise and golf-wise. Yeah, I mean, I really felt like I grinded it out this week. Obviously today it kind of all came together, but the first three days I didn't have my best stuff. I talked about it earlier in the week that even my not so good stuff has gotten a lot better, which is great.

Then obviously to come out today and to shoot 9-under was awesome. Definitely not what I had in the cards, but I'll take those cards dealt to me, for sure.

Q. How can this work for a prep for The Renaissance Club? Pretty different golf courses.

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, it worked last year. I didn't play as good last year, so hopefully it's good prep, even though they're about as polar opposite as it gets.

Yeah, I think just getting good tournament reps is helpful. I felt like the last two weeks I was kind of grinding through some stuff. Obviously this week came out and played great golf. Hopefully, you know, keep it going ask get some sleep on the plane tonight.

Q. The headline on PGA.com after your Genesis win last year was, "Chris Gotterup unexpectedly beats Rory McIlroy." You won't be unexpected this week. Can you talk about where you're standing now, the strength of this season? You joined Matt Fitzpatrick with three wins. Going to obviously move up in the... How do you view your game now in lieu of this kind of success?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, I think it's always a work in progress. We're all crazy, golfers. The bads feel really bad even though they're not that bad, and the goods feel like you're unbeatable. Today I obviously had a really good day.

This whole year has been really good, if you look at it in a big picture, but I obviously got off to a great start and was grinding it out in the middle of the year, but that's not unexpected. Yeah, obviously hopefully this kick-starts some other great stuff.

Yeah, I'd be lying if I said this year wasn't a massive success. Hopefully I still have some tournaments left, and hopefully keep it going and running into the end of the year.

Q. You said the first three days, not your best stuff. What turned it around? How do you stay in it mentally to turn it around and come up with a round like this on championship Sunday?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, I think you're still trying to move up the board even if you don't have your best stuff. I just felt like I would go on a stretch of -- you know, yesterday I started off 3-under through 5 and then just kind of parred my way in with a couple of sloppy bogeys and just didn't make a couple of putts that would build that momentum.

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Today I felt like I was building that momentum nicely. Yeah, even if you don't have your best stuff, you can still go out there and play decent golf and just enough to keep me in the mix. I did that this week.

Yeah, it's a marathon, each event. Even though it's only four days, it feels like a lot longer than that. To be able to kind of just hang in there, hang in there even though you don't have it going is kind of what I've gotten a lot better at.

Q. A few months ago at the Arnold Palmer Invitational unsolicited you come out and call this event your fifth major. Where did that come from, and explain that to us. Why is this tournament so important to you?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, I got a spot here in '22 from Clair. It really kick-started my whole career, honestly. At that time I had no status anywhere. To get a fourth here was the biggest tournament of my life at that point.

Obviously we're biased towards places that we play well at and that we like, and this is one of those for me. To be able to come back and win makes it even more special.

Q. You got off to a hot start, 4-under after five holes, today. Par on 2. What happened on 2?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I don't know. I hit it in the right rough and then hit a great shot just over the green, literally licking your chops to make another birdie. I left it halfway there, and it just got caught up in the fringe where the grass is a little longer.

Yeah, I was pretty pissed at that point. I felt like, all right, birdie one, good start, and then great look at birdie, and then walk out of there with a 5. It's, like, God, that's how my week felt going up into the whole thing beforehand. Then turned it around nicely.

Q. Chris, when you were on the range, how much of it was hitting shots and staying loose, and how much of it was checking the broadcast every five seconds? What was that process like?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Staying loose, for sure, because I didn't want to sit in the AC in here and then have to go back out and feel like I was kind of panicking to get loose. I figured I would just hit some balls. I'm not working on anything. I'm just hitting balls to stay loose and keep the club in my hands.

Yeah, I mean, one way or another I'm going to -- someone is going to say something, so I might as well just watch and follow along. Yeah, it's nice to just kind of feel it out, feel

the situation out.

Obviously to not have to go into a playoff is nice, but I was ready to go for a playoff if need be.

Q. You one-putted 13 greens today, only 23 putts, 4 for 4 scrambling. Is this your best short game in a while, and if it isn't, what's been better?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I don't know. Those sound pretty good. I wasn't thinking that through my round today, but those numbers are good. I'll roll with that.

But I actually felt like my short game has kind of been iffy over the last couple of weeks, which is kind of the point back that I felt like I wanted to keep playing and keep getting good reps.

Yeah, I think that's a mix of hitting it in the right spots, even though if I'm missing, and I did a great job of that today. Obviously executing is the next thing, and I did that really well today throughout the whole round.

Yeah, that's not going to happen every day, but when those days happen, usually good things happen.

Q. Two shots, you took it over the left bunker at No. 4 and found the power slot, 344. I don't know if anybody is going to play the hole that way ever again. Maybe you will.

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah.

Q. And the putt at 17, that was obviously huge.

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, 4 is a way different hole now. I used to just send driver and have a wedge in, and now the first two days I think I hit, like, a 7-iron and 8-iron in, and then the last two days I've hit 52 and 60 degree in.

The wind switch has been nice on those last two holes -- or the last two days. Yeah, it was a big hole, for sure. I felt like I have an advantage on that hole, especially downwind. I can cover those bunkers.

Then to 17, kind of got a little unlucky, I think, with the ball rolling up against the collar there off my tee ball. Then it was going to be hard to not hit that ball right with the rough on the toe of the club. Hit it in a decent spot.

I mean, it was going to be a hard up-and-down. We just wanted to get a look. Hit a pretty good shot, I felt like, to whatever that was, 15 feet or so. Yeah, to roll that putt in felt like, all right, I'm going to give this a good chance.



Q. Is that an indication, making that putt in that moment, is that something you could have done two years ago? What was your confidence level?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, I don't know if I'd be here two years ago, but you learn from those things. I don't think I would have been able to handle my not-so-great golf as well as I did the last two days, score-wise and mentally.

You know, I think it's all part of the building process that's gotten me to this point. So the answer is, no, but you learn from your mistakes, and you try to get back here, and to have a putt that matters and then roll it in is awesome.

Q. Can you remember a putt that you've had like that that was that important?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Waste Management probably, yeah.

Q. Yeah, I guess so. Was Patrick on your bag in 2022?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: No, my buddy Ryan O'Connor was. We're all good friends. At that time Patrick was in school, so he couldn't caddie for me. At the time Ryan was looking for jobs. I said, Why don't you caddie for me for the summer? I had a couple of sponsors lined up, the sponsor exemptions lined up. We played through the year. Yeah, he was great.

They're very similar in how they both caddie and fun to be around and keep me cool, yeah.

Q. Is Patrick younger?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Than me? Like two years younger than me.

Q. Was there a moment where you kind of thought to yourself, I'm going to go out and win this thing, or was it just kind of playing it hole by hole?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: More hole by hole. I definitely didn't tee off on 1 and be, like, I'm going to win this tournament today. I was trailing by five or six or whatever it was.

I felt like if I could get off to a good start, I could at least throw my name in the mix. This whole year has been about each point is valuable, and I just wanted to get up there and get in the mix. Obviously got off to a great start and then was, like, when I was 5-under through 7 I was, like, all right, now I'm in the mix.

Yeah, I certainly wasn't thinking, let's go out and win this today in the morning, but once I got going, I felt like I had good chance.

Q. Did you stay at Champions House this week?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: At Champions House?

Q. Yeah, the place out in Geneseo that has ...

CHRIS GOTTERUP: No, no, no. Yeah, so no. No. Broke the streak, happily.

Q. It actually got broke last year, so...

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I figured Davis would have been maybe in it with Georgia guys, but...

Q. You're still paying for the house this week?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, yeah, I'll be happy to pay for that, though.

Q. Obviously you want to do make the Ryder Cup for Bethpage Black. Was that kind of a gauntlet, a moment where you said, you know, I'm going to kick some things into gear and make sure that doesn't happen again?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: It definitely wasn't like a I got screwed, why is this happening to me moment. It was more of, all right, this was a great learning process.

I certainly didn't have a year like this last year, until the last five or six tournaments I started playing really well. It definitely was something that motivated me to play well this year.

I talked to Keegan a bunch and still do. He was saying, Just go out there and prove it and earn it. I felt like I did a good job of that today.

Yeah, it was a good moment more than a bad moment not making the team. It wasn't something like -- it would have been a home run if I did, but it was still a great process of learning and being under the gun of Ryder Cup pressure. Obviously not playing in it, but all right, your name is in the mix, you have to go play well. It's hard to do, and I feel like I've done a much better job of that this year.

Q. I put Patrick on the spot and asked him to diss on his older brother, asking him what you're like off the course. Is what we see on the course Chris Gotterup 24/7, 365?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I don't know. I think I'm a little more intense on the course, even though -- I wouldn't say I'm intense, but when I'm off the course, I'm pretty done with



golf and going back and hanging out, watching movies or sports or whatever.

I like to think I'm more chill at home than on the course, but yeah, I feel like I do a great job now. It's been a work in progress of staying cool and staying calm in the moment. That comes from failures and experiences and all learning processes.

I don't think I'm the same person on the course as off the course, but I don't think I'm, like, polar opposite. I don't know how to answer the question, but I guess for golf and off the course I'm as close as you can get maybe.

Q. Obviously a little different person this year than when you were here on a sponsor's exemption?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, for sure. Definitely even Korn Ferry when Patrick was caddying for me, I was probably tough to be around just more so -- I think the pressure of being on Korn Ferry, and your whole life is to make it to the PGA TOUR, and there's a lot of pressure in that. I felt it, and everyone else felt it around me.

I feel like I've done a good job of not putting that on a lot of other people now. Obviously winning helps that a lot, too. Yeah, I feel like I've matured a lot and gotten a lot better at dealing with adversity and just growing up, I guess.

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