

# The Sentry

Wednesday, January 3, 2024

Kapalua, Maui, Hawaii, USA  
Plantation Course at Kapalua

## Patrick Cantlay

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Patrick Cantlay into the interview room. He's making his sixth start at The Sentry with a couple of top-4 finishes here. Welcome back to Kapalua. If we can get some comments on being here, Patrick.

PATRICK CANTLAY: Thanks, John. Good to be back playing after a long break. Excited to be here. It's a golf course that I think requires a lot of historical knowledge. I think you have to really play shots around this golf course, unique shots that we don't have to play each and every week, especially quite a contrast to the next event I'll play in Palm Springs.

It's basically golf in a ton of wind on the side of a mountain. So you got to get comfortable with that and I've played the tournament enough times where I feel pretty comfortable with most of the shots now.

THE MODERATOR: Ten top-10s last year, 16 top-25 finishes, if you can just recap your season for us.

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, I played a lot of good golf, but in general it was disappointing because I didn't get any wins. I've had years where I maybe played worse in total or in aggregate but won more tournaments and those years were more satisfying. So hopefully this year I can clip off some wins.

THE MODERATOR: I know Maui and Lahaina specifically has been on your mind lately. You've recently partnered with the First Responders Children's Foundation. If you can talk a little bit about that partnership for us, please.

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, definitely. I think with the fires that affected Maui, I thought it was important that the tournament this week and some of the players also are doing something, give back and try and help the healing process. So partnered with First Responders Children's Foundation, and we're just working with them to try to help those that were affected this week, and it's one of a couple other initiatives that we do throughout the year with First Responders Children's Foundation.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Good stuff.

Questions?

**Q. How did that relationship come about?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, well, when I first started my charity, we had two pillars and it was to do junior golf and also help first responders. So given what happened here this year, I felt this week was a great week to do this initiative and officially partnered with First Responders Children's Foundation and become an ambassador for them.

**Q. I know you don't change very much, but anything in the off-season that you did maybe differently to prepare for 2024 or anything out of the ordinary?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I'm always working on trying to get a few new clubs that work better.

**Q. Did you find any?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I haven't got any in there yet. Hopefully if there's some club out there that can help me, I'm going to use it.

**Q. You've been married for three months now. Have you gotten into an argument yet?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Not yet. Not yet. But, like you said, three months in, three months and a success, and I think I'm getting the better end of that deal.

**Q. Sorry, I just thought I would mix things up for a bit for a change.**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I like it.

**Q. Speaking of your years that you talked about, Player of the Year voting came out today with Scottie over Jon Rahm and it made me curious how you guys as players think any differently possibly than public, media, would have of what you. When you look at**



**wins, at scoring average, consistency, whatever other metric, how do you prioritize what you value in a successful year?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Well, I think it comes down to the individual. I'll tell you a story. I went over to Tiger's house, I think to talk Ryder Cup after I had won Player of the Year, and it felt like a big deal to me at the time that I had got a Player of the Year, and they give you this little Jack Nicklaus bronze trophy that's about yeah high.

So we're walking through Tiger's house and we're in the basement and he's got, like, 11 of 'em lined up right next to each other all in the corner of the basement boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, and I go, Hey, I'm catching up, and he looked at me and he goes, You got a lot of work to do. (Laughing).

**Q. How much do you value wins?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: A lot.

**Q. I mean, that's what you play for. I understand that.**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Right.

**Q. But did that vote surprise you of Jon having won four times plus Augusta, and Scottie having -- he didn't finish, like, out of the Top-12 until July, really crazy. What did you see as the difference between the two?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I'm not really sure.

**Q. Did you vote?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I can't even remember. You know, for me, it's about winning tournaments and, you know, the accolades or the Player of the Year trophy or the Vardon Trophy or -- well, it used to be everyone was worried about the Money List. People just want to win tournaments. That's what we're out there trying to do and let the chips fall where they may and the votes fall where they may.

**Q. With so much going on stuff-wise, let's just leave it at that --**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Stuff-wise. That's good.

**Q. -- and any concern about fans getting weary from it all, what would you tell a fan who was concerned about the landscape of golf? If you had a message for 'em, what would it be?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, well, I feel for the fan. There's been a ton of confusion not only for players out on

TOUR in the last year or two, but I can only imagine for the fan at home. So I hope with having more of the best players play the same weeks, they know exactly which weeks are important and important to us players, and they get to see a lot more tournaments where the best players on TOUR are competing against each other down the stretch on Sunday because I think that's what the fan really wants to see.

**Q. I guess you kind of just answered it, but what do you think the fan is rooting for in terms of outcome here?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I think the fan's rooting for the attention to go back squarely onto golf and squarely onto the tournaments that are being played and to forget all of this political non-golf talk, which has consumed a lot of the energy over the last couple years.

**Q. Do you remember the last time golf felt that way, where it was just golf, no outside --**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Well, when I was going on my run in the summer of 2021, I was all about the golf and it seemed all to be about the golf and I liked that time period.

**Q. Is there anything about this golf course that, I don't know, I guess you appreciate or that you can compare to any other golf course you guys play? Is it the toughest walk, to begin with?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: It's definitely the toughest walk and the fact that it's the first week of the year, especially for the caddies after some time off, you know, it definitely is the hardest walk and you feel it the most post-round.

But this golf course is wholly unique. I think this golf course is -- at first glance, seems really difficult because you hit lots of shots that are different than you would any other week, and yet you look at the scores and people are always 20-, 25-, 30-under lately. So it really is a birdie contest, and I think with the par-5s and with 14 being drivable, you know there's five, six holes every day that you have to make birdie on if you want to have a chance to win.

So if you're not comfortable with all the unique shots that you have to hit, it's hard to embrace that I have to make 25, 30 birdies for the week to have a chance.

**Q. Do you go back to Florida between West Coast events or do you stay in California?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I usually stay on the West Coast and I plan to stay on the West Coast this year.



**Q. I guess I ask because are you in Virginia the whole time and what does the time of year allow to you do then when you're with Jamie and back in Virginia for weeks at a time?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, I was just at Virginia day after Christmas and any time spending time with Jamie to be able to get his feedback is great. This year I'm actually going to spend some more time in Palm Springs in between the events, just because of where the -- how the schedule works and everything.

I will say one thing about practicing in California that's a lot better for practice than Florida is hitting golf balls with no wind, so you can actually work on the technical aspects of your swing and actually see what the golf ball's doing.

But as far as play-wise, I've gotten way more complete as a player after having moved to Florida and having the standard day be 15-, 16-mile-an-hour winds and playing on Bermuda grass all the time.

**Q. Did you have to learn how to -- even as a junior, did you have to learn how to lose and did it come easily for you? I guess by that, since it happened so often, especially in a head-to-head situation, being gracious on the 18th green, is that difficult to do?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I think it's important to do. I think in this game you lose so much more than you win, even the greatest of all time have lost far more tournaments than they have ever won, that, you know, it just makes you relish the wins even more. I think that's why when I have a season like last year where I played really well in a lot of tournaments, but didn't get that win, it feels like a very unsatisfying year, so hoping to hopefully get my fair share of wins this year.

**Q. What do you have, eight wins?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Something like that.

**Q. Something like that. Of those wins, who's been the most gracious or was there ever a moment that you remember someone that you beat was just really cool about it?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I'm not sure. Sometimes you'll play in a pairing where you're playing in twosomes and usually when you're coming down the stretch people know where the tournament's at, if you're in the last couple groups, and I've definitely played tournaments before -- like, I remember playing with Hideki at Memorial one year, maybe the first year I won, I think, and we were waiting in the 17th fairway and we were having a conversation, and

he had not played as great that day, so he didn't have a chance, I think, at winning, but I was right in the thick of it, and it felt like he was rooting for me.

So, like, maybe that's not exactly the question you're asking because he didn't finish second that week, but playing in a pairing where you're friendly or friends with a person, sometimes coming down the stretch can be an advantage and it's nice to play with someone where you feel like they're pulling for you to win.

**Q. Do you have any special memory about winning or losing and are you going to use that to your advantage to win the Sentry?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Thanks for the question. You know, I passed Ludvig Aberg this week, and just said congrats on his first win, and we chatted briefly about how much your first win really self-validates you, and you feel like you now belong. I was chatting with him about that and I was like, It's nice to get the monkey off your back, right? I know you've been doing it a short amount of time, but it's nice, and he said, Yeah, you know, and you could tell that it's a sense of accomplishment of all the work that you've put in over the years when you grew up.

And so when I think back of how I felt after my first win, there's nothing more satisfying or inspiring to think, okay, now that I've got one, I'm just going to try and win as many as I can. I know I can do it.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Good question.

**Q. You have been criticized, for lack of a word, called names, accused of stuff quite a bit. What keeps you from barking back and have you ever been tempted?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I just don't think that's my style. In general, I'm one that I would rather let my clubs do the talking. I think this game is supposed to be a game of gentlemen, and there's just no need for that. We're all on the same side here. We're all trying to make the game and the PGA TOUR as best as possible, so I just don't think it will help.

**Q. Does it bother you?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I think, you know, it's expected that people will have different perspectives, and so if people have different perspectives, that's perfectly fine because that's what makes the world so exciting.

**Q. Is that a yes or a no?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: That's for you to decide.



**Q. Does playing golf ever get repetitive?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: The golf part doesn't get repetitive, but the warming up, the doing the body work in the morning in the gym and doing the body work after can be repetitive, but it's all part of the process.

**Q. When it does, how do you maybe break it up or get reinvigorated, I guess, on doing the whole process?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: No, I think you just have to realize that the more engaged you can be throughout the process, the better the end result. So, the process has been refined over time to try to put me in the best spot to perform as best as possible, and so not letting the repetitive nature of doing the same thing every day to get you in the right spot to play well, and actually engaging and focusing in it is part of the recipe for success.

**Q. I know the pre- and post-round stuff was pretty long for awhile because of the back. Is it still as long or does it decrease with time as you get further away from the back injury?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: It's been decreasing over time, which is good. But I still view it as putting deposits in the bank. Golf, fortunately, is a game that a lot of us can play for a really long time and play for a long time at a very high level. So, the way I view all of that is putting deposits in the bank so I can play really well for as long as I possibly can.

**Q. What exactly did you do golf-wise from Ryder Cup onward?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I took some time off. Got married, had a honeymoon over in Italy, which was, you know, fantastic. Then took some time off. Then had about, I don't know, four, five, six weeks of prep or something. Started slow and then ramped it up. Usually in the off-season I'll practice more at the start, make sure my technical parts of my game, my swing, are in the right spot, and then start to play a lot more as I get closer to the event.

**Q. More play than practice?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: More playing, yeah.

**Q. I was curious, just from the, where we are now, getting away from the fall season calendar year type thing, can you ever imagine yourself playing anything in the fall?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Certainly, yeah.

**Q. Why?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Well, I think, you know, there's a short amount of time during the year for tournaments to be played. It really feels like a sprint now between January to August, which I think is a good thing. I think you know when all the most important tournaments are. But if the right tournament came along in the fall -- I've played really well at Vegas, at the end of the day I still want to play and win golf tournaments. I could see a situation where, if it fell around a Ryder Cup or fell around a Presidents Cup, that I could play the right event in the fall.

**Q. With, speaking of which, what do you guys as Americans have to do for next time to avoid being off for however long you were off going into this match? Was it at month or month and a half?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Well, we just need to play better.

**Q. Well, that helps, but did you see that as an issue at all of ending in, you know, mid August, late August, and not having competition for a month?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Look, hindsight's 20/20. I mean, we could have gone out and played really well, and won the thing, and then everyone would write articles about how well rested the American players were and how the European players had played the playoffs on the PGA TOUR and then went over and played all these events in Europe and they were just burnt out off the biggest week of the year. At the end of the day, the Europeans just played better than us that week as a whole. So, whatever the recipe is, the U.S. side has to figure out a recipe to play better.

**Q. Do you not think that had anything to do with it, the time off? I know it's hindsight, but it was kind of a talking point going in as well.**

PATRICK CANTLAY: It could have, but I can't say definitively if it did or not.

**Q. If you guys get waxed at Bethpage would it be an issue?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Well, do you know how much time we're going to take off before?

**Q. No, I was going to ask you that.**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I haven't even looked, that's so far in the future, I don't even know what the schedule, where that

tournament falls on the date, but we'll see.

**Q. One last thing, you were close, if I recall, at Torrey Pines in 2021 for the Olympics. Is that important to you?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: Yeah, I think any time you have the opportunity to represent your country it's important.

**Q. You would have liked to have gone, is what you're saying?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: I just, I think really important and important for the game and everything that, you know, the event happens. We'll see what happens this year. I mean, I have to make the team first.

**Q. If you made the team, would you go?**

PATRICK CANTLAY: We'll see.

THE MODERATOR: All right, Patrick, thank you for your time, we appreciate it.

PATRICK CANTLAY: All right. Thank you.

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