

THE PLAYERS Championship

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Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, USA

TPC Sawgrass

Wyndham Clark

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Good morning, everyone. We'd like to welcome Wyndham Clark to the interview room here at the 2025 THE PLAYERS Championship, making your sixth appearance this week, T2 last year. Is there anything that you sort of unlocked with your approach to how you attack this golf course and that kind of led to your success in 2024?

WYNDHAM CLARK: I don't know if there's anything specific to the golf course. Definitely more just where I was at mentally and where my game was at, I was playing really nicely, and I stayed in a good groove.

I would say as my game has progressed, I'm able to hit some of the tee shots I always kind of struggled with, which would be like hole 2 -- any of the holes that maybe were draw holes, I traditionally have struggled in the past. Last year I was able to hit those shots.

As far as anything about this golf course, I don't know if it's anything specific, but definitely just was in a good mental state.

Q. Since you mentioned some pieces of the golf course, some of the new tees and obviously the tree on 6, what have you noticed about some of the changes they've made here since last year?

WYNDHAM CLARK: Yeah, it's always tough because I think it golf course is really good and don't always love some changes. I think lengthening it on 2 is probably good. It's now -- you have to hit 3-wood or driver as before maybe you could hit something less, so I like that change.

6, I'm still indifferent about -- I get bringing the tree back that was kind of the cool thing when I played the Junior PLAYERS here and when you'd play this seven, eight years ago.

The only thing I don't like is depending on conditions, if they play it all the way back, it's almost too penal of a hole. You have a narrow -- I thought it was a great short hole to begin with. It was a narrow tee ball. You hit it anywhere



from 220 to 250 and you're in a great spot. Now that area is 240 to 270, and if you get into the wind, if you hit a 3-wood I think you're going to hit the top of the tree.

I'm hoping they just play it from the middle of the tee box so it's not too big of an issue and more of an esthetic thing. I have not played the back nine, so I have not seen 11 or 16 yet.

Q. A year ago you win Pebble, you're going head-to-head with Scottie for a few weeks there. Just curious looking back a year later, where did you really feel like you were in the pantheon of golf at that exact moment?

WYNDHAM CLARK: Man, it's tough because I was playing really good golf. I didn't start the season off great and then boom, I win at Pebble, and then from there I started playing some awesome golf.

Bay Hill, 100 percent, tip the cap to Scottie. I played nice golf. He just played better. This one really hurts. I just go back to that day specifically on Sunday, I missed a four-footer for eagle on 2, missed a four-footer for par on 10, and I left a 12-, 13-footer for eagle on 16 short dead in the heart. I unfortunately kind of gave that one away.

The lip-out obviously was tough, but that's not really where I felt like I lost it. But at that time I felt like I was playing some of the best golf and definitely some of the most consistent golf on the PGA TOUR. Then I kind of followed it up with good play at RBC and then the year fell off a little bit.

Yeah, I'm hoping to try to get back into that quality golf. I felt like the consistency was so great and always just kind of knocking on the door. Although I fell short, it was my best finish at Bay Hill ever. It was my best finish here. So I was doing a lot of firsts, which is always great.

Q. I ask that almost in reference to we've seen you win a major. We know what you can do, and in that moment you probably knew it as much as ever, how tricky that is then to carry that into major season when it didn't go the way you plan. How much expectation plays into frustration or how you're handling things?



WYNDHAM CLARK: Yeah, that's a great question. For me, it has been frustrating. It's funny how you have success and you win a major you win some tournaments and then everyone expects you to do that all the time. Scottie is doing that all the time, and it's very impressive, but no one else is really doing that.

It's kind of put some undue pressure, I feel like, on me specifically because if I went and I made all four cuts in the majors and contended one time, that's actually not that bad, or if I missed three of the cuts and finished fourth at one of the majors, I would have taken that three years ago.

It's tough because sometimes your expectations get skewed either by the media or outside people. My thing is I'm just trying to get back into playing good golf and enjoying it and not raising those expectations because they have been raised a little bit. I feel like it's hurt me a little bit.

Q. Did you learn more about yourself from the win at LACC or off the heartbreak last year here?

WYNDHAM CLARK: I feel like I probably learned more at LACC. I bet you most people would say they learn a lot after losing. I've lost a lot in my career. I feel like I've learned those lessons, and so it was really nice to learn how to win and have that feeling and to embrace that and what that can mean for my future and in future moments that I get in similar situations that I can rely on those moments, what I learned during LACC.

Last year it was just more of a heartbreak, and I wouldn't change anything. Other than making those putts, I feel like I did everything I could. So yeah.

Q. You just mentioned trying to divorce the joy from the expectations. To you, what does give you joy out here?

WYNDHAM CLARK: My biggest thing is I just love to play kind of to -- my biggest thing is kind of playing to my potential, and whether that changes each day and each tournament, but I get frustrated when I have lack of focus or I get angry out there or I'm giving away shots or not playing to my potential. Those are things that frustrate me.

When I am enjoying myself on the golf course, I feel like I'm maximizing those things. I'm having fun with my caddie. I'm really embracing the moment. Those are things I'm trying to get back to because I think I play my best golf when I'm in that state of mind.

I'm hoping I'm there this week, and if not, I'm hoping I'm building towards getting there in the coming weeks.

Q. Wyndham, that iron last year you hit off 18 and you were using it on 2 last year; is that correct?

WYNDHAM CLARK: Maybe used it once on 2, yes.

Q. Does the change on 2, the added distance and moving it over to the left, does that take that out of play for you?

WYNDHAM CLARK: Yeah, probably, yeah. We're maybe supposed to have some serious wind on Saturday. If it was severely downwind, then maybe I would still use that, but more than likely I won't be using that club. It would be a 3-wood.

Q. You've played golf long enough, you probably have putts like at 18 last year once a round. Was it just the timing and everything that was at stake that made it seem particularly cruel, and was that as tough a lip-out as you've ever had under the circumstances?

WYNDHAM CLARK: I would say, yeah, under the circumstances for sure. The thing that gets me now is just -- if I would have, let's say, parred all the holes and you had that putt to force a playoff and I miss, you're bummed. But I think the fact that I birdied 16, birdied 17, and if I would have birdied 18, forced a playoff and somehow would have won in the playoff, my mind goes to that could have been one of the best finishes in PLAYERS history, and it would be shown on all different highlights for a long time.

So I look at little things like that, like man, that could have been a really cool moment for myself and my career.

So yeah, the timing is just unfortunate. I also think the fact that it looked like it was in multiple times. Like it was on the high side of the hole, looked like it was going in dead center. Then it looked like it was lipping in. Then it came right back at me. I just think it was all of that combined that kind of made it unfortunate.

Q. The first couple years here, it was a little bit rough on you, but the last couple of tournaments here, did you play well enough to make you realize that year in and year out you have the game for this course and that you'll be there if you're playing well?

WYNDHAM CLARK: Yeah. I think in the first few years my ball-striking wasn't good enough to play here consistently or to contend here. I think as I've done some things with my equipment, I've worked on my swing, and now that I feel like I am becoming a good ball striker, I'm able to play this golf course. I feel more comfortable.

I used to almost have demons or fear on a lot of holes, and now I don't really even see those bad shots or those areas that maybe I would have before. Yeah, so now I feel like any year I can come here if my game is good and contend and maybe win.

Q. The internet was very quick to bury you last week about that drop situation, and then the video showed that you were right; it did roll into its own pitch mark. Are you aware of any of that? Do you care at all?

WYNDHAM CLARK: Obviously I found out after the round. I have a few comments on this rule in general. But I didn't know -- so I approached scoring and they approached me like, hey, there's something that's going to come up in media about what happened on 3. I was like, on 3? I hit it in the middle of the fairway, hit it on the green and two-putt. I'm like, what are you talking about. He goes, it's your drop.

I was like, what do you mean, did I do an improper drop? He said, well, we didn't know if you were plugged. Long story short is you're okay.

Then they showed me the video, and then it leads me to thinking, well, how are we supposed to know. We were 300 some yards away. The ball just hit -- we didn't see the ball bounce from our distance, and we get up there and it's plugged. How was I supposed to know? No one told us.

So my frustration was that if I did get stroked, how is that my fault when no one told me that I rolled into something -- if I did roll into someone else's pitch mark. That's one of those rules in golf where it's like, why are we making this so complicated. I can't see that, and if the volunteers don't tell me and I get stroked for something that I didn't know happened, it kind of seems unfair.

But I am glad that it was correct because I wasn't trying to cheat by any means. We just walked up, ball was plugged, took an embedded ball rule.

Q. The second question I had was you're No. 8 in the World Rankings. Data Golf which kind of compiles everyone has you in like the 40s. Do you pay attention to any rankings anymore? Is that at all relevant?

WYNDHAM CLARK: Not really. I think it is relevant, but I don't look at it. I don't like that I'm dropping in World Rankings. But yeah, I don't really look at it.

Obviously I know because people constantly tell where you're at, but it's not like I'm looking each week, oh, if I do this, I'll jump. I have a place where I'd like to be in the

world, and I'd like to move up, but at the same time, I'm more focused on, like I said earlier, getting back to me playing good golf, feeling comfortable on the golf course, enjoying the golf, and then look up and see where we're at.

Q. Wyndham, this is, I think, your seventh season out here, and a lot has changed, even in these seven seasons. Do you pay much attention to what's going on with the PIF or all these other things? Are you one of these guys that buys into we need to reunify and do things differently?

WYNDHAM CLARK: I took kind of a stance about a year, year and a half ago where I wasn't going to be involved in it. I saw guys that were getting really involved in it, and their golf game went downhill because they were so consumed with dealing with mergers or any sort of issue and they're constantly in meetings or they're getting worked up and frustrated about everything that was going on, and I said, you know what, if I play good golf and if I'm one of the top players in the world, I'm going to have a place to play regardless of what happens.

I have not really been concerned about it. I've just been more concerned about kind of getting myself in the best golf shape as I possibly can.

Q. Whatever the result is is the result and you're not really worried about it?

WYNDHAM CLARK: I mean, there are some things that -- I want whatever is best for golf. I'm at the point now, if you had asked me a few years ago I might have said something different. I'm at the point now where I want whatever is best for golf. I feel like golf is in a great place. It's being consumed a ton. People are loving golf more. Athletes are playing golf. We have shows about golf. We have LIV, we have TGL, we have so many different avenues for people to watch and consume golf. I just want whatever is best and I want the highest level to be adored and loved like I love it.

So that's where I'm at is I just want what's best for the professional game.

Q. Do you recall the first time you played the 17th hole here, even if it was like as a junior? What did it feel like, and how did you fare?

WYNDHAM CLARK: The first time the green was way bigger than I thought it was going to be, and it's funny how as I've gotten older and now I play in the tournaments and I only really see it when I'm playing the tournament, it's gotten smaller than it used to be.

But yeah, it's one of the coolest par-3s in golf. When I first approached it, I loved it, and I love it now.

The one thing that I think people don't really see on that hole is it is very slopes. There is a ton of slope. The back right pin, you never have a flat putt. The bottom pins unless you're underneath the hole, you don't have a flat putt. Only on that top shelf would you maybe have a flat putt, but it's usually way firmer and faster up there.

Your job is not done when you hit the green. It's a challenging green to read and hole putts on.

Q. Do you remember, were you in high school or college, AJGA?

WYNDHAM CLARK: Yeah, I played the Junior PLAYERS here. I don't remember the year. It probably would have been in 2010 or 2011 or something.

Q. Do you remember if you hit the green with your first shot?

WYNDHAM CLARK: I did. I played that hole very well. As a professional, I haven't played it maybe as well as I did as a junior, but that's hopefully going to change.

Q. Getting back to the rankings for a minute, shot at this Scheffler has had a pretty good long run at No. 1. I'm curious what your impression is about how he's handled it. Some guys who have been No. 1 don't embrace it because of the pressure to stay there. I'm curious what your impression of Scottie has been.

WYNDHAM CLARK: Yeah, Scottie is the closest thing to Tiger I think any of us have seen. He not only is the No. 1 player in the world, he embraces it, and he shows up every week and almost wins or is in contention or does win. It's very impressive.

I think he's kind of the mark we're all trying to get to, and I have nothing but respect for everything that Scottie is doing, and I love that it doesn't affect him. It hasn't gone to his head. He just continues to be Scottie and goes about his way.

Q. Earlier you were kind of mentioning expectations and maybe feeling the outside expectations, whether that was from media or just other parts of golf. Has that been anything you've struggled with? We hear people trying to compartmentalize or not pay attention to what is said or talked about about them outside of the ropes. Is that something you've had to figure out or try to not pay attention to, or have you felt like it has affected you at different times?

WYNDHAM CLARK: No, I don't think that part has affected me as much. It's more the internal expectations of me trying to play good golf and just wanting to be in those -- in contention a lot, winning the big tournaments, doing more of these in front of you guys because I've done something great or you think I'm going to do something great. Those are maybe where some of the expectations come from. Nothing is much off the course.

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