

# WM Phoenix Open

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Scottsdale, Arizona, USA

TPC Scottsdale

## Chris Gotterup

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome the winner of the 2026 WM Phoenix Open, Chris Gotterup. Win No. 4 didn't come easy. Talk us through the emotions of getting this one.

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, definitely different than my last couple. I went in with a chance for sure to start the day. Today I really wasn't expecting to be -- I would have had to go shoot a really good round, which I did, but even during the back nine, I was like, all right, just keep climbing the board, try to get into a good spot.

I knew I needed to birdie 18, and I had some, let's say, maybe a little luck involved in that shot, but to come out on top and do it the way I did in the playoff was awesome.

#### **Q. Talk us through that putt to win it.**

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, can't feel a thing and just trying to make sure I didn't bomb it by the hole and get it down there and put some pressure on Hideki, and for it to find the hole like that is really awesome.

I've seen countless putts on this 18th hole in playoffs or normal events go in, and to be added to that is pretty cool.

#### **Q. Chris, why was there a little luck involved on 18, first of all?**

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I mean, I hit it into the grandstands pretty much. I was in the right rough, and I was up against the grandstand and then got a decent lie in the trampled down grass. I had like 120-something yards and just trying to hit it on the green, and for it to land perfectly on the green and roll up to three feet was definitely some luck involved for sure. You don't get those all the time.

#### **Q. You bogeyed 12 and then you went on a run. When you're walking off 12, what was your thought process?**

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I mean, that's a brutally hard hole today. Just trying to get back into a decent position. Certainly at that point I wasn't like, I lost the tournament. I

didn't think I had the tournament to begin with.

Just wanted to bounce back on 13 and then hit some high-quality shots coming in. Yeah, just ended up sneaking up the leaderboard and just tried to keep making birdies, and then all of a sudden you're in the mix.

#### **Q. I think it's three wins in maybe your last 11 starts. Can you talk about the feeling of really breaking through and being a force?**

CHRIS GOTTERUP: You know, I don't know. I'm just really enjoying being out here right now, and I'm having fun.

I feel confident in what I'm doing and feel like I have played well enough to feel confident to be able to be in those positions. So far, I've been able to capitalize on those, and I'm excited for the rest of the year.

I've got a bunch of tournaments coming up that I haven't played in some cool spots. Really just looking forward to what's to come.

#### **Q. In the playoff, did you have a good angle where Hideki was in that bunker and were you able to see his shot?**

CHRIS GOTTERUP: We were watching it on the first tee hitting balls. CBS brought a little iPad thing and we were watching it. He had, it looked like, somewhat manageable, and he caught the lip, and I was like, all right, we've got to be ready. He hit a great shot up there, and obviously the putt didn't go in. Got to get ready to roll.

I felt like 17, I felt like he could have made a birdie, and 18 is not the easiest hole with how firm it is. You've just got to be ready to go.

#### **Q. When you're playing the waiting game, do you want to know the play-by-play what's happening?**

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, four sure. If Hideki made birdie on 17, it was pretty much all but over. So just try to stay loose and watch, and I've got nothing else to do, so I



might as well have watched it.

**Q. Can you just break down minute by minute for us what you did when you finished your round to when the playoff started?**

CHRIS GOTTERUP: We walked off, and I knew -- I think I was one back of Hideki and Mike at that point. I was like, all right, we'll see what happens. I didn't really know what -- you never know what to expect.

Just wanted to stay loose, watched the finish, and hoped that I had a chance to come out on top. We went over to the first tee, hit a couple balls, was watching, and then all of a sudden you're out there on 18 and everyone is going nuts, and you're like, all right, this is it.

Yeah, that was that.

**Q. When you first came out on TOUR and got your card, what were your expectations for how much you could actually win out here? Was this even in the realm of possibility for you when you first started as a pro?**

CHRIS GOTTERUP: You know, after getting -- you get humbled a bit on Korn Ferry, and even when I got out here, you realize how good everyone is. I definitely knew I was a work in progress, and still am. But I knew that my game was suited for out here, and I knew if I continued to work and at least had faith in what I was doing that I would be able to be in the position someday. To now I've won four times is pretty crazy.

**Q. Today and Thursday you had such a big difference in your putting. You got off to such a good start. I think you made over 100 feet of putts in round 1 and then over 70 today and obviously the last one. What happened in those middle rounds, and how were you able to get your putting back for today?**

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I don't know. I wish it was easier Friday and Saturday. I just couldn't get in a rhythm, couldn't -- it gets tough out here in the afternoon. One, it gets really firm, hard to get it in the good spot, and then two, you obviously are playing behind everyone, so it's a challenge in itself. I hit a couple loose putts and obviously wasn't comfortable with what I was doing.

I just wanted to come out here today and at least feel like I was confident in what I was doing, and I hit a couple putts last night -- I didn't change anything. I just was maybe more intentional with what I was doing. I don't know. If I knew, I would have hopefully not have done that Friday and Saturday.

Nothing different other than just making sure that I was confident in what I was doing.

**Q. What did you and your caddie see when you were looking at that last putt?**

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I mean, we saw it going a little right to left, and obviously it's all downgrain and bright yellow, and you're just trying to get it down there and put some pressure on Hideki, and for it to go in like that is really amazing.

At that point, it's hard to feel anything, and you're just trying to make sure you do something right and get it -- wish it down the hole. For it to go like that was really awesome.

**Q. With the way that Scottie is playing right now, are you aware when he shoots 2-over on Thursday? Is that something you notice, and does that raise any level of pressure for you to take advantage of an opportunity like that that opens up?**

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Well, I watched the 2-over round, so I know he's going to play well. Everyone has seen it out here. If I could bet on golf, I would have put a lot of money on him to come out and play good on Friday. And I didn't.

But he's the best player in the world right now, and what he did today -- I'm playing behind him again, so I could hear it all day. There's no pressure to -- if he wins a golf tournament, you're not surprised. But yeah, to take advantage, I guess, to your point, is nice. But any week you're just trying to beat everyone in the field.

**Q. This course hadn't been so kind to you the last few years. How were you able to block that out and finish strong today?**

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Once I got over the hump on Friday, I felt, at this point it didn't matter what I did in the past. I feel like I'm a different player than I was a couple years ago. Yeah, I was just trying to keep myself in the mix, and obviously didn't do a great job of that on Friday and Saturday, but today I felt like I did a great job of that, and just tried to lurk and ended up sneaking in a playoff, and to end up on top is awesome.

**Q. Your two lowest scores came on Thursday and today. What do you think worked better on those days compared to Friday and Saturday?**

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I think they just alluded to it. I made some putts today and Thursday. The first couple rounds -- I definitely did a better job of keeping it in the fairway and

hitting it in the right spots on the greens. Friday and Saturday I felt like I was trying to do the right thing, and I still didn't. You can get yourself in some funky spots on this course pretty easily, especially with the rough being up and how firm it was.

Did a better job of managing my game and made a couple putts when it mattered.

**Q. I just wanted to ask about sort of the atmosphere on 18. Looks like you guys both had to step off your shots once or twice. Just wondering, how do you stay in the moment and not let yourself be taken over by the fan atmosphere?**

CHRIS GOTTERUP: You know, it's a good thing that there's so many people. You hear it but it's all -- you have so much going through your brain, it's almost like white noise. For it to be -- obviously I think on the tee box a chair fell. Of course that happens in the playoff.

But it's just a crazy atmosphere, and you just have to embrace it this week, and I felt like I did a good job of that. Let alone trying to win a tournament and then also having people line the fairways, it just makes it that much more difficult.

But I felt like I was focused on what I was doing. We talked everything through, me and Brady, and yeah, and then for the putt to go in is awesome.

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