

# AT&T Byron Nelson

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McKinney, Texas, USA

TPC Craig Ranch

## Brooks Koepka

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We'll go ahead and get started. Brooks Koepka, thanks for joining us for a few minutes prior to the 2021 Byron Nelson. Making your sixth start with a couple of top 5 finishes. I know obviously a different course, but just your thoughts on the course. You had a chance to get out and see a little bit of it.

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, didn't remember too much of it from when I played in '12, second stage here. I do remember it's a quite open, long golf course, so you can bomb it. And it's just nice to be back playing, to be honest with you. I felt like just missing those competitive reps, and it will be exciting to play.

THE MODERATOR: And how about just health update, how you're feeling heading into the week.

BROOKS KOEPKA: Still not 100%. You know, still be a while before I'm 100%. It's dramatically better than it was at Augusta. You know, I feel like the strength is getting there. The mobility is getting there. I'm ahead of schedule. Long ways ahead of schedule of where I should be at this point, so I'm very pleased.

THE MODERATOR: Moving that aside, you claimed your eighth tour win earlier at the Phoenix Open. Just what are you most happy with in your game?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I don't know. It's been a while since I played, so I'm not too happy the last time I played Augusta. I don't enjoy missing cuts. Up to this point it was going pretty good.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. All right. Fair enough.

**Q. Thank you for taking my question. Thinking about you missing second stage here in 2012 and then the Challenge Tour success that you had just a season later, how does this place fit into your journey story?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: Never thought about it like that. I guess, yeah, there is a reason -- I mean, I wasn't nearly the same player I am today as back in '12. Maybe I don't get

out here as quickly. You know, who knows? I could have gone through and failed in the final stage and still be stuck on mini tours. You never know. It's one of those crazy things.

But it worked out, so I'm not going to complain.

**Q. Brooks, your health, if you're not 100%, I guess how close are you to it and what are the kind of lingering issues?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: I mean, I still can't squat down, get into a catcher's position or fully bend down. It'll be -- it's a lot better than it was at Augusta, but it's still not completely normal.

Yeah, I mean, it feels really good. Every once in a while I'll have a swing where it doesn't get off. I don't load on my right side and stay on it. I get off it. That happens with the longer clubs, mainly driver.

But everything from about 7-iron in, no problem. There is just more load the longer the club, and I'm pleased with what I've been able to do. Between Dr. Elattrache? (Phonetic) Heather, Marc Wahl, my trainer, Derek, it's all been -- everyone is very happy with it.

You know, months ahead of schedule, so it's just nice to be back out and being able to play golf and actually hit shots that I want to hit, unlike I was doing at Augusta.

**Q. Speaking of longer clubs and things, have you had to make any swing adjustments or anything like that?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: No.

**Q. Not really?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: No, just keep doing what I'm doing. If it wasn't allowing me to do it then I wouldn't be out here.

**Q. Not that you're one to look back and regret probably isn't the right word, but did you have second thoughts after Augusta and obviously not the performance you would've liked? How much did**



**things bother you there physically that week compared to where you are now?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I mean, that's -- that was like a month ago?

**Q. Yeah.**

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I'm in a completely new place now. You know, it was one of those things where the struggle I went through for that entire three weeks, month, whatever it was, just to get back to play was very just satisfying, all the work I put in and being able get out there and play.

Yeah, I didn't play how I wanted to, but that happens a lot of weeks out here, and guys aren't hurt and still don't play like they want to. I've been victim of that. It's just one of those things.

I think seeing how it kind of helped me mentally because I saw how much effort and how much mental strength I had to put into that just to make that work, it's only going to help me down the road.

**Q. Brooks, you said you didn't remember a lot about this golf course in 2012. You and Jordan missed that second stage by the same number. I think it was three shots. Jordan attributed to missing a few short putts. Can you maybe remember what you might attribute that to in 2012?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: It was nine years ago, man.

**Q. I get it.**

BROOKS KOEPKA: I don't remember much of it. I remember leaving disappointed. I don't think I putted the way I wanted to and didn't drive it -- obviously I didn't play good enough, so...

Otherwise I would've made it through.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, one more.

**Q. Just a follow up. How familiar are you with Kiawah and so forth? I'm assuming you've not been there, but can't quite recall, or how much you know about it in terms of looking ahead to next week?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: I've never played it. I just know my brother was here this week so we were kind of -- he was just telling me a few things about it. I mean, it all the depends. Weather changes things.

He told me it'll be -- it's a good golf course. It's interesting. It's wide but it's tight is what he kind of explained it, how the ball can run into some areas where you miss the fairway. It's not necessarily a driver off the tee on every hole, but it's -- I've never played it, so we'll find out next week.

**Q. Did Chase play it or what's the --**

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I think he played it in college. He said something about the last time they held a tournament there he played the week after, so whenever that was. I don't know when that was, how many years ago.

He said he played the week after, so he had some advice and just some -- just kind of explaining things. Maybe not advice, but just explaining the golf course and how it sets up.

**Q. Sorry if this has been talked about. What was your mindset like when you left Craig Ranch after missing Q-School?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: I think it was all right. Then I've still got one Q-School left in Europe and make it through there. Obviously disappointed, but at the same time, golf is full of disappointments. You lose probably, what, if YOU win 5% of your tournaments you're a Hall of Famer, so plenty of disappointment in golf. Get used to it.

**Q. Both and you Jordan missed out that week. What was it about that week?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: Like I said, it was nine years ago. I barely remember. Obviously I just didn't play good enough. Didn't play good enough, hit it good enough.

**Q. What part of your game is the most -- has shown the most improvement since the player you were back then?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: Short game for sure. I think all the work I've done with Pete from -- what I did is bunker work, chipping, just different decision making around the green. Just changing those things I think has made me a completely different player than I was back then.

Nine years ago is a lot of time in there. You work on things, you get a little better. Just completely different with the wedges and short game.

THE MODERATOR: All right, Brooks, that's what we got. We appreciate your time. Good luck this week. Thank you.

BROOKS KOEPKA: Awesome. Thanks.

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