

THE CJ CUP Byron Nelson

Saturday, May 3, 2025

McKinney, Texas, USA

TPC Craig Ranch

Davis Riley

Quick Quotes

Q. Davis, it's a lot easier with that eagle putt on the last to get you in at 5-under, but we just want to talk to you about the situation on No. 17. Can you just walk us through how it happened, what happened, and then we'll talk about it.

DAVIS RILEY: For sure. I stepped up -- we've been with this new rule that we adopted, started using the range finders. We had been using the range finder for the first handful of holes, and me and my caddie doing a good job of double-checking to make sure we're not on slope.

Without thinking anything of it, I whip the Bushnell out of the bag and then I shoot it, and it pops up a second number there with the adjusted number. It was kind of interesting because it was level, so there's not really any knowledge to be gained.

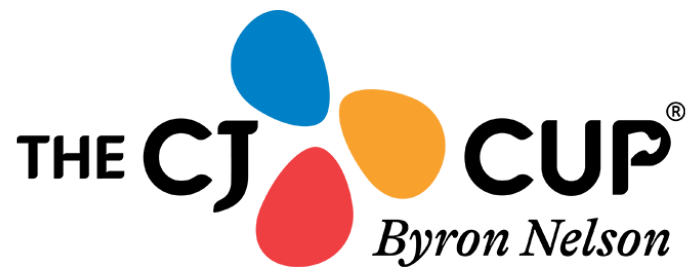
In that moment, I was just like, wow, it's just one of those times that it just sucks. It was a tough deal, and it's just a bad break. All I can boil it down to is bad luck that, by the time you put the thing in there and pull it out, it switched from just raw number to slope. It was tough.

Then my head was spinning for a little bit because I didn't know what the deal was. I was like, as soon as I walked off 17, I called for one of the rules officials, Ken Tackett helped us out. I was like I just need clarity on this because I just did this. I tried to get through 17, but before I got another number, I wanted to get some clarity.

He helped me out. If you have the slope adjuster on that, no matter what knowledge is on there, it's a two-stroke penalty, and another one after that is disqualification.

So, yeah, a two-stroke penalty is tough. I rallied pretty good and made an eagle on the last to hopefully make the cut. Yeah, it was a culmination of a lot of things going on out there.

Q. Just to clarify, do you and your caddie share the one range finder, or do you have one each?



DAVIS RILEY: No, we share it. I hadn't shot the numbers all day, but I didn't think anything of it. We checked before the round. I saw him check before the round. He had been shooting numbers all day. Obviously if there was something wrong, he would have said something.

So I knew stepping onto that tee on 17, I was assuming that the range finder was in the proper mode and shot it, and two numbers came up. I've used it enough to know that that's the slope number. Unfortunately, it was just kind of one of those moments where your heart sinks a little bit, like you're just throwing away two shots.

It is what it is. That's the rules of golf. And we certainly have a trial period here with this, and I know the USGA is trying to do something about the range finder and the pace of play.

I think there can be some more -- a deeper look into this just because I know this has happened a numerous amount of times. I was just talking to the rules officials on PGA Americas and Champions Tour. I was just talking to them. I'd hate to see something happen coming down the stretch and you pull out a range finder, and it ends up a two-stroke penalty and costs the tournament.

I think there might be a way. I don't know if there is before the round, of checking that guys are going into the round with the intent of not using slope and know that's where their things are at.

It's a game -- it's a gentleman's game. That's just something, when you start out with that, that's the integrity of the game knowing guys are going to keep that there. You kind of have to have that same trust as if guys, what happened to me today, have the security to say, hey, I shot this, and it was accidentally on slope.

I don't know if there's a way around it and a different angle to look at it, but, yeah, it was just a bad break. I'm just happy the way I rallied.

Q. You said your head was spinning when it happened and you needed to get clarity. Once you got that clarity, how did you manage your emotions during the rest of the round?

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DAVIS RILEY: Yeah, it was interesting, I looked at my caddie, and I told him, I was like, man, I'm struggling. I'm kind of angry. My head's spinning because I'm right around the cut and I'm playing good and I want to make a move, but then you kind of take a punch on 17.

So I just told my caddie, David, I just said, hey, man, I need you for these next 12 holes or 11 holes, however many it was, just kind of guide me around because my head's spinning a little bit. He did a good job of that, and I kind of hung in there and played okay coming in.

Hit a nice shot out of the rough on 9 to give myself an eagle look was awesome, and then to make the putt to make the cut was awesome.

Q. Did you know on the 9th tee that you pretty much needed to make eagle at that point?

DAVIS RILEY: Yeah, I saw on 7 green, I saw the leaderboard, I saw it was 4-under at the time, but I know finishing on two par-5s on both sides, I knew it would probably go to 5.

So when I stepped up on 9 tee, I told myself I needed to eagle. I hit a good drive just barely in the rough and then judged a 5-iron perfectly and had to putt those about two to three inches out left and hit it center cup. So I was real excited about that.

Q. We're all aware of the situation you experienced back in 2013 at the U.S. Junior, called a penalty on yourself on the 16th hole of the final against Scottie Scheffler, who went on and won that event. How important is it for you, as a PGA TOUR member, to display that integrity for young players.

DAVIS RILEY: For sure. I love this game, and that's one of the beautiful things about this game is the integrity all of us PGA TOUR players and golfers uphold that standard to ourself. So I think it's really important to protect the field and play the game with a high integrity.

Yeah, that was just -- it's very important to me because I love this game. That's kind of something my coaches from a young age, my parents instilled in me. This is a game of integrity, so play with it and act that way. When something like that happens, you just have to own it up and just that's part of the game, the integrity of the game.

Q. Now making it into the weekend, Mental Health Awareness Month, what will you be wearing on your caddie bib for today?

DAVIS RILEY: I chose at registration, I chose pray. Pray is a big thing for me, and my faith is important to me. So, yeah, pray. My faith is really important to me. It's really cool what they do here with the mental health awareness because it's a real thing.

Hopefully some people see that walking down, fans and stuff, and have a few smiles out there.

Q. It looks like you'll go and play the weekend. Do you kind of look at that as having that situation happen now and eagling the last as an opportunity to almost go and play with house money now? It could turn into something special with a couple of good rounds.

DAVIS RILEY: Yeah, for sure. This is a place, and you've seen it from a couple guys, that you can get some birdies and get it going around here. Yeah, it was a little tougher today to kind of get it going because it was a little colder, had some wind, so they maybe weren't quite as favorable as they were the first -- you know, yesterday.

Yeah, it's a place where, if you drive it well, you can have plenty of looks. Like you said, I've got nothing to lose. I'm however many it is, 12 or 13 back, so I'm going to try to come out swinging and make a lot of birdies.

Q. Finally, that last putt from 11 or 12 feet for eagle, we noticed you backed off it after getting set over. What was the deal?

DAVIS RILEY: I knew the putt was left to right, but wind was kind of gusting off my right. With the gusty winds we were kind of getting out there, that can change your read dramatically. I just tried to let that wind gust pass, and I kind of caught the right amount of wind I wanted to feel over the putt. So I stepped in and hit a perfect putt.

Q. What was your first reaction when it went in?

DAVIS RILEY: Just relief because I knew that would -- especially being at home, I love this tournament. This tournament has been good to me. It was my first PGA TOUR start.

So playing with family and friends here, and being able to play the weekend is very important to me. That would have been a tough pill to swallow off a two-shot penalty to miss the cut by one. So it was a lot of relief.

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