

# THE CJ CUP Byron Nelson

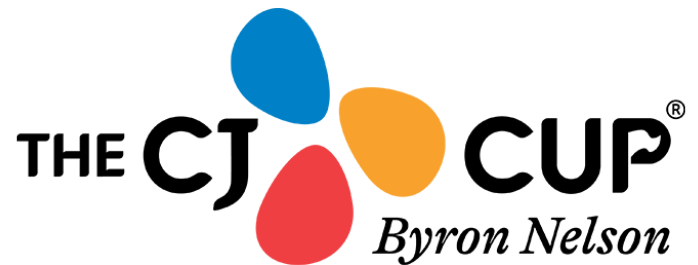
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McKinney, Texas, USA

TPC Craig Ranch

## Brooks Koepka

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good morning, everybody. I'd like to welcome Brooks Koepka to the interview room here at the 2026 CJ CUP Byron Nelson.

Brooks, welcome. Coming in off a difficult week last week at the PGA Championship. Just talk about what you're looking forward to this week after, I guess, not a stressful week, but a difficult week.

BROOKS KOEPKA: Any major is always a difficult week. It's the third week in a row for me, which is usually -- I like playing a little bit, playing a few weeks in a row and kind of build up that momentum, build a rhythm.

I'm excited. It's been a while since I've played this golf course. I know there's a few changes, but it's a golf course I like. Hopefully this weather just holds up for us.

THE MODERATOR: I was going to say you're making a start here, but you've played this tournament at three different venues now, Las Colinas, Trinity Forest, and here. This is going to be like a fourth venue because it's a different golf course. What do you know about it? Have you seen it?

BROOKS KOEPKA: So you're saying I'm getting old. Yeah, it is. I guess, yeah, third venue for me. Makes me, I guess, just realize how long I've been out here.

Like I said, I like the golf course. I didn't see it, I was at home the last two days. I saw the weather report, so figured I'd get a little more practice at home. Hopefully get a good feel for the golf course today and see how it goes.

**Q. Hate to harp on the feeling old theme here, but some of us are old enough to remember 2016 when you and Sergio were in the playoff. What do you remember what that week meant? I know you'd won in Phoenix the previous year, but you were really starting to emerge as a player. What do you remember about that experience?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: Thanks for bringing that up. I still

think about that from time to time. I feel like that was a very, very good chance of winning. I felt like I should have won.

I know I was young. Sometimes that can kind of play into your advantage of not really knowing the situation as well where -- but also can be a disadvantage when you can put yourself in that many situations where you know how to handle yourself.

Yeah, I played well that week. It was a great week. I actually love that golf course. I think that golf course was fantastic, some good history around there. Yeah, I would like to have that tee shot in the playoff back.

**Q. And you said you like this golf course. What from your memory from 2021, what is it that you do like about this golf course?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: I mean, I played this golf course quite a bit. I remember Q-School back 2012, I believe it was final stage I was here. Yeah, I like it. I think, if you're a longer hitter, you can be aggressive with your driver. You can put yourself in some good spots.

I just there's -- I know it's changed a little bit, so I'd have to go out there to go see it to be able to give you, but just from past experience, I feel like the more aggressive you are off the tee, it can really pay off. Then around the greens are quite difficult.

I feel like you've got to manage where your misses are and understand there's certain flags you can't go for, be very disciplined. I think that's the sign of a good golf course.

**Q. Speaking of sore subjects, you brought up your putting and how you feel it's been horrendous of late and most of this season. Obviously in the middle of a major, you don't want to make major changes, but when you have these little lapses in between, talk us through what you do to change, to tweak, because it's something you've brought up multiple times. It must be wearing on you a little mentally, I'm assuming.**

BROOKS KOEPKA: Well, I don't bring it up, you guys do. I just try to fix the problem. Yeah, while I was back -- I



have a little warehouse at home. There's a putting studio in there. I was in there from -- I drop my son off at school in the morning and then was in that putting studio until I had to pick him up from school. So I was in there for quite a while working on some different things, trying some different putters.

Just going back to basics, I think is a huge thing, trying to make sure you're lined up, your grip is correct, your putter is aimed where you think it's aimed. Just little different things.

Switched putters again this week for something I feel like released on its own, something I've been trying to -- been fighting a little bit, and I feel like it definitely releases a little bit.

**Q. What are you using this week?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: Got a Scotty Cameron Fastback 1.5, I believe it is.

**Q. And when you play a course like this that's completely overhauled and everybody is kind of seeing these greens for the first time, is that an advantage if your putter is struggling, or does that not really make a difference? Because everybody's seeing this basically for the first time.**

BROOKS KOEPKA: I don't know, it can be a bit of both, I think. The way I look at it, if you hit it close enough, you don't have to worry about putting.

Yeah, I don't know. I think sometimes you have a little bit of history or like mental history of, oh, if I hit it here, this ball might roll or slope a little bit closer to the hole, and it doesn't anymore. So sometimes it can be an advantage, sometimes it can be a disadvantage. It just kind of depends.

I mean, I'll be able to tell you this probably later in the week when I get a better idea of it.

**Q. Players obviously are free agents. They can play any week they want to. What brought you here this week to play when obviously a lot of guys in the top categories didn't play this week. What brought you here to play?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: Every week is a new fresh start for me, and I'm obviously with my penalty I'm not allowed to play every event, and if I get the chance to tee up, I want to play.

I've mentioned it a couple times, I've kind of fallen back in

love with this. I'm enjoying the grind. I'm enjoying battling it out here. Yeah, it's just a newfound love, a newfound passion for the game, and something that I'm really, really enjoying being back on the road and grinding it out and trying to find it in the dirt. I think there's something to be said about that.

Each week is becoming more and more fun, and I very much enjoy that.

**Q. With the two levels or two tiers of tours, can tournaments like this that don't grow, can they be in danger with the talk of the two tiers of tournaments coming up?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: What do you mean the two tiers?

**Q. With the upper tier, like the commissioner mentioned, and the lower tier?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: Like the Signature Events? Is that what you're saying?

**Q. Yeah, the competing tournaments in 2028.**

BROOKS KOEPKA: I don't know anything about that. I don't have the information on that. I don't know anything, unless something came out in the last week or so. I haven't really paid much attention to it. Yeah, I'm probably not educated enough to answer that one.

**Q. Good morning, Brooks. There's a question from Korea. You played in Jeju back in 2018. Do you have some favorite memories from the week in Korea? You went fishing and did different stuff in Jeju Island.**

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I had a blast, went twice, won once. It was a fun trip for me. I enjoyed it. I know the fun probably started on the trip over. I just remember flying over with -- I believe my brother played one year. I think it was maybe me, my brother, my agent, my caddie, I think even Graeme McDowell, his caddie, we were all on the flight over. Honestly, we had a blast on the flight over. We had so much fun.

Then getting there that week, the island is actually phenomenal. It's really, really pretty, very cool. I wish it would have been a little bit warmer, but I remember the theme parks. There was just always something to do, I felt like.

Sometimes each week can become very repetitive, the same thing over and over, but if you're staying in a different place, different country, I enjoy that, going out and experiencing the culture. It's always something I found

very intriguing and fun from going back to my challenge tour days.

THE MODERATOR: We actually have a picture of that fishing trip, Brooks, that he mentioned. Any memories of that trip?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I remember actually being out on this boat. We were out there for -- by the way, we struggled to catch fish. I know that's probably crazy, but we caught one, as you can see right there. We had a blast. I think me and my caddie -- I made Ricky, my caddie, come with me during that trip.

Yeah, it was a lot of fun just getting out on the water. I enjoy fishing. So any time you can go out and go catch something, it's quite fun.

**Q. You talked about the putter change. Is this a new putter or one you've had like before?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: I think it's one I've had. I might have -- I was just with Blake, my agent, and Ricky, and they said I might have used in Singapore maybe last year, two years ago. I've used it before.

Yeah, it's something that just feels good in my hands. I feel like I've struggled with the toe release a little bit, kind of fighting that, kind of holding it off, and this putter seems to have a little bit more toe hang, to get kind of scientific with it or more in depth on it. It's got a bit more toe hang than what I have been using all year, kind of similar to the blade. I know the CG's up closer to the front of the face, which is kind of what I'm looking for.

So hopefully I can just kind some confidence with it and build some momentum off of it. I think I look back at last week, which I'm very kind of annoyed with because I kind of let the last couple holes get away from me just from maybe a little bit of anger or annoyance, maybe more of an annoyance thing, of not making any putts and feeling like you've got to go at flags. I had no business going at that flag on 17. Aiming right at it was stupid.

Hopefully I can just find some momentum with it and really kind of start building the groundwork and work my way up from there.

**Q. You mentioned momentum a couple of times and one of the reasons you're playing the third week in a row. While the putting has been a struggle, what do you think you've found in your game that you can build on this week?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: I'm driving the ball fantastic. I feel

like I'm in complete control. Ever since Augusta, where we noticed the setting was at B1 and we switched it back to A1 on that driver, I can work it both ways. The flight's very, very good. Iron play's been fantastic.

I know maybe last week the stats didn't quite say that they were as good as they were, but it's also tough. Do you get a lie in the rough, and are you able to advance it versus some of the pins last week you weren't able to aim it.

But I feel like I'm in complete control of my golf ball -- shape, spin, trajectory, everything seems to be right where I need it to be. It's just a matter of rolling those putts in.

**Q. PGA TOUR has different offers at the player dining, this tournament especially is known for serving Korean food and different variety of dishes. Do you have special dish that comes out from your mind?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, we had -- I think right after we caught that fish, I believe we had a Korean barbecue, probably about 30 minutes after that. So, yeah, I've enjoyed some Korean food. It's been great. It's been fantastic. It's something -- like I said, I like diving deep into the different cultures around the world, and being able to experience that was quite enjoyable and something I won't forget.

**Q. Brooks, I don't want to get too far ahead here, but next year you'll be back in Frisco at the PGA Championship. Have you had a chance to play Fields Ranch East? If so, what are your thoughts on that?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: I have not. I haven't had a chance to go down there to see it. I believe the Seniors played there, was it last year? Two years ago? Okay, yeah. So I haven't had a chance, but I'm sure I'll talk to a few of those guys just to hear their thoughts on it.

Am I crazy in thinking this? Did they make some changes after that or maybe there was some slight thing? I'll probably go make a site visit and just go see, see what it's like probably next year at some point.

**Q. I want to go back to your comment about kind of falling in love with the grind again. Logistically coming back on TOUR and going week to week, has it felt different in kind of your day-to-day operation? Have you had to almost readjust? Have people asked you on the other side about that reintegration, so to speak?**

BROOKS KOEPKA: I changed my number a while ago, so I don't think many guys have my number, which is great. So I haven't had to worry about too much of that.

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

Yeah, it's totally different, like I said, just being able to see all the different -- just to have so many options, it's maybe a little bit overwhelming, at the same time, because access to equipment trucks, grip changes, things like that, sometimes I wasn't privy to over the last four, five years. During majors was kind of the only time you saw it.

So to be back out here and have the opportunity to if you need to make a slight change in something, it's a whole lot easier, or you damage a club during play, to get a replacement, a shaft change, whatever it might be.

Just more access to everything, I think, has been a huge advantage. I'm not going to do too much of that. I know I keep changing the putter pretty much every week now, but as far as the rest of the equipment that I have, I'm very satisfied with it. I'm very, very pleased with it.

Maybe during the off-season start doing a little bit of testing just because all of these options now are out there. Like the mini driver, I haven't even -- I don't want to say, but it's kind of like -- it feels like a PGA TOUR club because I never saw it until maybe the end of last year. I watched guys hit it. It's only out here. I haven't seen many other guys use it.

Yeah, looking at that, it's funny, I was talking to Shane Lowry at Zurich about it, and Augusta kind of suits it to the ground. Like you look at 1, it might be a perfect hole for that mini driver, 2, 5, 7, 9 is kind of perfect for it, 10. You can go down the list. Just little things like that, I guess, broadens your capabilities of options.

THE MODERATOR: Before we let you go, you have a premier pairing the first two days with Scottie Scheffler and Si Woo Kim. Talk about what you're looking forward to. There's going to be a lot of fans out there.

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I hope so too. Both of those guys living in Dallas and obviously Scottie being the best player in the world, you expect a lot of fans and a lot of people out here cheering for him. It will be fun. It will be exciting and I guess a good measuring stick to figure out where I'm at.

Obviously Si Woo is playing pretty good and very talented. It will be a lot of fun. I'm excited about it, and we'll see how things shake out.

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