

Myrtle Beach Classic

Sunday, May 12, 2024

Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, USA

Dunes Golf and Beach Club

Chris Gotterup

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome the inaugural winner of the Myrtle Beach Classic, Chris Gotterup. Congratulations. Start off with some opening comments what it's like to be a PGA TOUR winner.

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, I'm in the circle now.

It definitely hasn't sunk in yet. But I just want to thank everyone this week for the support. What a great first event. I'm sure it's a big success for Visit Myrtle Beach. Honored to be the champion and couldn't have gone any better.

Q. A little bit about today's round. What were nerves like sleeping on a lead and capping it off with that finish?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, in the morning I set my alarm for 9:00. I got up at 6:00. I was a little upset about that one, so I had some time to kill. Actually just went down to the beach and walked for an hour.

But yeah, I felt pretty good to start the day, and obviously started off with two bogeys. I was more calm than I thought I was going to be.

I was definitely more nervous until I got here. But yeah, it was a great day. Definitely up and down. I wasn't expecting it to just be smooth sailing.

Q. You're in the winner's circle. Were these moments you thought about when you were making your debut, Puerto Rico Open and professional debut, RBC Canadian Open?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, I definitely knew at some point hopefully that I would be in this position. Golf is a crazy game. You never know where you're going to end up.

I feel like I've done a lot of the right things in my process and going through the system that the TOUR has provided, and yeah, now we're here.



Myrtle Beach
CLASSIC

Q. Mom, dad and brother flew in overnight. When did you find out they were making the trip down to Myrtle Beach?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I called my mom yesterday after the round because I figured they were probably going to do it. But I was like, just stay at home, like everything is going fine here. But she's like, all right, we're coming. I'm like, okay.

But yeah, it was good because I ordered flowers and they weren't going to make it today, so she'll get them when she goes back home.

Q. The two bogeys, three-putts, was that nerves, or how did you feel the first couple holes?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: The first hole was probably nerves. I don't know, I really didn't even feel that bad. I hit not a good second putt, and not a good first one.

But the second hole, it was like a 75-footer up and over into the wind. The odds aren't in my favor on that one.

The first hole, that one bothered me a little bit. Then I settled in nicely. I was actually in a divot on the third hole and hit it to about four, five feet. Once I got going, it was definitely much more calmish.

Q. Did you have to reset after those two bogeys?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I don't think so. A.J., my caddie, was like, are you good? I'm like, yeah, I feel fine. We did what we were trying to do. I just didn't hit a great putt. We were just going along as usual.

Q. You've won in less than two years as a pro, which is a short amount of time. Most people would say that's a short amount of time to win a PGA TOUR event. Did it feel longer than that, 27 starts in two years?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I don't know. That's a good question. I had a chance to win John Deere. I had a chance to win Puerto Rico. When I say chance, I mean, I lost by a couple, but I was in the mix.

Korn Ferry I was in the mix a little bit here and there, but

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I've always kind of just gone about my business, waiting for my opportunity. I figured if I could just keep working hard and doing what I'm supposed to be doing, at some point you would think it's going to go your way.

That's why golf is crazy. You've got guys who are probably plenty deserving to have won and have never won. I'm happy on the other side of that.

Q. Talk about closing out anything for a championship is obviously the toughest aspect of any athlete. What was the mindset coming into today with a four-shot lead, knowing that you had 18 holes to go but also knowing that there was guys behind you playing really well and trying to close this thing out?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, I think that's the hard part. You know guys behind you are going to play well, so you have to still play well. Four shots can vanish in two holes or one.

I think, like you said, closing tournaments out is something I've done pretty well in college and amateur career. You rely on those things knowing that you can do it down the stretch.

I think me and A.J. were pretty dialed in, even though it might not have looked like it. Sometimes grinded it out on some holes. But especially birdieing 18 like that and just finishing off how you're supposed to finish off a tournament, it feels good.

Q. You've now tripled your FedExCup points. You qualified for the PGA Championship and you have status for two more years at least. How good does all of that feel with the win today?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, I mean, I think the biggest thing is the two more years. I've got no stress in my life for two years other than golf stress.

I think especially starting off my rookie year, kind of some events you're not getting in, here and there, you're like, I need to play good to maintain my card, and now I don't have to worry about that. That's a huge worry gone. Now I can just go focus on trying to make a move further up the FedExCup.

Q. It's been a record attendance for the first PGA TOUR event here. How would you compare the Myrtle Beach crowd compared to other galleries on TOUR?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: It's very comparable, knowing that some of the other big ones are -- obviously this isn't a main-main event, but it felt like it. My group Saturday and

Sunday was multiple rows deep coming down the stretch. They were cheering me on, and it definitely kept me in the mix mentally and just kept my juices going. I couldn't say anything but good things about the tournament and all the people that came out and supported this week.

Q. Any suggestions to the grounds crew here at the Dunes Club?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: No.

Q. If you look out to your left right now, you see this beautiful ocean out there. Tell me about your experience playing in Myrtle Beach this week and what this community did to come out and support you.

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I mean, obviously it's amazing. I grew up by the beach, so I like going to the beach. I like hanging out. I like being in the water and the ocean, just makes you feel good, and being able to play right here, we had an AirBNB right down the road and I was able to hang out at the beach in the morning, and I probably looked like a lunatic this morning pacing up and down the beach, but it helps clear your mind.

Obviously the tournament was amazing, and people coming out were amazing, volunteers, amazing. Everyone here has been really nice. It's just been a great week.

There's a lot of positive comments about the golf course. Talk a little bit about that golf course you played the last four days.

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, the wind was kind of funky all four days. It would switch here and there. It made the course play different every day, which is fun. Obviously the course is in amazing shape. Greens were great. There's not a whole lot wrong with what's going on out there.

There's definitely some tough holes. I really, really enjoyed playing it. It just looked good to my eye.

When you're on a nice place and everything feels good, your game just feels good just because. Definitely helps to have a nice place like this to play at.

Q. You had mentioned your drive on No. 3 ended up in a divot. Was there any point there where you were starting to wonder if you might be a little snake-bit coming into today?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: No. I mean, I try to pride myself that I have a pretty good head on my shoulders, and I didn't say anything when I walked up there. It was just another shot.



If I had hit it in the bunker and made bogey, maybe I would have said something else. But I made birdie. So it was good.

Q. It was a fickle game, but you three-putted each of the first two holes and then took a total of three putts on the next three. What's that kind of roller coaster like?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: That's why golf is so stupid. It doesn't make any sense. But sometimes it's good, sometimes it's bad.

Q. Can you talk about the approach on 4? I assume after you made that putt, did you feel as if you had control of the tournament again?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, I think so. I actually hit a great drive down there the other day, and it was in like a hole over there, and I had to lay up from like 185. I got a good break today, and it was in a great lie, and I hit it to whatever it was, 10, 12 feet and made it. Definitely a big swing in my direction for sure.

Q. Earlier this week we talked to you about the difference between first-year player and rookie, and you said I definitely feel like a rookie out there. Do you feel less like a rookie with this under your belt and what do you expect this to do for you in terms of confidence going forward?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I still feel like a rookie, but I feel like I belong at a high level. Not that I didn't before, but now I have some more accolades to prove it.

I think, like you said, obviously this is a big notch on the belt, but I feel like I have a lot of room to improve, as well, which is the fun part about it. Obviously I played great this week and grinded it out, but me and A.J. out there, we were talking about things that we can get better at while we're playing, which is the fun part.

I think you kind of just take it week by week or try to, at least, and see what you can do with it.

Q. You had a few missed cuts earlier in April and then placed solidly at Zurich. Did you have any expectations coming into this week or good feeling maybe?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I think I definitely started to feel better -- you said I missed a couple cuts earlier in the year. I don't know what -- I guess it's just golf, but just didn't feel great. Game didn't feel great.

But I stuck to my thing, and it started turning around. Zurich was great. I played with Austin, and we play together at home all the time, so we were just having fun. That definitely just made golf seem more fun again, and that tournament was awesome, too.

I played decent last week. I felt like I played better than I probably finished.

I knew I felt pretty good coming into this week, and I just had to make it happen. Tried to stay patient and try to take advantage when you can.

Q. Does this mean the mustache stays?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I don't want it to, but I don't think I can shave it now.

Q. What's it going to take to shave it?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: I don't know. That's a good question. I assume my mom is probably going to tell me to take it off. But we'll see. It's going to stay for now.

Q. You mentioned a pretty decorated college career for yourself. Wanted to get your thoughts on a 16-year-old making the cut and shooting 10-under around here this week?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, I would have 80-80 if I was here at 16. It's pretty impressive. I saw him in front of the media the other day. Blades, right? Yeah, pretty cool.

Last week there was a 15- or 16-year-old, too. I'd better keep practicing. They're going to come for me.

Q. You strike me as a guy who likes to have a little fun. What does tonight look like for you?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Tonight is going to be chill, but I can promise you down the road at some point in New Jersey there will be a big party.

Q. Going down the stretch, you didn't know but Austin Eckroat joined the broadcast to say some nice words about you and you were there for his first win at Cognizant. What was that friendship like at Zurich that helped propel a comfortable week?

CHRIS GOTTERUP: Yeah, I think we're very similar people. We just happen to play golf, but we're pretty chill, and we hang out at home. We play together all the time. We're very similar people even though we grew up very differently.

I think after watching him win, I was like, all right, I play against this guy all the time, I've taken his money, he's taken my money, why can't I go win at some point.

Zurich was great. We had some fun. I think there was definitely just some good momentum going from that week.

It's never bad to hang around people that you like and people that push you. Hopefully now he takes me back as his partner and we'll be back in for next year.

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