

# U.S. Open Championship 2025

Monday, June 9, 2025

Oakmont, Pennsylvania, USA

Oakmont Country Club

## Xander Schauffele

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Please join me in welcoming world No. 3, Xander Schauffele. Xander, in your eight U.S. Open starts, you've never finished outside of the top 15. What is it about the test of U.S. Open golf that seems to suit you?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I don't know, maybe I'm just sick and enjoy the challenge. Something about it playing really hard.

I think a good attitude goes a long way. It's obviously easier said than done, hard to keep a good attitude through the entire stretch of 72 holes, nonetheless practice rounds as well.

I don't know, I think they're a lot of fun.

**Q. You've seen the course. It's obviously been a little wet here. What's your take from it so far?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I'm assuming it's going to firm up. Hopefully it firms up. I think it's more fun when it's firm. Yeah, whatever it is is what it is, so we'll see how it goes.

**Q. When you have greens that are abnormally fast and rough that's abnormally long, do you think the skill sets for good players in those areas are accentuated by setups like this, or does it kind of get leveled out when it's all abnormal to you guys?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I think it just puts an emphasis on hitting the fairway and hitting greens. If you're a premier ball striker, you'll be licking your chops. Yeah, that's pretty much it. You're legit in the fairway, in the first cut, or it's pretty hard to be in the bunker and have an open shot to the green. Typically you seem to be up in it, so you're just kind of taking your medicine. If you're in the rough, it's very lie dependent.

For the most part, the only control you can have is if you keep it right in front of you.

**Q. You kind of mentioned how tough this course is. Where does that enjoyment come from in challenging yourself in places like this?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It's a challenge. It's challenging myself to try and hit every fairway, to try and hit every green, to try and be disciplined like through and through.

There's going to be a point where you lay up into a bad spot, and it goes to laying up again from that layup spot. If you have a decent lie, you might try to take some risk, and that's part of the fun.

**Q. Coming off your injury and working your way back, what do you think is probably the biggest challenge working your way back? And in what part of the game do you think it affected you the most?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Probably trusting it at first. I've never been hurt before. So I think it was all kind of new. Just the mentality. I felt like I was playing at a pretty high level. Then I got hurt. My expectations of what I knew I could do to where I was were very different, and accepting that was tough.

I think that was sort of the biggest wake-up call for me coming back.

**Q. What's your definition of a good attitude?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Like truly being positive, or for me at least, good attitude is being level-headed. I think I look pretty level-headed when I play, but internally I might be absolutely just thrashing myself.

I think truly having a good attitude is just sort of accepting what happened and allowing yourself to be pretty much at zero to hit the next shot.

**Q. How often are you thrashing yourself, do you think?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Pretty often, to be honest.

**Q. You don't have to name names here, but have you played with someone who you could tell had a bad attitude, and what did that look like?**

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XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I think honestly it's sort of -- like let's take anyone that throws a tantrum. To me, I'm like, if that's who you are and you throw one, it may affect the people around you, which sucks, but for you personally, if you get back to zero to hit your next shot because you're over it and you kind of let it go, then more power to you. I would consider that maybe having a good attitude.

There's all definitions. You can make up your own definition for that.

**Q. Not to think that you're hitting it there, but are you finding some decent lies in the rough when you do try to hit one out of there?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I feel like I always get good lies when I go in the rough. That's having a good attitude. Yeah, pretty much, it's always good.

**Q. Are you okay with hack-out rough?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It's the U.S. Open, yeah.

**Q. Some people think that's --**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I don't think people turn the TV on to watch some of the guys just hit like a 200-yard shot on the green, you know what I mean? I think they turn on the U.S. Open to see a guy shooting 8-over and suffer. That's part of the enjoyment of playing in the U.S. Open for viewers.

**Q. Right, but you're not playing for viewers. People say, well, that seems -- hack-out rough seems boring, but the rough is there to test the tournament golfer, not to entertain the viewer.**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: If you're a true fan of golf, it's more about what happens after the hack-out.

**Q. You talked about how it would be more fun if the conditions firm up, as they probably should, but what specifically did you see out there with how it was playing today?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: The balls were just plugging. Fairways were easier to hit. There was less run-off.

Take 1, for example, or 10, if you are in the rough, the way Oakmont plays is you can sort of hack something, if you're courageous enough to hack something sort of down, and if you get the correct line and a couple of bounces, you could kind of turn what would be a nightmare into a decent situation. Right now with it being soft, your ball is not going

to really roll where it needs to.

**Q. Is that going to make it tougher during the tournament rounds if suddenly you're playing Oakmont at its close to firmest versus what you're seeing now?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It could. I think all major championships, there's some degree of adjustments you have to make. Whether the greens are two, three feet faster or the fairways are running, whoever adjusts the best with their caddie are going to play the best.

**Q. How much time do you plan on spending on the putting green as you prepare over the next few days to try to get into shape for this event?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Putting greens is obviously essential. You feel like you have a crazy putt when you just practice on 9, but then you kind of look down on the 9th green, and you're like, well, I guess that's kind of what it is, you know what I mean? It's hard to find a straight putt. It's hard to find a level putt. It's hard to find an area to do what we would call a speed drill. Like I said, you just have to adjust.

**Q. Did you play No. 10? I'm just curious what the play is there with that ditch going across the fairway now.**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I haven't played it since it's been softer, but when I first -- for the first time, it was firmer, and I hit 3-wood, gap wedge into what I thought was a back pin. I think the play today would probably be a 3-wood of some sort and maybe a 9-iron or 8-iron.

**Q. Do you play short of it or carry it with the 3-wood?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: No. The ravine, no. I think Bryson is the only one who would think twice about carrying it. It might just be an iron from off the tee. I'm not sure how far the ravine is. I might be capable of one-hopping it, but I don't think my caddie is going to allow me to do that.

**Q. I know you didn't play here in '16, but based on what you see, what's a reasonable winning score out here based on what you've seen so far?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: In '16, they got some rain as well. From what I can remember, from what I watched, balls were sort of -- guys were stopping iron shots. Guys had a few more irons off tees. Not a lot, but I remember seeing a few guys hitting maybe three or maybe four irons off tees. I feel like they've lengthened those holes to where they're not. I felt like you're only hitting maybe one iron off

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the tee this week or maybe two.

Anything close to par is what they want here. The members absolutely love their property, and the members absolutely want it to be over par. I know what they're rooting for.

**Q. The reigning champ really loves being a YouTube golfer, and Tommy Fleetwood just started his own YouTube account.**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Nice.

**Q. Has any part of you ever wanted to create a Xander Schauffele YouTube account?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Is that like a serious question?

**Q. I knew the answer. I'm curious actually, do you ever watch YouTube for golf purposes? Do you ever like to preview courses in that way?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I watched some of the '16 coverage on YouTube. I would have watched it on any platform that would have been provided, but I watched some of that coverage there just to see sort of how guys were hitting shots and how the ball was reacting.

I don't really know if there was another question attached to that about YouTube.

**Q. What can you take away from that stuff?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Viewing YouTube?

**Q. Yeah.**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It can be helpful. I've been in dark places where I've looked up swing tip things on YouTube as well, trying to make sense of it, just like every golfer has. I'll confess to it.

I'm luckily not there anymore, which is probably healthy for myself and my family (laughter). Yeah, there's a lot on there, I can tell you that much.

**Q. Do you ever watch "The Amazing Race"?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: No, Doug.

**Q. I was kidding.**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Have you?

**Q. No, of course not. I was curious, you seemed like**

**you have a pretty good memory of here in '16. That came from YouTube, I take it? Since this was the last Open you missed and frankly the last major, how often did you watch them when you weren't playing them? How much did you sit in front of the TV and pay attention?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I mean, it depends. It depends if it was close. In '16 I would have been on the Korn Ferry Tour, so that meant it was a pretty good chance I missed the cut at some point out there. I missed nine in a row there. I probably would have watched some weekend golf at some point after practice.

Yeah, I remember watching a few events from the hotel room with Austin on weekends. Yeah, I just -- I literally went on YouTube to watch this Sunday just to see sort of how shots were reacting and what guys were hitting off tees and sort of how it looked.

**Q. It seems like with this tournament, more so than other majors, there's a lot of talk often about setup and conditions and all that. I'm curious, among the players, is that something that you discuss or think about? Obviously you're thinking about it when you're strategizing the course, but you enjoy that aspect of it. I guess what does it kind of ask of you in that sense from a mental standpoint?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I'm more in the boat of -- you know, part of my attitude thing is sort of we're all playing the same course, and it's going to be hard. You may think something's unfair, but it doesn't really matter at the end of the day. Whoever can sort of deal with it the best is going to play well. That's the attitude I've had: Look at it as a fun challenge versus feeling like you're living in a nightmare.

**Q. Generally, do you enjoy places that are closer to par maybe or par feels like a better score than when it's 15-, 17-under?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, you've just got to get yourself there mentally. There's times where -- the better you hit it, the more likely you are to feel like you might be able to -- like 9, for example. If you hit a driver in the fairway on 9 every day, landing your ball into a pretty severely pitched green, you might feel like you can bury that hole a couple days. I know that's kind of weird to say with how steep the green is. Birdie, you shouldn't even think about it. If you pull or push an iron and it goes to tap-in, you should be stoked about it.

At the end of the day, take Scottie Scheffler, for example, he's in the middle of every fairway. It takes a serious amount of discipline to play away from pins and hit really

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good shots to safe targets, and that's what it takes to play well at U.S. Opens.

**Q. Have you had a look at the par-3 8th, and what strategy do you have on a hole that could reach 300 yards this week?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It's just a golf hole. If you can peel a par away from it, you just figure out how best to make a score on it.

I think you might hurt a few egos if you see guys pulling driver or some long clubs in there, but at the end of the day, however you feel you're going to make the best score in there is how you should play it. Whether it's laying up with an iron out to the right and trying to wedge it close or being aggressive with the driver, however you feel like you can make a good score is how you should play the hole.

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