

FINAL ROUND INTERVIEW: BILLY ANDRADE
Sunday, August 23, 2015



DAVE SENKO: We would like to welcome our 2015 Boeing Classic champion, Billy Andrade, to the media center. Second win of the year, you become the third multiple winner on the Champions Tour this year. Your first stroke play win since winning in Las Vegas. I know you won with --

BILLY ANDRADE: So member-guests don't count, is that what you're saying?

DAVE SENKO: The CVS Charity Classic doesn't count.

BILLY ANDRADE: I never won that. The Fred Meyer Challenge doesn't count? I won a few of those.

DAVE SENKO: Congratulations.

BILLY ANDRADE: Thank you.

DAVE SENKO: Maybe just take us through your day. I guess maybe starting at No. 4, maybe take us through that.

BILLY ANDRADE: Well, I hadn't hit a tee shot left all week and I stepped up first because I think they both -- I had the tee and I just stepped up. Tried to play a little cut off those bunkers on the left-hand side and I hit a hook, and I was like oh, my gosh. I thought it was going to be okay, not out of bounds, but it was out of bounds. Then I reloaded up there, I hit a provisional and I hit the provisional left. We were lucky to find the ball. So now my mind's racing and this all of a sudden, where did this come from? Now we've got ourselves a golf tournament letting everybody in.

I hit a hell of a shot to get it to the fairway. I missed the green to the left and I chipped in for 7. It was the greatest 7 I've ever made in my life.

DAVE SENKO: How far was the chip-in, Billy?

BILLY ANDRADE: It was straight downhill, pin-high left. Pin was front. I had nothing. If it doesn't go in -- I was just trying to get it on the green so I have a chance for a putt so I don't make 8, and it went in, which was fabulous. I had a three-shot lead and okay, I made triple here, but let's not let this one hole screw up a great week was my thought.

I made a bad decision on 7 with a wedge. I should have played it left of the flag. I was trying to play it a little right and long and spin it back, and I ended up hitting the bunker there and I made a bogey.

The key to the tournament really was probably the eighth hole. I drove it in the right bunker, I chunked a wedge out, I had a wedge to the green from 142 yards straight downwind. When the ball was in the air, I didn't think it was going to get over the water. It barely got over the water and it got up on the green and I had about a 15-footer and I made it for birdie. So that was kind of, to me that was the key to the tournament, to winning, was that hole there. That ball goes in the water, I'm probably done, but it didn't and I made birdie.

I played really solid on the back nine. I kept looking at the scoreboard and I just kept seeing nobody was really doing anything. I knew coming down the stretch pars were going to be big. It would be nice to make one more birdie there to give myself a little cushion coming in, but it all worked out. Bernhard, son of a gun, he had a chance to tie there. He had a chance to get to 9-under with that, hit a beautiful 3-wood there in the back fringe and almost made eagle after making a great birdie on 17.

Can't say how happy I am. This is what we work hard for and this is what we want to do is to win. Playing with one of the best players in Champions Tour history and prevailing and winning is something I'll never forget.

DAVE SENKO: Birdie at 12, what was the shot sequence there?

BILLY ANDRADE: Hit a beautiful drive and had 97, I think 97 yards to the hole. Pin was right on the front. It was kind of a little sucker pin. If you come up short, you'll go all the way down the hill and be in big trouble. Hit a 56-degree sand wedge there about 15 feet, made a nice putt.

DAVE SENKO: How long was your birdie on 1?

BILLY ANDRADE: It was about eight feet.

DAVE SENKO: Did you ever have a triple and win a tournament, do you recall?

BILLY ANDRADE: You know, when I was probably 12 in a junior event or something. But no, it usually doesn't happen. It goes to show you the way this golf course played this week and how I guess in years past, in years past the scoring was incredible and this year the scoring, it was more like a U.S. Open kind of setup with the greens being firm. And I don't know how many low scores there were today, but 65 I shot yesterday, is that the low score for the week?

DAVE SENKO: There was a 65 today.

BILLY ANDRADE: Yeah, it played hard. Today was a grind. Today's not a day where it was fun. Today was -- our whole group really, we were not struggling but we were all just grinding. It wasn't like birdie, birdie, birdie, birdie. It was trying to just survive. And you knew you were around the lead or leading so you had to watch out, you didn't want to make any mistakes, and I knew on the back nine I couldn't make any and I got lucky.

DAVE SENKO: You move into fifth place in the Schwab Cup race and also went over a million dollars for the season.

BILLY ANDRADE: That's pretty cool, thank you.

Q. What did you hit off the tee on 4?

BILLY ANDRADE: Driver, it's a driver. I hit 3-wood the first day. In the pro-am it was so cold, it was completely different conditions, I think I might have hit -- I think I hit driver that day. Then I hit 3-wood the first day and I hit it in the right bunker. And then yesterday I hit driver and I hit it in the first cut of rough on the left-hand side. It's really not a hard drive for me because I like to hit a little cut. It was just one of those bad swings and all of a sudden this thing's going left and I went oh, my gosh. It was just whew, what the heck was that?

Q. How far do you think the chip would have gone past if you didn't hit the flagstick?

BILLY ANDRADE: It probably would have gone 15 feet by. It's straight downhill, you have nothing. The good thing about the shot was that the lie, I had some fluff under it, it wasn't like a hardpan lie. So I just -- it came out beautiful, but still I knew I couldn't stop it.

Q. So 9's definitely in the equation with a 15-foot putt, if that happens you're probably two shots out of the lead. How big was it to get out of the hole and still have a share of the lead?

BILLY ANDRADE: It was big. I didn't know if any of the guys up ahead of us were making birdies, I wasn't really looking at the scoreboard at that time, it was early in the round. But yeah, it was -- thank God I had a three-shot lead.

Q. I was thinking you're going to be two-shots behind.

BILLY ANDRADE: Here he goes, giving it all away right here. Yeah, it was -- you know, I didn't get flustered, I would say. I screwed up, and it goes back to I think your question yesterday about how are you going to handle yourself tomorrow, are you going to be nervous? I wasn't nervous, I was excited about the opportunity.

This is a different animal than the regular tour. I'm not out here because I've got to put food on the table and get my kids through college and all that stuff. This is gravy, this is just fun. I'm not going to hit every shot perfect and I'm going to hit a lot of bad ones, too. That's been my mindset since I've been out here and I've had a pretty nice run here since I've turned 50 with that kind of a mindset. I said I made triple, it's over, let's regroup and hang in there. Bernhard, after I won on the 18th green, said, "Way to persevere, way to hang in there, that's the sign of a champion." It's something I'll never forget.

Q. After you took the penalty drop, two clubs, I heard you tell your caddie (inaudible)

back on the fairway after the drop, right?

BILLY ANDRADE: The drop was horrendous.

Q. Because you're hoping the ball is going to roll?

BILLY ANDRADE: I wanted it to roll down this little path because you can roll another two club lengths and be okay, and it didn't, it came back. I really had -- I didn't think I could get it to the fairway.

Q. What did you hit?

BILLY ANDRADE: Sand wedge just to get it out. I was very, very fortunate. I could have whiffed it. I had a similar lie in Calgary in the last round, I whiffed. I could have whiffed it. I could have still been there, yeah. I would have been very sad.

Q. When you went in the trap off the tee on 18, was that a mis-hit at all, and how concerned were you at that point?

BILLY ANDRADE: Well, I didn't know if Fran Quinn made birdie to get to 8. He was the one up ahead that had that chance. I've been going left there. I didn't think I could carry those bunkers because it's been into the wind all week. I just pushed it just a hair, just a little bit because you want to hug that middle bunker, because if you tug it left, then you can't get on the green. So you have to kind of try to get close to that bunker and miss it, and I didn't, I pushed it. I was fortunate that I was in the middle of the bunker where I could hit a 9-iron out of it to where I could hit a 9-iron to the green. I had 240. I felt like a par was going to be okay until Bernhard hit his 3-wood right at it and now I'm thinking, well, I had better hit this next shot pretty close up there. My mindset was I need to make birdie here to make sure, because you never know what the other guy's going to do, and he almost did make eagle.

Q. You talked yesterday about struggling on the PGA TOUR and then the years you didn't play. I'm wondering in that stretch if you allowed yourself to imagine a moment like this happening?

BILLY ANDRADE: You know, when you quit playing -- I mean, I played for 23 straight years on the PGA TOUR. I played junior golf, college golf, I played amateur golf, so I played for a long, long time. Then taking a break and not playing competitive golf, I think in your mind, in the back of your mind you're wondering if you can ever get to this point again. I didn't know. I just knew that I needed to take a little break and get my mind cleared.

I felt like when I turned 49 when I quit television and just started practicing and playing and whatever I could get in, I went down to Mississippi. I got a call from, what's the chicken group down there? The tournament, Sanderson Farms was the sponsor. I went down there and I brought my son at the time, who was 17, and I finished fifth. Woody Austin won and I

shot 18-under par out of the blue. That was in July and I was turning 50 in January. That, to me, was like, you know what, I can still play. If you do that on the regular tour, then I think you're going to do okay when you come out here. So that was big back when I was 49, so I kind of knew then that maybe I am born to do this game. It was nice to take a break and nice to come out here fresh and that's what I've done. I've embraced it, I've embraced this tour. I've had so much fun with these guys. Everybody kind of roots for each other, but it's a different -- it's just a different feeling and a different mindset than the PGA TOUR. The PGA TOUR is very cutthroat, it's very competitive. Missing cuts sucks. Missing consecutive cuts really stings. And when you go home after having a pretty good career for 20-plus years and you go home every Friday night and your kids start talking, you know, "Hey, did you miss the cut again? Did you miss the cut again?" Yeah, I missed the cut again. It wears on you. After that Mississippi tournament, I knew that I could play, I still had something in me.

Q. What do you remember about the win in Vegas in 2000?

BILLY ANDRADE: I remember I beat Phil Mickelson by a shot and I didn't think he was in the tournament. It was a five-day event and on the back nine on Sunday -- I shot even on the front and I had a two-shot lead. I shot even on the front, which is like shooting 4 over, and I thought I was done. I was still tied for the lead because nobody was doing much on Sunday.

I got to 15 and I looked up on the scoreboard and Phil Mickelson was in second place. I was like, Holy shit, I didn't even know he was in the tournament. I never saw him all week. He was shooting 62, I think, on Sunday. It was a big win. I was 183 on the money list going into Vegas. For the first time in 20 years I sent in a check to go to Q school, I was really struggling. I sucked it up and won that tournament and really jump started the second leg of my career. That was 2000 and I played pretty well until about 2007. So I had a nice run after that, it was big.

Q. Going into today with three strokes, does that change your approach? Do you get more concerned knowing that other guys are going to have to take some risks?

BILLY ANDRADE: Yeah, that's a great question. This is a golf course you can't really -- you can't be a chicken. You have to hit some shots. You don't want to be dumb and just kind of fire at every flag, and if you mis-hit on the wrong side you're going to make a bogey and stuff like that.

But yeah, with a three-shot lead, you're going along and no one's doing anything. Like coming down the stretch I knew that pars were good, and if I could make one more birdie after 12 that would be really good. I didn't see anybody rushing at me. The mindset's that you don't want to be a chicken, but then again you don't want to be dumb, either. I was thinking about it in those first few holes when I played. No. 2 and 3, if you miss it short or right on 2 or short and left on 3, you're not going to get them up and down, but then again you can't bail way out to the right and miss the green. It's a little tricky with a three- or four-shot lead.

I remember Kenny Perry talking about that in Minnesota. He doesn't like having a big lead and playing safe, he likes to just be on his own going at it. It's hard, it's not easy.

Q. Your wife is a Presbyterian minister?

BILLY ANDRADE: She is, ordained, which means that I'm closer to heaven now because I'm sleeping with a minister, right? That's the way I look at it. I grew up Catholic, so am I still in Purgatory? I don't know. Am I closer to get out of Purgatory? But being Catholic now, I'm sleeping with a Presbyterian, maybe I'm going to go to hell, I don't know.

Yeah, she graduated last year. Took her five years part time with the kids and me, the third kid. She got a job at Pleasant Hill Presbyterian Church not too far from TPC Sugarloaf and she's been working there as head of pastoral care. She just absolutely loves it, and she is very good at it, I have to say.

Q. You met her at Wake?

BILLY ANDRADE: I did, I met her in college back in the great decade of the '80s.

DAVE SENKO: Thanks, Billy.

BILLY ANDRADE: Thank you very much. Thanks, guys. We'll see you next year.