

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW

January 22, 2019

XANDER SCHAUFFELE
LIZETTE SALAS
TYLER DENNIS



MARK STEVENS: Thanks for being here, everybody. Like to welcome in Xander Schauffele fresh off his win at the Sentry Tournament of Champions and our current leader in the FedExCup.

He is joined by two special guests. We have Tyler Dennis on the far side, he's our chief of operations at the PGA TOUR, and LPGA player Lizette Salas. Today they're here because we're going to introduce the holes and scoring for the Aon Risk Reward Challenge, which is all new to the PGA TOUR.

We also understand that you guys will want some time with Xander afterwards, so we'll spend about 10 minutes doing this and then 10 minutes with Xander, okay?

So just to start off, Tyler Dennis, he comprised the scoring system and came up with the holes on the Challenge, and just as a recap, we announced it this summer, but the Aon Risk Reward Challenge is a winner-take-all one million dollar challenge at the end of the season. It will be one million dollars to the PGA TOUR win and the LPGA Tour win.

Tyler, if you want to start off and just kind of talk about the scoring and how we decided on the holes and then we'll hear from our players.

TYLER DENNIS: Sure, thanks, Mark. I'm going to try to be brief because I'm honored to be up here with these two and I'm sure they have a lot more interesting things to talk about as far as golf goes and this exciting moment.

Just from the PGA Tour point of view, we're really excited about this to work with Aon. As Mark said, it's been a great project. We've actually collaborated with their team and our team to really think hard about how to make this exciting throughout the year.

Just to briefly go into the scoring, it's a challenge each week. There's a hole that's selected -- a par 4, par 5 -- out here on the PGA TOUR virtually every week and you're going to -- all the players that are eligible for it are going to be taking the two best scores for the week. So if you make the cut, you're going to take two of your best four; otherwise, your two scores on that hole, and the season-long competition for the million dollar prize is going to be related to the average under-par score throughout the year.

The reason we did that was to really make it exciting for all types of players depending on how many tournaments you play and whatnot. It was a lot of fun to analyze it with the Aon

team and we're really excited about it.

Just on the holes briefly, because of the name, the Risk Reward Challenge, I think it's obvious we went through and tried to pick really the iconic holes on the PGA TOUR that represent that idea, and as you look through the list, you'll see some very familiar par 5s and par 4s here from this moment on, including the 18th hole and a lot of the ones that our fans are used to being excited about. We feel like it's going to be really engaging to watch each week from a fan point of view and we tried to pick a variety of holes so it doesn't necessarily favor a long or a short hitter, it's going to be great for everyone. Really excited to be with Aon and announce this great program.

MARK STEVENS: Thanks, Tyler. Lizette, if you want to take a moment and talk about how this might change your decision-making process over the course of the season on the LPGA and how that risk of a million dollars at the end of the year might factor into that.

LIZETTE SALAS: Yeah, I can speak for all the LPGA players that we're super excited and honored to be included in this Aon Risk Reward Challenge. I think whenever you bring in a million dollars, it really does catch everyone's eye and it changes our approach to this. It's a season-long challenge and we're going to do -- we're going to change our game plan if we need to. It's a team effort. We're going to include our caddies in it and even our fans. So it's a great opportunity for us and we're excited about it.

MARK STEVENS: And last week at the season-opening event in Orlando, the Aon Risk Reward Challenge got started on the LPGA. Can you talk a little bit about what the players are saying about it and the excitement level?

LIZETTE SALAS: I've heard really great things about it so far. I think the caddies are really excited about it, too, because they get more insight and, I don't know, I've heard so many great things about it. It's just a great thing to be a part of.

MARK STEVENS: Okay. Moving on to Xander, this week the 18th hole is the risk-reward Hole for the week. If you want to kind of talk about how you envision playing that this week and your strategy going in?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it's a tricky one obviously with it being colder and wetter. I'm sure Tyler and you guys had a lot of fun picking out the holes for the Risk Reward Challenge. Golf is interesting because there's so much risk-reward throughout the course of an entire tournament week to week, even in a practice round you sort of do risk assessment. The 18th hole is definitely a good one. I can think of a lot more holes out here where the risk-reward could come into play as well. Coming down 18 will be tricky just based on if you can reach it or not and if you want to try and push it up that right side and squeeze it.

I think it's all based on what position you're in in the tournament and I'm sure a lot of the boys will be talking about it come near the end of the season when people are close and that risk-reward, you know, your ranking is amongst your peers and I think it will be pretty

exciting.

MARK STEVENS: At Sentry you actually birdied the risk-reward hole all four days. Kind of talk about your thinking. Did you plan on being a little more risky going into that week on that hole?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I had no idea it was a risk-reward hole, to be completely honest. That was a joke, too. I was like, I don't even know if I want to know the holes just because I feel like it might add some pressure. Sometimes, like I said, risk assessment is different for everyone. I think that's why, like Tyler said, it's not just short hitters or long hitters; you guys came up with a collection of holes that makes sense, that's fair for the entire field and I think it's a really cool idea and it's an easy tie in to golf.

A couple weeks ago at Sentry it was sort of a no-brainer to me. I felt like I had the shot and there was way more reward than risk, so it was sort of a no-brainer for me, so it's a lucky situation in that sense.

MARK STEVENS: So is this going to be plan going forward this season to try not to think about the hole?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I mean, being an ambassador I feel it's definitely I need to be aware of more than at the Sentry. I think the Tour and everyone's going to be doing a good job to make the players aware. Like Lizette said, a million dollars is a lot to play for and coming down the stretch, I guarantee some guys will be doing something that they weren't used to doing in the past.

Q. One question for both of you. How nice it is that the women and the men are paid the same for the same effort, so what do you think of that?

LIZETTE SALAS: Yeah, it's a really important -- sorry, I lost my words. It's a really great place to be to be included with the PGA TOUR with this Aon Risk Reward Challenge. We don't come around the same opportunities as the PGA TOUR, so to be included and to have a partner like Aon that thought of us and really wants to put the LPGA Tour on another platform, we're just so honored to have them. We're just, we're excited for that million dollars, it doesn't come around often. So we are going to change our game plan, I know I am, just so that I can get the best reward out of it.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I think it shows Aon's commitment. Equal pay, especially in today's day and age, is something that's been talked about not just -- apart from golf. So Aon putting the \$2 million up front is a huge commitment on their behalf. I think, like Lizette said, I think both tours are honored.

Q. What was the hole at Kapalua?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: 14, the drivable -- sometimes drivable par four.

LIZETTE SALAS: Oh, that's nice.

MARK STEVENS©: I bet he knows it the rest of the year. Are you a risky player, do you think?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I'm no Phil Mickelson, but I would say I lean towards risking more. I would say my caddie's even sketchier than I am. That guy thinks I can do anything, which is awesome, I guess. We'll be in the trees and whatnot and he'll be like, you just draw it and cut it and then go over, it will be easy. I'll be like, maybe we should just chip out. I guess he believes in me more than I do.

Q. One question for Lizette. There's been a big growth of the game among the Latino community in the U.S. and especially Latino girls. What do you think about that? I know you are engaged with the committee with that?

LIZETTE SALAS: Yeah, coming from an Hispanic background, it's been very important to me and I've carried that throughout my career. You know, my goal is to bring more Latino girls into golf. It changed my life and I'm sure it could do the same for others. I've had really great partners along the way that supported that motion, that idea of bringing more diversity into golf, and Aon has been a great partner in doing that. I've just been very lucky. I just want to share that luck with a lot of other Latino girls.

Q. August now is the field for the new event in Augusta, the Women's Amateur. I wanted to hear your thoughts on that, if it's an opportunity for amateur women?

LIZETTE SALAS: Oh, yeah, definitely. I think every new opportunity for women is great. We've always attacked or targeted junior golfers and professionals. The fact that we now get to target amateurs and kind of fill that void is a great thing and women's golf will just keep climbing and going up. So to have this new event is a great thing.

MARK STEVENS: Any other questions for Tyler or Lizette? Okay. If you guys kind of want to step off. Xander's got a lot of good stuff going on in his career, so we'll take a few moments and talk about that.

Also, before I would be remiss if I didn't mention Mr. Andy Weitz, the global CMO of Aon, is here. He's going to kind of come around and talk to everybody later today. We appreciate you being here, thank you.

Let's just open it up for questions for Xander.

Q. The reaction to the Tiger pairing, when did you find out yesterday and what's your experience with him? What's your interaction been with him through the years?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Limited. We've ran into each other a few times in the locker

room, but besides that, I'm not one to sort of, you know, be a -- have a fanning moment there where I'm going to try to run up to him or take a picture with him or whatnot, you know what I mean? We're still out here to compete.

The reaction to the pairing, not overly surprised, I guess, me being a San Diego kid and now being ranked enough to be in a featured group. It's really cool. I've never played with him, not even a hole, so looking forward to the zoo that's going to be out here Thursday, Friday. Just going to look at it as a warm-up for next week.

Q. You talk about the zoo. You've been in pressure situations now. How do you look at it, especially being in your hometown and what the expectations are for you now?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, this is going to be a little bit bigger of a zoo than I'm used to, but I don't know, I just sort of block it all out. I've already prepped with my caddie when Tiger taps in, people will be running around just to get as close to him on the next tee shot. So that kind of stuff doesn't really bother me. When I practice there's a bunch of noise going on, people will talk, so I don't really have mouse ears for the most part.

I say that now. Watch me have a melt-down Thursday and Friday.

I feel like mentally I should be okay. I've just got to sort of handle my own thing. Plus playing with Tony Finau in that group as well, me and him are really close and that will be a comforting factor for me as well.

Q. Why not just feed into your underdog mentality, help you out again?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I could just play out here in a one-some. I've never made the cut, I think that feeds into the underdog thing more than anything else.

Q. I wanted to get to that. Obviously you mentioned at Sentry you have high desires to play well here. Why do you think you haven't in your Tour stats?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I don't know. I'm at home sleeping in my bed, I'm too comfortable. If I knew, I wouldn't have missed all these cuts. We're trying to change it up in whichever way. I think mentally I've never come into this tournament with a win that fresh, so I'm in a good state mentally and I think that will help out here just because whenever I play in front of fans and friends, I always want to do that little extra, you know. So if I'm playing poorly, it will piss me off a little more than if I'm in New York or somewhere way away from home. There's added pressure just to perform better. I think I'm at the point mentally where I'm a little more mature and it is what it is at this point.

Q. How successful were you here as a junior, amateur, college, et cetera? Did you have any success here to speak of?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I made the cut in the Junior World. It's big-time for me, I guess,

on this property. You know, I played high school matches, that's the most I did out here. Nine holes from the white tees, which is a lot more fun than the blacks. Everyone that comes out here loves being out here and I'm one of those people, so I'll just try and go with the flow.

Q. Just wondering growing up here, any good stories about when you first got to play here or your first round here?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I just remember being excited to leave school early to come out to Torrey Pines, eating onion rings in the Lodge after nine holes. My high school teammates and I would do some stupid race, we would sprint down No. 9 and loser in the race would have to buy the onion rings. I just remember all kind of kid-ish fun things about this property, so I need to sort of revive those thoughts and bring them into this week.

Q. What about attending the tournament?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, Tiger's putt on 2008, I was by that tree left of 18 that's no longer there. I was there in that arena-type feeling when he made that putt and went nuts. It will be cool to play with him come Thursday.

Q. How many days did you attend that week, and was the U.S. Open the only time you came to a tournament here?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I think I've come out to the property a few times. I remember coming out here especially to sort of watch not the big names, but I got a signed crusty glove from Brett Wetterich.

Q. A Ryder Cup player.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It was the coolest thing on the planet, so now I don't feel as shy to give my signed crusty glove to another kid.

Q. Where is that signed Brett Wetterich glove?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Somewhere at home probably, but that thing is like a raisin now.

Q. Your previous multiple-win year kind of comes at the end of the year. How are your expectations or your outlook on the year having won twice early different from going into a second season type thing, and do you have to sometimes guard against your own expectations?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it's uncharted territory for my team and I. We don't -- you don't really plan -- I mean, you plan to have a start like that but not many can do it. Now that we're sitting in the driver's seat, yeah, scheduling and trying to peak at the right moments and stuff like that sort of is in the conversation. I like to say we have no idea what we're

doing, but we're sort of plodding along and trying to figure it out. Two wins early is something new to us and it's something I've always dreamt of since I'm sort of a late in the season kind of guy, but hopefully we can kind of keep this trend going.

Q. (No microphone.)

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I really sell myself as a space cadet, so maybe, maybe I'll just go with that this week. I have no idea who I'm playing with, I don't know anything.

Q. How would you just characterize the challenge that you guys face when you come here to this course?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it's brutal, it's mentally exhausting, the place is a hike, just everything about it. When the wind picks up, you're just worn out at the end of the day. A week like this week, you're playing two different courses. For some reason I feel like this property like around the practice facilities with the Monday and Wednesday pro-am, it just feels like a zoo already and I'm kind of caught up in that being in the hometown trying to say hi to friends. I consider myself more of a recluse so maybe I'll try and do that a little bit more this week, getting off property and just trying to stay away from here because this place will wear you out mentally and physically.

Q. You mentioned the hometown aspect. Does it feel any different, that aspect, when kind of the big hometown guy isn't around like he has been the last 28 years in Lefty?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, he pulls a crowd, so it will be -- it's sad to not see him play. I haven't read much on the reason behind him not playing. I know he was playing last week and he's going to defend in Mexico and whatnot. I know he's got a busy schedule. Yeah, I think everyone out here's going to miss him, especially the San Diego fan base.

Q. Can you explain what it's like to be a young golfer crashing on to the Tour, not get overwhelmed by the presence of a Tiger or Rory or Phil, and also what's it like to play four rounds every given weekend against that level of competition? How hard is it as a newbie?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, as a rookie it does feel like crashing a class in college. When you crash a class, you're sitting there staring at a couple hundred kids and you don't have any idea what you're doing. As a rookie, that's exactly how I felt.

Now you just sort of overcome those sort of weird feelings by beating everyone you look up to. I think that's sort of how I've envisioned being comfortable or trying to get more comfortable and I think that's what we'll continue to do. Obviously there's a lot more to it, to beating them in terms of the process to gain points, so I feel like my team and I have done a good job of doing that.

Q. You talk about the zoo, which we've tossed it aside, but there's been a lot of talk

out here about distractions. What specifically are you and your team doing to avoid these kinds of distractions?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Look out at the ocean.

Q. Say again?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I said look out at the ocean, that's a good way to distract yourself from whatever's going on. I think Thursday and Friday will be the most distractions I'll have to deal with in two days than I've ever had to in my whole career. I'll just have to be patient, more patient than normal. Like I said before, playing in front of my friends and fans is sort of what's put more pressure on me to be impatient and to get a little more ticked off than I normally do. I think just trying to have fun is the biggest thing at the end of the day. Just like I said, revive of those old kid mentalities that I used to have coming to Torrey Pines.

Q. Just one follow-up about 2008, did you come the next day to the playoff?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: No. I figured that would be something better to watch on TV. Like I said, this place is a hike. Yeah, maybe I did have school, I don't remember. That old chestnut, huh? School.

Q. Xander, getting back to Phil not being here as a player, maybe in the locker room, what will you miss about Phil not being here as a competitor?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: The roars, I guess. I would say one of the places where Tiger and Phil might get equal roars will be here in San Diego. Phil's a big name and he pulls a huge crowd just like Tiger does. Just the wave of people, I guess. Now that Tiger's playing well again, he'll cover that just fine. Having them both in a field, especially in San Diego, easily gives the tournament a little bit extra, so we'll definitely miss them.

MARK STEVENS: Thanks for your time, everybody. Xander and Lizette both have a little time outside if you want to do a little one on one, and Jason Day will be in in a moment.