

PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE
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XANDER SCHAUFFELE



JACK RYAN: We would like to welcome Xander Schauffele to the interview room here at the 2023 Wells Fargo Championship where Xander is making his fourth start.

Xander, if we can just get an opening comment about being back at Quail Hollow also for the first time since the Presidents Cup.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, always nice to be back to a spot with good memories. It was nice to drive in yesterday. A little bit windier than I remember, but always good thoughts and good feels, especially pulling in.

Yeah, overall good vibes for the week and probably not just for myself but for the rest of the team.

JACK RYAN: Coming into the week No. 21 in FedExCup, you've got four straight top-10s on the PGA TOUR. Just how do you feel the state of your game is coming into this week?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it's getting better. I feel like I've been playing a little bit more solid as of late. Typically just a slow starter trying to adjust for that. But yeah, I usually come in pretty good form throughout the summer, which is usually the thick of our season so that's helpful. Yeah, I'd say with the schedule changing, I guess I need to sort of learn how to play better early on. It's definitely something we're working on.

Q. Any reasons you've identified for being a slow starter or how do you change that?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: You're just peeling off of the offseason, you're sort of -- you're either relaxing, trying to make any physical changes you can in sort of the time frame that we're allowed. Yeah, you're just not golfing as much.

I'd say I'm probably one of those guys that would say he plays better the more he plays almost, but that can go south quickly, too. If you play too much, you get tired and you don't perform at a high level. It's just a little thing every guy out here is trying to fix or solve, sorry.

Q. Xander, how would you describe this course and how would you describe how it fits with your game? I've heard it described as a big ballpark and you've got to move it out there off the tee; is that pretty accurate?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It plays very different with the overseed right now. Yeah, it's got a big championship feel to it no doubt. Just driving in, the clubhouse, the range, the facilities, it's got that big property feel to it.



It's very difficult. It does help to hit it further, probably a bias to that, but yeah, I just remember it being almost impossible -- I always think back to this place being impossible during the PGA when it wasn't overseed, it was all bermuda, the greens were like 16 and chipping was impossible. I think it's probably -- it's still really difficult, but it's probably like a little bit more forgiving now that there's overseed and the grass is green and you can kind of get under the golf ball a little better and spin it some more. Yeah, it's definitely one of those properties where if you're not healthy through the bag, you're not going to play well.

Q. Xander, you're going to turn 30 this fall.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Thanks for the reminder.

Q. I just turned 40, so...

Are you the kind of person who thinks about time passing, about milestone birthdays? Does it mean something to you?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I mean, growing up I think I went to Roberto's for like my 13th birthday so I haven't really been like a big birthday guy, no. Maybe, you know, you kind of -- maybe, I don't know. Once I turn 30 you can ask me that question again, but I'm cherishing my 20s as we speak.

I don't think so. I think you sort of look at your body of work and being 30 doesn't really mean anything. I'd say most golfers are in their prime when they're in their mid 30s. You just have seen enough, you've been through enough that you're just more comfortable, you're more experienced, you're sort of that veteran as we say. I feel like my best golf is in front of me.

Q. That was my followup, if we just put the time at five years, looking five years in the past, in what ways do you feel different, if at all?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I mean, I feel five years older. I can't wake up and just go to the course and just swing like a 22-year-old or 24-year-old for that matter. But I'd say yeah, just a little bit more mature probably.

Q. As A human being and a golfer?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I'd say on and off. I mean, my wife would probably argue the latter, but you just try to be better all around. I definitely try to be as aware as possible of myself and my performance on the course. I don't know if I'm really answering your question, but yeah, I don't really think. I'm more a day-to-day guy versus sort of like a milestone guy.

Q. I didn't get the Roberto's reference. What does that mean?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: That's just like a taco shop. My parents asked me where I want



to go eat and I was like just get me like a carne asada burrito and we'll call it a day. They're like, well, you had that the last three days in a row. I'm like, that's what I like.

Q. Obviously there was going to be some growing pains with designated events, making some tweaks already for next year obviously. How have you thought it's going? Have you been happy with the way it's played out? Anything you would have changed and are you happy with what's going to go on next year?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, everyone's been pretty aware that this would be the year to fight through I guess scheduling. We're no strangers to sort of traveling around a lot and doing things of that nature.

I think it's going as well as it can. I feel like the membership's probably, I don't know if I should say split's the right word. No one likes change, it's just human nature. There was a big change that happened with these elevated events and non-elevated events and things of that nature.

The comforting thing is the Tour's been a lot more transparent and they've also shown that they can make adjustments, so come 2024 we're going to rip through that schedule as well. If it's fluid, it's fluid, if it's not, it's not. The Tour will change again if need be to make a better product for the membership.

Q. It was almost inevitable that some guys, because you're all but required to play the events. Next year you're not, but yet you're probably not going to want to miss them and yet you might have to go to some courses that don't suit you or maybe you don't like as much.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Sure.

Q. Has that happened to you and how do you sort of fight through that part of it?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I'd say the way I look at it is I have to earn my time off and I haven't done that. I'm just not where I'd like to be.

Hilton Head, for example, is not a place that I've historically liked. I've played there four times now with only one solid finish. You just -- the courses you do like that happen to be elevated, just play your butt off because then you can earn some time off and maybe take off a course that you don't like. That's just how I look at it, like I said, I have to earn my time off. I haven't do that, so here I am playing pretty much all of them.

Q. I know the property obviously looks different than it did Presidents Cup and the course is a bit different, but what were some of those kind of images and flashbacks that popped through your head driving in today?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it was more a feeling, like a nostalgic feeling almost. Just



the range being split with the International Team, U.S. Team sides, everything. Like the clubhouse looks the same, the range looks the same. I guess the grass is different. I haven't played nine holes yet, I'm going to go out later today. I'm sure it will come back to me, Sort of maybe not because it was playing really hard during the Presidents Cup and I'm hoping it's a little bit softer than then. Yeah, just more of a vibe or a feel than anything else.

Q. Xander, why do you love golf?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It's different. It's a mental "beep." On my end, a "beep."

Yeah, it really gets you going and it's different every day. I'd say everything that goes along with it, the physios, the range sessions, the coaching, all that stuff feels the same week in and week out. I can see that getting tiresome as you get older, but playing, different. Up against a root, you hit a tree, it goes out of bounds, you hit a cart path, you hit it in the bunker, it plugs in the lip. You're playing outside and there's so many variables that come into play and it's an everlasting challenge that is the mind "beep," as I said earlier.

Q. Speaking of team golf, never too early for the media to ask you about the Ryder Cup.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Sure.

Q. They're playing in Italy this week. Do you ever let your mind drift to that or do you have any thoughts about what's going on later this fall or what you might have to do to make that team?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I mean, yeah, it's definitely on the list of goals, but I really try to be a day-to-day guy, just sort of trying to win the day more than anything else. It will bear its fruit in the end. Yeah.

My mind wanders at times, but I try to sort of lock myself back in. It's really hard to do, but I try to be that way more than anything else.

Q. What's it like when you're a day-to-day guy and you come to a press conference and people are asking you about age 30 and the Ryder Cup? That's the media's thing is like give us the long-term perspective.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Sure, sure, sure, it's pretty normal. Me trying to be day to day is pretty normal and you guys asking questions about something that's going to happen in six months is pretty normal, too. It honestly just feels like another day.

Q. Last week in the NBA there was kind of a viral moment where Giannis talked about failure and losing and how it's not really a failure, it's the grind, it's about building up to winning. You guys, obviously you all lose most of the time. Did you have a reaction to that speech that he gave?



XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I saw the clip. I don't really have any like social media on my phone, but I do have the Apple News and my "For You" page is very sports oriented.

Yeah, I did see what I what he said. I thought it was a very cool perspective. He's an all-star and he's very humble in his approach. I've heard a lot of cool stories about his rise and how he takes care of his family and how he pretty much had nothing. It's no surprise that he sort of has that outlook.

It's definitely a really cool one if you apply it to golf because we are just a bunch of losers at the end of the day with the highest winning percentage player being at like 14 percent or 15 percent, whoever, Tiger, whoever it was in sort of the modern day era is the winning percentage.

Yeah, it's all about perspective at the end of the day and he gave a really cool outlook into how he sees sports.

Q. A little more on what you said about earning your time off. Jack referenced the good stretch you're on of top-20 finishes. What specifically needs to happen with your game to earn your time off?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I mean, to be comfortable out here would be to probably be in the top-5 in FedEx, just pushing forward to secure a lot of things. That means you're playing really good golf. So pretty far away from that, and in my mind if you're in that sort of top bubble, it will allow me to sort of take a week off and feel OK about it. Every time we're not out here competing you feel like you're falling back and that's just the nature of the sport. When I say earn time off or earning it, that's kind of what I'm referring to is I've got to earn that week off or that two weeks off at home that I really want.

Q. Is there a part of your game that you feel needs that more than any other?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: What do you mean?

Q. Like is it driving, putting, short game, approach? Is there a specific part of your game --

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: That needs a little bit of love?

Q. Yeah.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, off the tee's been really bad this year unfortunately. I feel like I've been driving it better since Match Play so the stats probably don't show that because it was match play in New Orleans and it was team event. And Hilton Head is not really a driver's course, it's more of a second shot approach course. I feel like I've been driving it better, the stats just aren't showing it. Obviously trying to address the biggest



issues in my bag and that's probably been it for the year.

Q. You mentioned feeling like you're rounding into form here. Just wondering, do you have a primary swing thought?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It varies, yeah. I'd say we all do. Some guys work really well off cues, some guys have one thought, some guys have sort of like pre-shot routine thoughts.

For me, I feel as of late more likely getting in more of sort of like an athletic posture or stance getting into the ball sets me up for a lot of good things before I even swing. Fortunately, that's not something that I need to worry about while I'm swinging, it's sort of like getting set before. That's probably been my swing thought I'd say for a bit of time.

Q. Lastly, with this being Mental Health Month, I'm wondering what role mental health plays in your game and if there's anything you do off the course that maybe helps you find success in that area.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I didn't know it was Mental Health Month. I guess they have months for everything now.

Yeah, that's cool. Yeah, I know I probably -- you've heard me say strokes gained add to, things of that nature. I'm always trying to work on half empty, half full, try to take the half full approach, try to be positive off the course because it'll bleed on the course. Like we referred to earlier, golf's a game of a bunch of losers since only one guy wins and you've got to find perspective on that.

Yeah, there isn't a whole lot of sort of dopamine kick when you're losing tournaments every week, so you've got to find it elsewhere and staying positive is definitely one way to sort of stay mentally healthy.

JACK RYAN: Thank you, Xander. Best of luck this week.

