

PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE  
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**XANDER SCHAUFFELE**

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**MODERATOR:** Afternoon, everyone. We're going to get things started. We're joined here with World No. 6 and 10-time PGA TOUR winner Xander Schauffele.

Xander, welcome. You're a San Diego native. What's it like to be back and making your season debut?

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** Yeah, it's always nice to be back. The weather is showing out finally. Feel like we've had a couple cold San Diego Farmers tournaments, so it's nice to be back here with good weather. And a strong field. I think, talked to Marty, he's pretty happy with the turnout, so good to be back.

**MODERATOR:** Last time we saw you, you won in your last start in Japan at the Baycurrent Classic. What have you been up to in the offseason as a new father and how's your game feeling?

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** Yeah, it felt like a lifetime ago. It's been, yeah, a lot of my wife and I grinding. Having a baby is real life. Been enjoying that. Took advantage of my offseason just to be a dad. It's good to get back in the swing of things.

**Q. How long does it take you to get back in the swing of things? Like what's your daddy-hood and offseason and in terms of working again?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** I mean, just depends on, you know, I think carrying a kid, I'm learning like just so slowly, you get like dad shoulder, neck's all messed up, you know what I mean? Stuff just happens when you're holding like a 15-pound, 20-pound bowling ball all day. I can't imagine how my wife feels, to be honest. Yeah, straighten that out. That was a little bit of a learning curve there.

I think if I can play enough -- I've been trying to play like as many 18-hole matches just at home with friends or other pros in town just to kind of sharpen up, just to get something in the veins going just because it's been quite some time. Even before Japan, I missed East Lake, had the little one, played the Ryder Cup. I was like kind of shocked with how well I played, to be completely honest, and had Japan and I played no golf in the last six months it feels like.

**Q. (No microphone.) Do you play at least once a week?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** I think I played, I don't know, at least eight to 10 rounds since I've been back in San Diego, 18-hole matches just with whoever, whoever's willing to play with

me.

**Q. Beat any of them?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** Some of them, yeah, yeah. Thanks, Doug. Tone's a big thing, huh? Appreciate you.

**Q. What do you make the Brooks Koepka being back?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** Yeah. I mean, it's good. I mean, I don't know Brooks like crazy well, but I've always gotten along with him. I think he wanted to be back and I think the Tour found a way to pave a path for himself and a few others.

I haven't seen him or spoken with him yet, but I'm sure I'll see him either tomorrow or throughout the week back on the full circuit.

I think it helps our Tour. Yeah, I mean, I said this -- someone asked me this question during one of my TGL matches, I said it really just depends on who you're asking and sort of how you're looking at it, but from my shoes, I feel fortunate to be kind of where I'm at and it helps, it helps bolster the Tour. It's not going to make the Tour weaker having a five-time major just want to come back and play.

**Q. Does it feel like you're coming off a win because it's been such a long layoff since then or does it feel like you're starting from scratch again?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** It feels like I'm starting from scratch. The win kind of -- I thought I did a lot of things really well that week and kind of got in the right mindset even though I was a bit rusty golf-wise. Definitely learned some things that week about sort of the mentality and sort of how focused of an approach I can actually have throughout a week of golf.

Yeah, I'm going to play a lot of golf coming up here in the next two months. The hope and my goal is sort of tap back into some of that focus.

**Q. Xander, there's been a lot of talk recently about the change in the PGA TOUR schedule possibly as soon as next year and where events might fit in. As a San Diego guy with this event being one that's kind of up in the air on its future, what are your thoughts on keeping this event somewhere in the schedule and how important it is to have this event in San Diego?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** Yeah, I mean, biased obviously, born and raised in San Diego and was running around here when I was a teenager in high school.

I think I would feel like Torrey's safe if you kind of look at the schedule just from it should find a home just because this property's iconic. It's a beautiful property, it's a big property, it's a

tough golf course, and it usually has pretty good winners on it.

I think Tiger single-handedly has made this property incredibly special in terms of a history in golf, just tying back to the '08 U.S. Open. You look at pretty golf courses that we have on Tour, I'd say Torrey's one of them.

I wouldn't be shocked if it was somewhere on the schedule. I couldn't answer when or who would want to be a sponsor or something of that nature, but I think it's a strong enough course and a big enough course, a championship course to be on the schedule still.

**Q. And coming off of a longer offseason like you just did, are you a fan of a schedule that's may be a little bit more condensed than it has been in the past?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** You know, I'm a kind of keep your head down guy. I try not to think too much about all that stuff that's happening.

I think the greater powers are going to kind of figure out what this needs to look like and if I can support that product and be entertaining, I'm going to try and do that. But for the most part, I'm no good when, you know, I stick my head above water too long to try and think about all the stuff that's happening on Tour. I just want to play really good golf.

**Q. That was going to be part of my question. Do you feel like you have much say or that -- not just you, Xander, but Tour players in general, do you think that you guys have much say at this point in how things are going to shake out or is it all about this competition committee and you guys trusting them, I guess?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** I think it's I think a little bit more checks and balances are in place in terms of governance. I think player directors have -- they have to vote on stuff that happens, you know what I mean? I don't think the Tour can just -- we are the Tour, so I don't think stuff will just happen anymore like it used to. I think it's a little bit more of a slower process. which isn't the worst thing. Obviously in terms of scheduling and with sponsors, there's so much stuff that goes into having just a single event let alone a whole season. Then you tie international stuff, domestic, everything, it becomes a little tricky.

I think things are a little bit slower than they used to be in terms of getting something big done. If something big does happen, I think everyone agreed on it.

**Q. And are you of the mind that the Tour kind of needs this kind of more featured events and more stars together at a time? Have you felt that way?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** I don't know. I'm not -- I'm not -- I would need someone to -- I haven't sat with anyone that's presented to me -- you know, the last time I saw the average age of who watches golf, it was a little bit on the older side. So obviously other sports are trending a lot lower and I think we are trending lower as well.

I haven't had anyone sort of show me exactly what it could look like and why. It would just be me airing out for, you know, something I haven't even thought about, to be completely honest.

**Q. After -- I'm guessing you would say last year was mildly disappointing, if anything, coming off the year that you had before. Obviously you had injury to fight through. But how big does that make that win at the end of the year for no other reason than you're not going to get asked about not winning and you come into this year at least coming off of that with something to build on?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** Yeah, I think it -- that was one of my goals. I knew we were going to have a kid or had a kid, and obviously I'm going to take advantage and spend as much time with him and my wife. It was a big goal of mine to play well.

So I just know myself, if I didn't play well in Japan, I would have been super pumped to be there and be present obviously but at the same time something would have been just scratching at the back of my head of just like you suck, you know what I mean? You've got to play a lot better.

I think it was a bad year obviously, but that definitely made my offseason a lot more enjoyable.

**Q. Do you feel that you kind of got some of the things rectified that kept you from having a better year or is it a little more complicated than that?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** I mean, I don't think it's very complicated. I think I made it very complicated, which is why I didn't play well.

It's been a big goal of mine to communicate -- I think I'm a good communicator, I just ask for a lot from the people on my team. You know, it was communicated now to, you know, bottle feed me, if anything. Don't turn the faucet wide open. Just give me a little bit of information once in a while and just let me go.

I'll ask a lot of questions, want to know why things are bad, all these things, and sometimes it's good just to sort of shut up and listen to some good advice and let that be it.

**Q. Xander, I wanted to ask you about a couple of guys from your school. If I had told you last year that J.J. was going to almost win THE PLAYERS, win the U.S. Open, be on the Ryder Cup team with you and you would come here this year with one spot between you and in the world rankings, what do you think you would have said?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** Not surprised, honestly. I think J.J. would be the -- everyone you talked to that knew J.J., everyone loves J.J. and everyone would always rave about how good he is. There's a lot of guys that are like that out here, but until you sort of prove it to yourself in big spots, sometimes you don't get that opportunity but he did and I think he

obviously proved it to himself and every one else. You just grow exponentially quicker than, you know, it may take someone five to seven years to do what he just did and he got that confidence kick overnight.

Obviously took him a while to get there, but he's got a good team around here. Yeah, he's an awesome player. He always was. He just needed just a little bit of confidence, made winning the U.S. Open look pretty easy .

**Q. What have you seen from Justin Hastings?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** I mean, consistent. I think he's played -- he's coming off a pretty solid finish on the Korn Ferry, I believe. He was really just a solid player in college. I think he's actually, he played even better as a pro.

Sometimes it kind of happens that way where college golf just, the timing of things, the preparation for things kind of aren't what you would want them to be, and when you become a pro, it's more stressful but you can have your team or your preparation however you want it to be and that can kind of help guys excel.

I don't know Justin all too well. I know he's a super nice guy, I've spoken with him a few times, but I think it's pretty cool they were able to give him an exemption this week.

**Q. Should they have put him in a group with you and J.J.?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** What's that?

**Q. I know how things work out here, but would you have liked to have seen the three of you --**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** I wouldn't have been surprised. My caddie was saying he thought that could have been a pretty cool group just with three Aztecs. But Harry's obviously a pretty good dude and so is J.J., so I'm pumped to play with those guys.

**Q. Do you feel in your position as one of the game's top players, do you have a responsibility back to the game, and if you do, what is it?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** Yeah, I feel like I do. I feel it's given me so much, whether it's financial or feeling whole. Obviously you have to earn a lot of it, but to play any sport for a living and to be appreciated by others is, I don't know, it's pretty darn cool.

So yeah, I mean, in terms of giving back, I mean, just -- what?

**Q. What does that mean to you?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** I haven't really sat and thought about it, but off the rip here --

**Q. You're sitting down.**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** Yeah, I mean. OK. Man --

**MODERATOR:** Good to be back, huh?

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** -- we've got to pull his credential, huh? See if I can use all my powers for that one.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** Yeah, it would be. For everybody in the room? I get it. Thought he could hide there in that white sweater, huh? Aloha, Doug.

Giving back would be I feel pretty -- I mean, I'm not young anymore on Tour, but I feel youngish, you know. Not when I see some of these younger kids rip it. But anything along the lines of, which I feel like I'm OK at, taking my time to sign autographs for other kids; taking my time to, you know, it can be a lot at times but just I don't know, being nice to everyone that's on property, volunteers, things of that nature. That's kind of what I feel right now.

And then as I get older, some sort of charitable work, just giving back. I love giving back to junior golfers and things of that nature, kids who aren't privileged enough to play golf.

**Q. And then one other thing, not to make you think too hard, but your attitude on or toward international play, going overseas to play, what exactly is that? I was trying to look at your record. I mean, Japan's kind of like a hometown event for you, but Germany, I think you've done Dubai. I feel like there was another one in there. Do you like to get out, and frankly, does having Victor change that going forward?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** I mean, it will. I'm dreading the day he'll send me a video saying, why are you leaving, or telling me that in person and then sending me a video like are you coming home tomorrow and I'm gone for like three weeks, you know what I mean?

I was just talking to somebody else who told me his kid just sent him that. The kid's like, I'll see you tomorrow, and he was like, I'll be home in three weeks, kid.

How do you explain that to a 3-year-old? It happens. It's part of having a kid. Luckily I've got an awesome wife that will let him know that I'm not going to be back. It's part of the job, honestly.

I think international golf is important and there are big markets outside of the U.S. that appreciate and love golf. If it makes sense, then leadership will identify that and which location to play and we'll go play international golf.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** Yeah, PGA TOUR is a U.S. product but, you know, I think at most we've had four or five international events in our schedule of used to be like 44 events or something like that. I'm not sure how many events we have now, but I could see a little bit more of an international swing at some point.

**Q. Is there anything pre-round you do that's unique that you do every single time before you tee it up?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** I mean, nothing that I do seems very unique, to be honest.

**Q. Nothing different than any of the other guys when you kind of look around?**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** I mean, we all eat, we all warm up, we all putt, then we chip, or chip then putt, then hit balls, then have our caddie yell at us to get to the first tee. That's kind of what every one of my mornings look like, yeah.

**Q. All right.**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** All right.

**MODERATOR:** Perfect. That's all the questions we have, Xander. Thank you for the time.

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** Cool, thanks. What's that, Doug?

**Q. (No microphone.)**

**XANDER SCHAUFFELE:** Yeah. You like that one, huh?