

# RBC Heritage

Tuesday, April 16, 2019

## Xander Schauffele

### Press Conference



EMILY TILLO: I'd like to welcome Xander Schauffele here into the interview room here at the RBC Heritage.

Welcome back. Your second time playing the RBC Heritage. So just provide some comments on this week and what you're most looking forward to apart from trying to get that third win this season.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it's good to be here, it's very relaxing and almost feels like home, sort of a San Diego vibe, everyone is in a good mood and the sun's up and it's Kid's Day, it's a bit hectic out on the course, but it's awesome seeing a bunch of kids smiling and everyone seems to be sort of jolly.

EMILY TILLO: As you take a few minutes in the past few days to reflect on Tiger's incredible win. Obviously you grew up watching him play and now you're competing against him. What do you think that win does for the game of golf and just for sports in general?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It's tremendous for our game, no doubt. It was such a cool moment. I just use the word "throw back" a lot, just watching him win in the mock turtleneck, the red on Sunday, the crowds. It's what I grew up watching on TV and it was cool to be a part of the whole scene there at Augusta on the back nine nod.

EMILY TILLO: Now we're halfway through the season, home stretch coming up. Anything changing in your game plan from the beginning of the season as we approach the FedExCup playoffs and make that final run.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I don't think so, I'm just going to do kind of what I've been doing. I think it always helps -- I've been sort of playing decent golf. I've been sort of finishing middle of the pack for quite a few months and it was sort of nice to make a splash once again.

**Q. Your mood on Sunday when we talked to you after the final round was pretty clear, you were just very pleased and very happy. Now that you've had some time to reflect, did you watch any parts of the final round at all and maybe what have you taken from that final round that you think you can use in the future?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it was just experience,

honestly. I was in a good mood just because on 16 I hit the wrong club. I laughed with my caddie because I had no idea what the putt was doing. I just went off memory with Tiger's chip coming all the way around, obviously hit the putt way too hard. Made a good 6-footer on 16. 17 I hit the fairway, which I was supposed to do. And hit the wrong club again.

So the winds are really tricky out at Augusta and with the situation I wouldn't say -- I maybe played a little too defensive at the moment and knowing that everyone is going to come in with some birdies.

18 I struggled off the tee on 18 every day. So for me to go bunker to bunker and make par, I feel like I didn't give anything away, you know? And I wasn't sitting there missing 8-footers for birdie on 16, 17 and 18. I didn't give myself those looks.

For the future just sort of put that in the memory bank and sort of learn. Also being on property it will help me with the winds and how the ball reacts on property, it will help. Just a lot of positives to take away from the past week.

**Q. This is your third full season on Tour, so you've obviously done really well. As you're getting further along in your career, is there anything about the PGA Tour that maybe you found more of a struggle or more difficult than you expected it to be? You hear a lot about the good side of Tour life; maybe the other side?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Trying to get me to say something negative? Honestly, no, I think everything -- I can't think of anything negative, to be completely honest. I think we're treated like royalty every week, our lives are made very easy. The Tour and everyone has their own sort of surrounding casts. We're just here to play golf. And everyone else sort of handles most of the noise in the background. It sort of seems to be the same picture with every team I've seen out here. Everyone puts everything in place for us to compete and play at our highest level.

**Q. If I can go back to Rex's question, did you get a chance to watch the replay at all?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: A little bit. I had to fly out and when I got home I was -- me personally I wanted to see Tiger's press conference after, just to see how

he was and just -- I always like to watch and see what people say after they win. I didn't get to see that but I saw a few clips of golf but nothing too much.

**Q. Did you see anything, any shots that surprised you, that you weren't aware of or anything that caught your eye?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: From the final round?

**Q. Yes, that you hadn't seen because you were busy playing?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Not really. The crowds are pretty vocal out on the course, so we sort of knew what was happening when people put the score up on the leaderboard or if someone made a birdie or whatnot.

**Q. You flew home before you came here?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: No, no, I flew into Hilton Head that night.

**Q. If you don't mind me asking, you talked about being on that Masters stage on Sunday. What was it like to be in that and also what was it like to be in that with Tiger? They're kind of two different things.**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it was -- it was like a dream. I've said it before and it really was. It's only my second Masters and I definitely jumped into that scene a little faster than I thought I would, to be completely honest. It's a property where Tiger said himself it definitely helps to know where to miss it. And there were a lot of different pins that people haven't seen in the past just because the greens were a bit softer.

And for Tiger to be -- he creates the atmosphere. So every bit of the Masters that I watched growing up was always with him in it or in the hunt and he just creates this environment with the fans and the crowds that are just -- they're unmatched.

So for him to do what he did, put a little extra pressure on everyone else and for me to enjoy that chase at the end was really cool.

**Q. What does it take to win on a course like Harbour Town? And is your game at the level right now you think it's a possibility you could be looking at the trophy on Sunday?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I wouldn't show up to a property that I don't think I could win at. I think my game suits a lot of different style of courses. This property historically suits sort of a shorter hitter that's very precise, putts well and wedges it pretty well. You can sneak a few extra drivers off the tee, but you don't really have to.

I played today and the greens are really firm. There's a

ton of run out. And I'm assuming it's only going to get a bit firmer. You have to be very precise and you have to make a lot of good decisions off the tee.

**Q. I apologize for not knowing how many times you've played in this tournament.**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It's my second time.

**Q. And the first time you did how well?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Okay through Thursday and Friday. I think I finished middle of the pack. Nothing too crazy.

**Q. Is this one a learning experience just like some of the other courses that you've gone to? You're three years into this. There are going to be courses that you've never seen before, you play a new event or something like that. How does it one compare to some of the other ones? This is better suited to you than East Lake or than PLAYERS Championship or what do you think is your kind of course?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I would say it's not. This is not really the type of course that I'm supposed to play well at statistically. I think this year my stats are a little more well-rounded versus my first two years, which is a good thing for this property. But typically I've played well at sort of bigger, more open golf courses where you have to hit your driver pretty far and pretty straight. So this course sort of takes my weapon, I'd say, out of my hands.

But I'd like to think I'm a pretty good putter, so I told my caddie, I think this is a really good week to sort of test our game and see how we stand amongst the best.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, yeah, for sure. It's a comfort thing. It's definitely a comfort thing. Being on property for the second time and sort of knowing -- even my caddie, my caddie is a way better caddie than he was last year. I looked at his notes this year and we both sort of chuckled. I remember, I don't get mad often, but I got mad at him last year, he gave me the wrong club off the tee. Usually I don't really care, but we're starting to think of things there. And this year his notes and everything, he's on top of it, so I'm looking forward to the week.

**Q. You mentioned off the top that this course, this city, has a bit of a hometown feel to you. Do you remember going back, your first PGA Tour event that you attended, either as a fan, as kid or played in, is there anything that sticks out?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Going to Torrey Pines. I grew up in San Diego, so the Farmers or the Buick was always out there. I snuck out a few times when I had

access to a ticket. I remember watching Tiger make a putt in '08. I was standing by a tree that was no longer there, it got taken down by the storm. I watched that putt live.

Yeah, I just remember being a kid everything seems bigger than real life with the stands and the crowds and people going nuts. That's kind of what I remember about PGA events.

**Q. Is there anyone that you've played with, maybe like a young kid or anything, that you've been surprised by how talented they are or that you've seen, wow, this kid is going to be something, he just needs more experience? Or did I put you on the spot again?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: No, not really. I wouldn't call myself a loner, but I didn't really play with too many kids growing up. I didn't play in all the big AJGA tournaments, I sort of stuck to local tournament stuff. You always knew who was going to be pretty good and who was going to make it.

**Q. I meant more like in practice rounds this year or last year, since you've gotten on the Tour?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: More on the PGA Tour?

**Q. Yes.**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: If you're out here, you definitely have earned your right and everyone is pretty good out here. Everyone can do everything really well. And I think any guy out on the PGA Tour is capable of shooting a 63 this week. So it's kind of a tricky question.

**Q. With nine top-25 finishes this season, two being victories, what is your take on how this season has been different for you?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Just the comfort level. I started off the year strong, which is something I've never done. I've always been sort of a come-from-behind kid. I still look at myself like that. For me to get those two wins early and sort of be up on the top of the FedExCup, I've never done that before. Even my career as a junior, amateur and pro, I've always been slower to start and stronger to finish. I'm pretty excited for this year, if that all holds true, since I got off to a hot start.

**Q. Last week you were kind of under the radar. Do you like being under the radar or more in the spotlight?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I just grew up under the radar. I honestly don't really care. I think when Tiger is playing well everyone is under the radar, that's just what he does. And I have no problem with that.

**Q. On this course what club are you going to hit to 9? Have you ever tried to drive it? You're probably long enough to get there, but it's dangerous to do that, so just curious on that one?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, if it's downwind. I just played No. 9. So if the pin is back right I'll hit driver. If it's sort front, middle right, I will not hit driver. Just because I have to hit over that mound. Usually when you hit driver the play is hit in the bunker. Any middle left pin I'll probably hit driver, as well. It really depends on the wind. If it's downwind I'll probably always hit driver, because if it changes, it's sort of splashing out of that middle bunker. I think it's 307 to land in it. Going downwind that ball isn't really going to get stopped by much.

**Q. And on 18, does driver hit you through the fairway and into the marsh and stuff?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah. Last year it was downwind and we almost hit 3-wood into the marsh. I have a driving iron in the bag this week that we might have to utilize on that hole if it gets really windy, but usually it's just a 3-wood.

**Q. If you don't mind going back to the Masters for one more shot, tell me about one shot last week, a positive shot that is the one that's going to stick in your mind for quite a while or one shot you're going to remember?**

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Man, I don't know. I mean the last putt I hit was nice. It was sort of -- I was sitting there and it was another putt I never had. But it was a lot of people have hit and I've watched on TV. It is a tricky putt. Like Brooks sort of -- his putt -- Brooks and Tiger had a similar putt and Brooks tailed it off, and Tiger had a similar line, just slightly off. It's a really tricky hole to putt to because of all the breaks around it. I was proud of making that putt, sort of putting a nice note on the end of the week. I think I would have been a little more bitter right now if I would have missed that one.

EMILY TILLO: We appreciate your time. Good luck this week. Have fun.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Thank you.