

Travelers Championship

Tuesday, June 23, 2020

Bryson DeChambeau

Press Conference



TRAVELERS
CHAMPIONSHIP



THE MODERATOR: I'd like to welcome in Bryson DeChambeau to our virtual press conference here at the Travelers Championship. You're coming off a T8 at the RBC Heritage last week and you're going for your sixth consecutive top-10 finish of the season. Can you talk about the confidence in your game right now and what has allowed you to play so well.

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Well, I think my golf swing, the ability to repeat motion has increased over the past year, and even through quarantine as I gained speed, I figured out some cool little things that allowed me to repeat motion a little more consistently. It doesn't mean it happens all the time, but it's definitely been a lot more lately.

Q. I just wonder, how do you characterize these two weeks because you've been knocking on the door for two straight weeks here. Obviously haven't crossed the line you want to cross, but where is this on the level of positive, and I have a follow-up question after this.

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Well, I think this golf course suits me a little bit better. I can use the length to my advantage on the front nine and there's a couple holes on the back nine I can do the same. It was pumping into the wind today on 12, I still got it down the hill over the bunkers. 13, I hit driver, 5-iron in. And so for me -- well, on 15 I hit hybrid. 17, I tried to go for the green out here. I got it over when I achieved 198-mile-an-hour ball speed, but it's just not worth it. But it was fun trying to attempt to do things that I just never thought were possible.

Q. The first two weeks have been pretty challenging with your added length because of the fact that it's been so tight and with doglegs and whatnot. Do you feel is it a little more liberating out here as you just played this practice round, for kind of letting it go a little bit?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Yeah, I definitely feel like I can let it go a lot more. Like I said, on 17, I just thought I'd give it a go and give it a rip, and I was able to get it over after like three or four tries. But it's not worth it, obviously. I'd have to achieve 200- to 205-mile-an-hour ball speed every time to be able to hit it over with that wind. So I'm still going to play it normally. But it's fun attempting to do things that I've never done before, and having iron shots into holes that just didn't even make

sense to me a year ago, there's no way I could do that. So it's a different golf course for me this year. I feel like it suits me pretty well, and hopefully I can take advantage of those holes that I can hit it really far on.

Q. What's your level of confidence that you're going to turn one of these into a win at some point? Obviously the last few weeks you've been there.

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Yeah, I'm just going to keep giving myself chances. I play it as a numbers game. I keep giving myself opportunities, it's eventually going to happen. And shoot, if it doesn't, it doesn't. I'm obviously not doing something right at that point, so I've got to figure out how to be more consistent in whatever it is that's going to allow me to get over that edge. But right now I'm just playing a numbers game trying to be the casino.

Q. Everyone is asking you about your driving, rightfully so, but I'm actually curious about your putting because in the space of one off-season a few years ago you jumped from 145th on TOUR to 32nd, and you've kept it there in that vicinity. It's sort of this amazing breakthrough, and I'm just curious what went into that change from your perspective? What did you begin working on? What was the shift that you underwent that you decided I need to sort of solve this problem and then you did?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Yeah, so it was a lot of understanding how to launch the ball off the green, and we used some devices that allowed me to understand how to get the ball rolling in a better way, and then going to arm lock really helped me control my starting lines a lot more consistently than any other method that I've ever used. So that combination. Also hitting my putts two feet past the hole, not trying to die in it, those three things just allowed me to reach this new level and gain this confidence, and I guess you could say this sensitivity to error that's in this higher level where I just feel like I'm less sensitive to error, and it just allows me to be more consistent over the course of time. So it's been those three things, and the SIK putter has helped a lot, the DLT technology, having a really stiff shaft, LAGP, obviously I've got the big shaft in it now, and we're just still trying to improve it and make it more stable, more consistent so it comes on line every single time the way I want.



Q. I'm just asking about a lot of guys had an option and a chance to play one of their early starts as a pro or even as an amateur at the Travelers. I know it was further in for you but you are one of those young guns they've given a chance in the past and they continue to do so. Could you talk about in general getting those early chances and what that means to a young guy's career?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: It's massive. I don't know if I'd be here without those starts. I obviously wouldn't. I mean, getting those seven starts or however many starts I got allowed me to get to the Web.com finals immediately, and that was massive. I went and won my first Web.com event, and the rest is history from there.

But having that start, that little jump start I guess you could say, not having to qualify, not having to Monday qualify through those qualifiers was big for me to be able to have a consistent opportunity out here. It allowed me to gain more knowledge, more understanding about what to do, how the weekend feels, getting to meet my heroes and go, okay, they're just people, let's just play. Just getting comfortable out here was a big deal, and those seven starts were instrumental in my success.

Q. The idea of picking a potential young up-and-coming star, do you think it's a good future thing for the TOUR itself?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Absolutely. It's definitely a way to keep it young, first off, and I'd also say give it to kids that are willing to try and be the best. You look at their career and you look -- or you look at what they've done, and you go, okay, these guys have succeeded in this amount of events. Let's give this guy an exemption because he deserves it. Not because of some play on -- there's a bunch of other things that happened, obviously, that I won't talk about, but give a kid that's willing to work hard, willing to try and be the best that opportunity, that was me growing up, and I can't thank everyone that gave me an exemption enough because I wouldn't be here without them.

Q. Bryson, we've seen the hours you've put in on the golf course, and I'm guessing it's probably just a tiny fraction of what you actually do. My question is are you -- not that you're worried, but how do you prevent burnout? I'm talking about short-term. It's got to be tiresome.

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Burnout for me is when I don't have anything else more to learn in the game of golf, and I don't think that's going to happen anytime soon. The reason why people get burned out is because they don't feel like they have in the hope to go forward or keep going forward or there's no inspiration for them to keep moving forward. I still have not

reached No. 1 in the world, I still have not won a major. I hope to achieve those goals soon. When those goals hit, does that mean I'm going to give up? No, not at all. There's still a lot more room for improvement. For me, I want to try and be -- that's, again, why I went on this journey of hitting it far because it did get boring for me for a little while, and I said, you know what, I need to make it interesting; I need to spice things up for myself. I was able to do that in the off-season and then during the quarantine. That prevented me from getting tired of the game. Definitely people have talked about that to me, but for me, when I stop learning is the day I'll obviously burn out I feel like.

Q. When people have talked about Tiger changing his swing four times after winning majors, I get a sense you can relate to that.

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Well, I haven't won a major yet, but --

Q. Except for that part, yeah.

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: But yes, I've won five times. I've changed my golf swing somewhat dramatically from a swing speed perspective. I've retained most of the alignments that I have in my golf swing, so you can still see faint images of when I was younger of what I used to do. Look, it's always a pursuit to get better, and I feel like I understand why Tiger kind of did what he did because he always wanted to be better. He just did, and that's him. He's such a competitive guy and wants to kick the crap out of everybody, that I think he wanted to spice things up and see if he could get even better. That's what I'm trying to do. Whether it plays out or not, I don't know, I'm just giving it my best.

Q. Simple question for you: What are your goals for this season?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: My goals, for sure I want to get to over 195 at least one time on TOUR. I think that would be pretty cool, for ball speed. I'd also say winning a major, winning multiple times this season, having a chance to win the FedExCup. Those are all goals that everybody aspires to, but for me, at the end of the day, I'm just going to try to do my absolute best every single day. That's what I've said from day one, and I'll stick to it, but there are long-term goals out there for sure.

Q. I know with the single length clubs you thought that might be something revolutionary, and it really -- I don't think it has achieved what you thought would happen --

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Well, that's your perspective.

Q. Right. You know, you're still the only one on TOUR using them --

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Yeah, absolutely. Well, look, here's the reason. I personally think everybody that's on TOUR has had great success using what they've done, building their game with their clubs, totally cool. I don't think that I foresee one-length clubs changing -- being consistent on the PGA TOUR for a little while. The reason I say that is it's going to take a generational shift. You're going to have to give these clubs to kids and they'll experience how much easier it is to start out that way and to play the game in that manner. If you give them variable length clubs after that, they're going to be like what am I doing, why am I playing with these different clubs. But because it's been the social norm for so long, it's just -- this is the bleed-out on the TOUR. This is what you see. It's a result of that.

So it's going to take 20, 30 years before you see a lot more people having success with it that are playing on TOUR and staying on TOUR.

Q. But how about with what you've done with your body? Do you think a lot of players, there will be a lot of copycats who starts trying to do what you've done to gain speed and distance?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: I'm sure there will be people trying to do it. I'm not one to speak in another person's space. I can only speak for myself. And when I say that I'm going to keep pushing the limits, I'm going to keep doing that. I'm going to see how far, how fast I can get and how straight I can hit it. As a result of what I've done, I think it'll affect some people. I still think at the end of the day, people are going to be like, I just want to play my own game, do my own thing and do my best with it. I think a result 10, 20 years down the road, 100 percent there's going to be a lot of people that are hitting it close to 400 yards, there's no doubt.

Q. Do you plan to play both weeks at Muirfield?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Not right now. I just plan to play the Memorial, the second week, as of right now.

Q. Just wondering your thoughts on how they could make the place look different or be a little different from week to week.

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: That's a great question. I do not know that answer. I'm sorry. I wish I could give you an answer there.

Q. I'm curious if over the years, I know you were just mentioning that you've changed your swing around a lot, but have you ever had one swing thought that you found yourself continuing to go back to over time, something that's kind of worked for you? I know you talk a lot about end range of motion stuff, how it relates to that.

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Yeah, and I didn't come up with that stuff until later, until the past couple years. But

one of the things that's been consistent throughout my career has been this ulnar deviation or unhinging sort of thing. I've always believed in that. I just felt like I could square the face way easier that way. There's a lot of physics that does prove that to be true. But that's been my biggest thing in life is trying to reduce variables, and I felt like this was a big one, the ulnar deviation, being able to control the radius of the club and where it's at in the course of the ground. So I just feel like I've been really good with that.

THE MODERATOR: Bryson, what are your thoughts on the PGA TOUR honoring the front-line and healthcare workers through the caddie bib program?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Well, it's amazing what they're doing. They are the people that have allowed us to play out here, and we are grateful to have them, and I've had a couple the past couple weeks and read through them, and last week Mrs. Keller had six years of service, and that's certainly inspirational. I haven't even been out here for six years. So definitely an inspiration every week, and I get to read over it and play for them. It's pretty cool.

Q. I think it was Hogan, and you would know, who once said, Every day you don't spend practicing, someone else is getting better.

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: That's right.

Q. So in the early stages of the pandemic, did you find yourself checking other states' state-at-home orders to see if anyone had an edge over you?

BRYSON DECHAMBEAU: Well, I wasn't checking other states, but I knew that if I could start working out my body every single day, I'd be better the next day, and other people would be behind. I knew that people -- not everybody was working out every single day, and I thought that if I could do that every single day through quarantine, I'd come back a different person, and I did, and I hope that it's given me an edge. I think it's given me an edge. I'm going to keep continuing to work out every day and just see where it leads me. But for sure that's one of my favorite quotes in life. Every day you aren't practicing is another day somebody else is getting better than you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for your time, Bryson, and good luck this week.