

Travelers Championship

Wednesday, June 19, 2019

Bubba Watson

Press Conference



TRAVELERS
CHAMPIONSHIP



THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Bubba Watson into the interview room. Three-time champion at the Travelers Championship, seeking to join Billy Casper as the only four-time winner here. Bubba, welcome back to TPC River Highlands. If we can get some comments on being here.

BUBBA WATSON: Yeah, thanks for having me. I love coming here. Gosh, first time I got out to see the course it was raining all day yesterday so I didn't go and hit some balls like some of the guys did. Going out and seeing the course, it's in perfect shape. Couldn't ask for better.

We started at 7:00 this morning. Golf course held up to the rain pretty good, so hopefully no more rain and the water gets out of here. The golf course is in perfect shape. Looking forward to it and the pairing I got. Learn from the young guys and watch them play some good golf.

THE MODERATOR: You have quickly become a legend in these parts. Anybody that has a candy named after them. Talk a little about Bubba Sweet Spot that's on site this week.

BUBBA WATSON: Yeah, it's one of those things where Travelers and the guys, they said, Hey, what about doing this, putting up a candy shop? I said, As long as it's for charity I'm all for it. So that's what we came up with. They took the colors, the scheme of my candy shop back in Pensacola. What an honor and privilege to have a little taste of Pensacola here. We love sugar obviously in Pensacola.

But, no, what an honor and thrill and privilege to have a title sponsor like this, Travelers, come to me and want me to be part of it and show a little love in the fan kid zone. I guess I'm a kid at heart, so it works out.

THE MODERATOR: And it's perfectly healthy, right?

BUBBA WATSON: Yeah, for sure.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Has this ever happened? What's the charity?

BUBBA WATSON: For me, yes, first pop-up store I've ever been a part of. People have called about franchising my candy shop, but we've never let

anybody or do anything like that yet. We're still learning the business ourself.

But, yeah, obviously the charity, it's whatever they choose. It's Travelers, so whatever they -- obviously I have a heart for Hole in the Wall Gang Camp. Why would I not want to support that? I guess sugar is the wrong way to support it, I guess -- or a good way. Whatever.

Q. Phil was joking that having won twice and you having won three times it's clearly a left-handers' course. Clearly that's not the case, but is there any truth...

BUBBA WATSON: Isn't he right-handed but he plays left-handed?

Q. Yeah.

BUBBA WATSON: He's faking it. He's not left-handed.

Q. Is there anything to that? Any sightlines, any holes feel better because you're a lefty?

BUBBA WATSON: Did he win on this course?

Q. Twice.

BUBBA WATSON: Oh, this course. It was so long ago when he turned pro. I'm not sure if I was born yet.

So, yeah, he was here. If he played here -- without the driving range, huh?

Yeah, so anyway, for me it's just a perfect blend of I can hit shots. I like to cut the ball, so holes lend to a cut driver. For me, the sightlines, the way the rough is, but the course distance. There is about four holes that are very -- get in my head; tough off the tee.

Other than that, it's a pretty generous golf course for me the way I play golf, the way I try to attack the golf course. The rough doesn't scare me, especially after playing the U.S. Open. Always feels like this is no rough at all, right?

So, yeah, works out good for me. The first time I played it, like I've always said, shot 74, 74. I said, I'm never coming back. Glad I came back. Yeah, just one of those things. Fits my eye the more I look at it and the more I see it.

Q. The field for this event has grown just crazy over the last couple years. What is it about this event that's getting these big-name players to show up? Specifically what Travelers has done to enhance the player experience here.

BUBBA WATSON: That's the key. Travelers, before I even won here, they asked me what I wanted, what my caddie wanted, what my family want. Then they also asked before all that what do the fans want? What kind of experience do you want for the fans?

So their process has been far beyond any other tournament that I can think of, a regular tournament with a sponsor. Masters is different than everybody else, right? But Travelers has stepped up, and the golf is the last thing. Let's talk about the golf course after the fact. Let's get all this other stuff right first.

The way they've done that, overtime people have seen it, watched it on TV. No matter how much they say they don't watch golf or whatever, other pros, they do. They hear and they listen and then they see the excited from other players so they come here.

That's what people are seeing, that's what people are doing. In every press conference I've talked about Travelers I've always said, After the U.S. Open why would you not want to come here? It's fun. It's a golf course we can play. I love coming here, and I think more and more people see that and want to come here just because they see the atmosphere.

Then, I mean, the setting on 18 on Sunday. No matter if you're winning or losing, that setting, you can't make that setting. When you get a small town like this with all the people, all the fans around 18 like that, what a great setting for a golf tournament.

People just see that time and time again.

Q. You just mentioned why wouldn't you come after a U.S. Open. Last year a lot of the guys were hesitant about committing because it was a west coast U.S. Open. Are you surprised so many guys got on a plane and traveled across the country to get here?

BUBBA WATSON: Yeah, I mean, it was different, right? I with to Canada first and went over there and came back here; it's been a long trip. It's one of those things where I think when the golf tournament -- it surpasses all that travel. You know what I mean? It surpasses it just because of the sponsor, Travelers, and what they do with the new clubhouse and the membership here giving us the golf course and wanting us to play the golf tournament here.

It's a big deal. Like I was telling him, people see and

feel that and they take the trip. Trip is a little easier now with charters and different things.

Q. Several of your favorite fans over here. What has that meant to you over the years? Anything you would like to say to them while they're here?

BUBBA WATSON: Yeah. For me personally, we're so -- I won't say we. I am the first one to complain on a golf course when I three-putt or hit the ball in the water or miss a cut or whatever, right? When you think about it, how truly blessed I am, my family is. You know, kids mean so much to me because of the adoption of both my kids.

The way I grew up, the way my parents raised me, and then to look over and go to the camp and see these kids, see these families sitting in the lunch room and them singing songs and dancing and singing songs to me and my wife, what a thrill of a lifetime to think about how blessed we are. Why not try to give back?

For me and these kids and the families, it's easy for me to give back. I want to because how lucky am I? I get to play golf for a living and have a candy shop, too. Why not give back and try to help other people?

Q. (Indiscernible.)

BUBBA WATSON: Out there? We were trying to go yesterday, but with all the rain just kind of didn't work out. Went to the science center instead; indoor activity.

Q. We haven't seen a music video from you guys in a while. Got anything in the works?

BUBBA WATSON: The PGA TOUR has caused that to go away, and the reason why is the schedule now. We're not having a break. You know, everybody wants to play golf. Three of the four band members have kids, so for us it's hard to get away. The last video took four days straight away from the house and all of us getting together. Just we just haven't had time. We all would love to do it again.

Q. If the Spice Girls can get back together you guys can probably come up with something.

BUBBA WATSON: They're making a lot more than we are. We can easily get back together.

THE MODERATOR: They're a lot better than you, too.

BUBBA WATSON: No. That's opinion.

THE MODERATOR: Do we have some questions from junior reporters?

Q. What age did you start playing golf?

BUBBA WATSON: I was six years old. My dad wanted me to be a baseball player and my mom said the only

way he can go play golf is if he took his son. My mom was the boss, so I went and played golf. Somehow I loved it, so just kept playing.

Q. What was your longest drive ever?

BUBBA WATSON: Longest drive ever? It was actually -- we had one -- not going to tell that you it went down the cart path, but last week we had one measured out at 455 because it went down the cart path. So last week at Pebble Beach on No. 2. I had 83 yards hole and that hole is over 500 yards, so it was pretty fun to do that -- even though it was cart-path helped.

Before that was it was 427 I think it was hitting it down the fairway on one of the holes.

THE MODERATOR: All right, anything else?

Q. Did I see Angie was in the pro-am today?

BUBBA WATSON: Yeah. She want to play with Chris Daly and with assistant Yukon coach, women's coach, and then she had to back out because of recruiting.

Q. Has she played with you in a pro-am and any side action?

BUBBA WATSON: No. She has played in the Bob Hope. Not sure what it's called now. Played in that a couple times and played in Canada Pro-Am a few times, because that's where she's from. I put her in a few Pro-Ams. Greenbrier Pro-Am. So she's played in a few. Had fun at it.

She's really looking forward to this one because talking basketball. I'm not sure who they filled the spot with, but J.J. Henry, who she's playing with today, said he'll try to loosen her up. She's worried about hitting people. I said, Don't worry about that. I do that all the time. It's totally fine.

Q. Three majors and now another one staring at you three weeks from now. Before the year people were wondering about the condensed schedule. Now that you've experienced it, pluses, minuses? What do you think?

BUBBA WATSON: I love it. I've loved it from the get-go. I think most of us on tour as players, we loved it. The PGA TOUR and Jay Monahan, they love it even more that Mr. Woods won the first one. Made everybody inspired about the game of golf.

Everybody getting ready for the next one, right? I think with a close window from one to the next one to the next one, the championships that we've had in those, but also it's just enough where it's getting out of your mind and then the next one comes. I think it's just a perfect setting for everything, and then end it with the FedExCup it's going to being an amazing run. This

year couldn't ask for better champions.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Best of luck this week.

BUBBA WATSON: Thank you.