

FINAL ROUND INTERVIEW: BILLY ANDRADE
Sunday, November 8, 2015



DAVE SENKO: Well, Billy, thanks for joining us. 6-under 64 today including a birdie on No. 18, you won your third event of the year. Maybe get us started, just share your thoughts on your win here and then we'll get some questions.

BILLY ANDRADE: Well, first of all, having Joe Durant as my partner today was huge. He sent me a text last night, he said "I'm not going to be able to sleep all night" because he's playing with me tomorrow, which is a joke that we have. Just having him there and getting off to a really good start, I almost holed it the first hole, I hit a wedge about like this. Second hole I hit I think a 6-iron about like that, so I was 2 under after two. So here we go, getting off to a good start. Playing with one of your best friends really kept me relaxed.

Birdied 8, hit a 4-iron in that bunker left of the green there and hit a beautiful bunker shot to two feet. No. 9 I hit it in the right rough. I hit a 9-iron over the -- it was a blind shot from 150 yards and hit it to about six feet and made birdie. 10 I hit a wedge to about 20 feet, made birdie. So I was 5 under after 10, I'm rolling. 13, 52-degree sand wedge to 15 feet, make that. And then I'm in the middle of the fairway at 15 with a very easy 89 yards with a 56 degree sand wedge and I just kind of nerved out and I hit this thing and I flipped it instead of held on and took one bounce and hit the rock. How it didn't come out of the rock but it went right in down below. I had to take an unplayable lie and made a bogey.

So then it was a little nervy coming in. 16 I made a nice two-putt from about 40 feet. 17, Joe hit a beautiful 5-iron so I knew I just had to hit a little cut 5-iron and I absolutely just smoked this thing and it went over the green and it hit -- I don't know what it hit, if it hit the rocks, it hit something. It bounced back on the green so it was very fortunate.

Then 18 I hit a 7-iron in there, a beautiful drive, 7-iron to the back fringe and it was like do I chip it, do I belly it. I'm a pretty good belly with a sand wedge and I bellied it and it didn't come out. Now I've got this, I don't know, 12-footer or so, 10-footer, whatever. I knew if I had a chance to win this tournament, I had to make that putt. It was a heck of a putt, it was a great putt. Then I waited.

And yeah, I was thinking when I was driving to the 18th tee that Bernhard won the Schwab Cup, you know? He doesn't need to win this tournament as well. Maybe it should be my turn. (Laughs.) I just thought of that. I'm very excited to be the champion and it's been a hell of a year and I really have embraced this tour, I have enjoyed myself and it really showed this year with my play.

DAVE SENKO: Playoff hole, what did you hit there?

BILLY ANDRADE: I hit a 6-iron, I was like 11 yards longer than I was in regulation and hit a beautiful, beautiful shot.

DAVE SENKO: How far was your third shot?

BILLY ANDRADE: I'm going to say that putt from the back fringe was probably 30 feet. Almost made it. I thought I made it and it just rolled by. Then his putt didn't break, kind of hung out.

DAVE SENKO: A couple feet that last putt?

BILLY ANDRADE: Yeah, two feet. Even you can make that in that situation. I know Tim could. I don't know, maybe.

DAVE SENKO: Did you have an idea where you stood during the day?

BILLY ANDRADE: I really wasn't paying much attention to it. I just knew if I could post a good score, I said that to Dave Marr in my interview yesterday on Golf Channel when I finished: If I can go out tomorrow and post a score and let them chase me and then see what happens. I just felt like on the back nine the weather changed, the wind died down, it was playing much easier than it did for the first nine today and the 18 yesterday. So those 27 played hard. Then going out this morning and shooting 4 under on the front, I knew I was there. I think I looked after nine and saw that I was tied. Then I had to get back into just playing one shot at a time on the back. Then birdieing 10 and birdieing 13, I knew I was right there. Then messing up 15, then I looked again and saw I was still tied or leading, so that gave me a little calmness of sorts coming down the stretch.

Q. Billy, the trend now, and you're an example of it, guys just continue playing right into the Champions Tour whereas a few years ago they kind of semi retire at 42, 3, 4. How is that changing the dynamic of this tour having guys come right off the other tour or other tours?

BILLY ANDRADE: I don't think there's that many that do that. I didn't do it. I quit playing and did TV for three years because I needed a break to get away from the competition because I wasn't playing very well on the last couple years on the regular tour and didn't want to come out here with cobwebs and with baggage. I wanted to come out here fresh. The experiment that I did worked. There are a few guys that have done that, that have gone straight from the PGA TOUR to out here, and some of them have succeeded and a lot of them haven't. You don't know what everyone's passion is for the game. Some guys are tired and they don't want to grind it out out here. A guy like myself, I did a dinner for PricewaterhouseCoopers last night with Russ Cochran. He's an energetic guy, he's been out here and he's had a hell of a career on the Champions Tour. Not as -- maybe better than he did on the regular tour.

So it's a great question you ask and this tour, it's about right now you're going to see more guys coming out in better shape that have taken care of themselves and you're going to see a more athletic group of guys coming out, except John Daly.

Q. Given that, how long did it take for you to feel like you were a top competitor again.

BILLY ANDRADE: Somebody asked me that question after the first round and I felt like my first half of the year, maybe up until where I lost to Freddie in Calgary last year, where I finally felt comfortable that I'm back playing competitively at a high level, it took five, six, seven months for that to happen. So that's from taking three years off full time. Even my fourth year, which when I was 49 I didn't get a chance to play much. So takes a little time to get back in it and get back going, because you know what, out here these guys play great golf. You have to shoot low scores and it's amazing.

My first tournament I played Allianz last year. I played okay, I shot 1 under, birdied the last two holes and I was 11 back. Michael Allen shot 60 and I was like wow, these guys, unbelievable, these guys are really good. So it took me a little time and I feel very comfortable now.

Q. Billy, when you got the break on 17 when the ball hit the rocks and ricocheted back into the green, did you think maybe this is going to be my day when you get a break in that key situation?

BILLY ANDRADE: Absolutely, yeah. I was really hoping to try to make that putt, that would really be awesome. Off the rocks, make the putt and maybe not seal the deal but have a better chance. But yeah, those things have to happen for you to win and sometimes you get bad breaks, you hit a good shot and it turns out bad. Those times you don't win in the situation. So you've got to get a little lucky, everyone knows that. It was a fortunate break for me there, for sure.

Q. Not too many guys would have tried that shot late that in the round.

BILLY ANDRADE: I was just trying to hit a solid 5-iron on 17. Adrenaline I guess kicked in and thin air out here, I don't know, that 5-iron went a hell of a long way so very lucky.

Q. So things got nervy for you as you say. What did you do to handle that and how persistent did you have to be to handle that?

BILLY ANDRADE: You've just got to slow down. I just tried to slow down a little bit, just take a little more time, just breathe. I've been in this situation before. You're going to hit bad shots, I know that. I screwed up 15. Oh, well, life's not going to end, I still have three holes left and see what happened. So I settled back in and was fortunate on 17. But I made a hell of a putt on 18 for the birdie to get to 14 under to put the pressure on Bernhard.

Q. So once you had that thought that all you had to do was slow down, was that the only time you had to deal with it, and from then on in it was --

BILLY ANDRADE: Well, I was on a roll. When you're on a roll, nothing's going wrong, you're birdieing holes. I'm 6 under after 13 holes, everything's on go and all of a sudden you get a blip in the screen here. Yeah, you have to -- you don't want to compound it and make another bogey and then all of a sudden -- now you're on the 17th hole, it's a hard hole and you make a bogey there and you blow the tournament. Just take a little step back. I've played this game long enough to know that and I was fortunate that it worked out.

Q. Two-part question about Bernhard. How impressed are you by what he's done at the age of 58 to win this for the third time and the points race, and does his success at that age tell you keep yourself in shape and play well and do the right things, you can have a long, prosperous career out here?

BILLY ANDRADE: Absolutely. The window in the old days was five years, now the window's 10 years of playing great golf out here. He's 58 and he's still the best that we have and he's a very dedicated player. I just look up to him. He's a Hall of Famer, he's a classy man and I'm just honored to be in his company and to be competing against him. He's a guy I looked up to as a young player. He's a Masters champion. I never won the Masters, so to be able to go head to head with him is an honor and I can't say much more. He's just a great, great man.

Q. Billy, you don't look much older than you did in your 30s. What's the difference between you now and your game and when you won back-to-back at Kemper and Westchester a long, long time ago?

BILLY ANDRADE: That was four years in, Tim. I was 27. I didn't know what I was doing. I didn't know my swing. I didn't know anything about my game really. I was just a good golfer that was blessed and I was athletic. I got in those situations and got lucky and played well at times. I was a streaky player when I was younger. I was never a consistent player, I was very much a yo-yo.

Walking off the 18th green yesterday with Kenny Perry, he said, I'll tell you, Billy, your swing is the best I've ever seen it in my life. When you were younger, you were real loosey. I was very flexible, real loosey at the top. He says you don't have that loosiness anymore and boy I'm so impressed with your swing and your game, you're playing great.

So when you here that from your peers it makes you feel pretty good about your game. I just think as I've gotten older I've learned a little bit more about my swing a little bit and I just don't -- I don't sweat the small stuff. When you're younger you beat yourself up and you go through stretches of playing bad and life's going to end. Out here, this is a mulligan. This is so much fun. Yeah, I'm going to hit bad shots. Who cares? One of those first world problems that I have to have, you know? It's no big deal. I'm going to hit bad shots. You know what, at the end of the year like a year like this, it's all turned out well so it's a part mental and a part knowing a little bit more about my game and my state of being.

Q. Do you still make jumpers from the corner with one foot on the wall throwing it

over the top of the backboard and swishing it like you did?

BILLY ANDRADE: Last week in Newport Beach, the Balboa Beach Club, I stayed there and they had a little health club. I went upstairs and they had a little workout facility and I went through this door and it was a basketball gym and there were 20 basketballs. I went in there and I shot for 15, 20 minutes and I was pathetic. I hadn't shot baskets in a long time, but I could get it back, just takes practice.

Q. Your golf game's not hurting. Finally, I called Jody today and she had two services this morning and one thing tonight. What were you putting her through today and were you thinking of her at all?

BILLY ANDRADE: Yeah, I put her through so much. I put my whole family through so much because of the way I play and going through these -- hitting rocks and all this stuff. I think that they're all ecstatic right now. I'm looking forward to getting on the phone with them all. My wife's in a great place, she's doing great work. She's a Presbyterian minister, so she had a couple services this morning and I guess she's got one tonight. I'll get in touch with her later. It's a great family win for all of us. She's been around so much. You know, she's been there, done that.

Q. So how long did it take you to transform your swing from the real loose thing to where you are now? Did you work with anybody?

BILLY ANDRADE: I worked with Billy Harmon back in the early 2000s but I just -- working with him and his brother a little bit, they've helped me. I just think as you get older, you're less flexible. Maybe it's helped a little bit. That's what Kenny was referring to. I still am pretty flexible but it's helped me as I've gotten older.

Q. So years, this process has taken years to get there?

BILLY ANDRADE: Yeah, yeah. And you've got to do it under the gun, you're got to do it under competition when your heart's beating and all that, not when you're just hitting balls.

Q. For an expert like you to take that long, how many years did it take you to get to that, do you think?

BILLY ANDRADE: I don't know. I took that time off, maybe that helped me mentally and it just kind of put everything in perspective. I don't know. I just like to hear when other players say, you know, wow, your swing looks really great. That just makes me feel like I guess I'm doing something right.

Q. So I was just asking so others might know what their expectations could reasonably be when someone like you takes that long to get it done.

BILLY ANDRADE: Well, you know what? Every time you wake up and you're hoping that

your swing is there. That's why this game of golf is so hard.