

XANDER SCHAUFFELE

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: Good afternoon, everyone. We would like to welcome Xander Schauffele to the ZOZO Championship media center.

Xander, your fifth time here in Japan for the ZOZO Championship. You're just coming off the pro-am, just start off by telling us how the golf course is playing this week.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, one, very happy to be back here in Japan. Sunday morning, I believe, that storm came through and it rained about two, two inches, so the greens are a bit soft, but the sun is drying them out quickly and the course is in great condition.

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: Two top-10s here at the ZOZO Championship, what is it about this golf course here that you really like and fits to your eye?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I think it's really fair. There's four to six I'd say really hard holes on property and the rest of the holes you can kind of manage and make some birdies. But if you can sort of manage and par those really hard holes, you can give yourself a pretty good look at winning.

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: A couple weeks now that you've been off since the Ryder Cup. How's the game feeling coming to the week here?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, played OK at the Ryder Cup, not great, and then I stayed in Italy for about five more nights. Had a quick turnaround in Nevada before I came here, but the game's feeling pretty good.

Q. First of all, welcome back to Japan. I think your result has been really stable this season. What kind of things are you like aware of in your game?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, we try to have a very solid all-around game and I think that helps with consistency week in, week out. Of course, winning is a very important thing and sort of how our careers are judged, and I wasn't able to win, but the season isn't over yet.

Q. A couple of weeks have passed since the Ryder Cup. When you back on it, how do you feel about it?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: We lost. We didn't -- we were able to make it somewhat interesting on Sunday, which was a pretty cool feeling. It felt like the tournament slipped away really early on, and myself and I know the rest of the guys wish we could have sort of

stabilized, you know, settled the ship earlier on just to make it feel like we weren't coming from behind the whole time.

But it was my first time playing a Ryder Cup abroad and the fans are great and I had a lot of fun despite the losing.

Q. Xander, just wanted to ask you, what are your motivations for playing in the fall and what are you hoping to achieve by being here obviously with the new FedExCup setup?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, coming to Japan is pretty simple for me. I have family here and to be able to sort of split the workload and seeing my grandparents is really cool, I wouldn't pass that up for anything.

Of course I'm still chasing a win this season and only have a few opportunities left to get that done. For the most part, it's been nice. I was able to see my grandparents on Sunday when I came in and spent some time with them Monday morning and then back to work. I'm sure I'll see them again as the week goes on.

Q. Your father suggested that Ryder Cup players be paid. Many people think that's probably a fair suggestion. What are the obstacles to having that happen and what do you think the resistance is to it from the public in general? In other words, you guys get paid for everything else, why not this?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: If you look at what he said, I wasn't super fired up that he was speaking to media just because I know how things get twisted. I had to look back at what he said specifically and he specifically said that if the tournament's for-profit, then players should get paid. He also said that if it's charitable -- it should be a charitable event most likely and that everything should get donated.

I don't know, when I look back on what he said, I think the headlines sort of skewed obviously what he was trying to say, but I don't think he ever really spoke directly to what you're referring to in terms of playing getting paid. He just said it should be either or, not really as confusing as it is.

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: Obviously coming back to Japan, you won the Olympic Games gold medal here, do you reflect on that win often?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, being back in Tokyo's special for me and obviously adding the Olympics experience plus the gold medal makes it even more special.

Yeah, I mean, I just have good vibes and good feels and that definitely added to that.

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: Where does that rank in your career?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It's way up there. It kind of gets better as time goes on. I can hear people in Japanese saying, "Oh, there's a gold medalist" when I walk by, so it's pretty cool.

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: And with that being said, how excited are you about the opportunity to go back to Paris?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it's very exciting. First things first, you don't get to sign up for the Olympics, you have to qualify, and as everyone knows, it's extremely hard to qualify and that U.S. team is extremely hard to make as well. I'm just trying to keep my head down and not look too far ahead to Paris. Need to qualify first.

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: Xander, I just found out that your professional debut was actually in Yamanashi in Japan in 2018.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah.

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: What do you remember from that first tournament then and how much have you grown since in the last eight years?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, I shot a pair of 76s or 77s, missed the cut by a landslide. I remember it was more of a traditional Japanese course and Yamanashi's OB stakes going down both sides of the fairway, which was very intimidating being a young pro. It would be intimidating now as a so-called veteran. I definitely was a bit aggressive and I remember hitting a lot of balls OB and just struggling to get my feet grounded playing in my first pro start. I think it's pretty cool I was able to play here in my first professional start.

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: And the Olympic success you had here a couple years back, I guess winning here, winning the ZOZO Championship would be the cherry on the cake.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yeah, it would be awesome for several reasons, but first things first, one day at a time for me.

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: Xander, thanks for the time and all the best this week.