

PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE
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CHANDLER PHILLIPS

MODERATOR: Welcome in Chandler Phillips to the media center here at the Houston Children's Texas Open.

Chandler, how's it feel to, you know, be back home playing in your home event for the first time as a PGA TOUR member?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Yeah, really excited. I have a lot of family and friends out this week and hopefully I can play well enough for them to give them something to cheer about.

MODERATOR: What's different this week compared to kind of the rest of the weeks on Tour for you?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Really the only thing is just having my own truck, not driving a courtesy car. It's kind of the same thing, just another tournament, man. Excited to be here. Not too far from home and ready to get it started this Thursday.

MODERATOR: You're coming off your best finish last week with a T3 at the Valspar Championship, you moved into No. 3 on the Aon Swing 5. What are your thoughts on where your game's at currently and giving yourself an opportunity play yourself into that next Signature Event?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Yeah, I mean, I'm trying not to think about it too much, just trying to do my own thing. If I end up getting into the event, so be it.

Tend to not play as well when I start thinking about the future, so I just kind of go day by day, shot by shot. If I end up there, I end up there.

Q. How did that last week being in contention at the Valspar compare to kind of past experiences in contention, college, Korn Ferry Tour or different levels, and was there anything you were able to draw back on that, even though you didn't win, you had a nice final round, right up there at the end?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Yeah, honestly, I was surprised how comfortable I was, you know. Didn't really like look back on past times I've been in that position, but it was honestly kind of scary how comfortable I was. Nothing really affected me too bad. I made a handful of bogeys on the last day, but it seemed like when I made a bogey, I came back and made a few birdies.

So it was real encouraging how I played in that position. I'm pretty happy with it.



Q. What would you say came together for you last week, or is it just a continuation of progress, or was there a part of your game that's elevated? How would you kind of --

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Yeah, I drove it a lot better last week than I have the beginning of this year and also putted really well. Last week the chipping, I felt like chipped pretty well, but man, that rough last week around the greens, it was pretty dicey. So you could get some lies where it's like you don't know what it's going to do, is it going to come out hot, is it going to come out dead. But everybody had to play it and I did what I could. The driver and the putter really stood out to me.

Q. Did you ever find out what happened to the folks that your golf ball found at Valspar? It really seemed to bother you that it happened. Of course you've got people watching golf, it's going to happen. Everything was OK with them, I hope?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Yeah. Actually, I got a message on Instagram from the guy that I hit and come to find out it was a husband and a wife. He messaged me and told me that they're all good and it happens and everything like that. Probably today I'm going to message him back and see what I can do for him.

You know, I'm just glad they're OK because I think it affected me the way it did just because it didn't look good. The lady that I hit, I think it hit her first and it ricocheted off of her and hit the guy, or the husband. Yeah, I saw some blood and then when you see that, you don't know how bad it is and everything like that. I just wanted to make sure the EMS or trainers could get to her as quick as possible and get her whatever she needed.

It sucks, but it is golf and sometimes it happens, but when it does happen, you hope it's not you, you know? Yeah, he did tell me that they're OK, they're fine.

Q. You're still living in College Station, right?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Sorry?

Q. Where are you living now?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Right now?

Q. Yeah.

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Yeah, I'm living in College Station. I'm from Huntsville, about an hour north of here. Yeah, I went to college at A&M and pretty much never left.

Q. Do you have any history with this golf course? I mean, even before it was a PGA place? Did you ever play Memorial Park as a junior?



CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Yeah, well, I played this course before they redid it. Then since they've redone it, I actually only played it for the grand opening. Giles and Whitey, they contacted me to come play in this grand opening like scramble tournament. That's the only time I've played it, for that.

Q. Any experience you would have had that day probably won't mean a whole lot, this is a different time of year and everything.

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Yeah. To tell you the truth, I couldn't even remember any of the holes, and really today the wind's straight out of the north, the tournament's supposed to be straight out of the south and it's going to be hotter. Really and truly today was kind of pointless on shots and everything.

Q. Learning the course.

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Yeah. Honestly, it was just a good walk, you know? You're not going to be in the same positions, you're not going to have the same shots because it was pretty cold this morning. It's going to be hotter during the tournament and completely different wind. I think it's going to blow pretty good, which I'm excited about because I love wind, I'm from Texas.

Q. Growing up in this neighborhood, right?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Absolutely.

Q. Does it feel like a home event, though?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Yeah, absolutely. It's going to really feel like a home event once Thursday and Friday comes.

Q. Adrenaline starts flowing and you see buddies?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Yeah. I mean, crazy, my adrenaline doesn't really get going. I don't know why, but every now and then maybe for one shot it will get going. I think it's going to feel like a home event once I see, you know, 20, 30 of my family and friends out here just coming out and watching. Hell, there may be more than that, I don't know.

Q. I'm going to steal your question here. It's kind of cool though that this is a course that anybody in Houston can play the rest of the year. Can you reflect on that? Is that probably a better thing for golf where everything's not so hyper-exclusive?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Yeah. I mean, I think I heard it's like 35 bucks if you live -- like you live inside Houston city limits, which Houston's so big you could live 30 minutes from here and you could come play here for 35 bucks.



The course is unreal. Like honestly, me and my caddie, Braden, we were talking about it, it's maybe the best conditioned course we've played all year. Now, not knocking any course that we've played so far, but I mean, there's not a blade of grass out of place out here. It's really good, greens of awesome. Yeah, I'm excited.

I think it's actually going to play a little bit easier. Not that it's an easy course, but it's going to play a little bit easier with the overseed because, you know, down here in Houston, in the south, we've got bermuda and if it was bermuda, I don't want no part of this place.

Q. In what ways do you think it will play kind of easier, like what areas of the course? Off the tee, around the green?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: So like for me this course really doesn't fit me. I'm not a bomber. This is a bomber's paradise. It's really long.

For me there's really not too much rough. There's actually no rough at all, it's almost like a first cut, so every drive this week I'm going to give it all I've got, you know. You don't have to hit it particularly like really straight, you can kind of, you know, have a little leeway on it. But also chipping, chipping off this stuff you're going to have a perfect lie every time. You know, you may be in a bad position and you may be able to get it up and down where if it was bermuda, the closest you could hit it is 30 feet. So that's the way I see it. But who knows.

Q. And you mentioned your caddie, Braden. I know it's a home game kind of from him, too, being from Beaumont. What's it like having him on the bag, someone you've known from high school, and he said first met when you were 8 at a tournament and how that caddie partnership came together and having someone who's such a good player too with you?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Yeah. Hell, he beat me the week before last. I think he beat me two days in a row. I mean, he's great. He's a great player, he's a great friend, great caddie. I mean, I think for me it's just really good to have somebody, you know, that's close, a really good friend. Known him for a long time. We can just talk about anything. We ain't even got to talk about golf, we can just kind of hang out and have a good time. He knows like if I get down on myself or get mad or anything on a golf course, he knows how to get me out of that state of mind. Yeah, it's been great.

Q. And what's his name?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Braden Bailey.

Q. Braden, B-R-A-D --

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: B-R-A-D-E-N.

Q. Braden Bailey?



CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Yes, sir, from Port Neches-Groves over in Beaumont. He actually went to Baylor. Yeah, he went to Baylor, I went to A&M.

After college he moved back home and he didn't have really anybody to play with. You know, when you start playing -- I feel like when you start playing professionally or even in college, it's just like college, you have teammates that you can play with and everybody's helping each other and everything like that, but when he moved back home he didn't really have anybody, you know, I don't want to say like push him, but like just didn't have anybody like to have some competition games or anything like that. So he actually moved to College Station, so he lives in College Station now also. Yeah, it's been great.

Q. What was the course that he beat you at?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Our home course, Traditions in College Station.

Q. And do you know what you shot and what he shot?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: I think he shot like 5 or 6 under and I shot like 3. He took like 50 bucks off of me.

Q. And then I do want to ask, too, I know you played a little junior golf, high school golf with Scottie Scheffler and he's on such a great run right now. Kind of what are your early memories of playing with him and did you notice that talent at the time that has shown now?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Yeah. Scottie's been who he is on and off the golf course that he is right now, he's been that since, I don't know, I mean, I've been playing against him for a long time. Texas has a lot of like -- I wouldn't say a lot, but a handful of like really good junior tours, like TJGT, Legends, and AJGA comes here and everything like that. Played against him there.

Then we had to be in the same like class A of state and played against him for three years. He was a year older than me. He won every year. Then he finally left and I, you know, played well and got to win state after he left. I was kind of glad when he left.

But now I get to play against him out here and it's awesome seeing what he's done, especially when you know Scottie. Like I wouldn't say that me and him are like best friends or anything, but like I've known him for a long time and we talk to each other when we see each other. It's really cool.

Q. And kind of I guess a simple or abstract question, but from your perspective, how is he so good, why is he so good? It's just like unreal ball-striking numbers. What would you say how he is able to do this?



CHANDLER PHILLIPS: Yeah, I don't know. You're asking the wrong person. I mean, he's just an athlete. I mean, I wouldn't say that he's a technical guy, I think he just has unbelievable hands and can feel it around a golf course.

I mean, going back to state in high school, I think it was like my sophomore year, Scottie used to play basketball in high school and he's really good. I remember at state he shows up in almost like a boot, you know. He had an ankle brace on his left ankle like and kind of limping and I'm like, what happened, you know, what's going on? Come to find out he ended up like rolling his ankle, almost broke his ankle I think playing basketball.

He like -- like if that's square of a foot, you know, when you get up to the ball, he cocked it out like way out almost pointing towards where he was hitting because he couldn't like turn on it, and he ends up winning state. I'm just like, man, get out of here, you know?

But no, he's just a freak athlete, he's unbelievable.

Q. So he won state championship did you say three years in a row?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: I think he won four, I think he won it every year.

Q. But you did win the year after?

CHANDLER PHILLIPS: The year after he left, yeah. He finally got out of there. Will.

MODERATOR: Thanks, Chandler. Good luck this week.

