

**ROUND 4 PRESS CONFERENCE**  
**November 17, 2024**



**RAFAEL CAMPOS (-19)**

---

**MODERATOR:** Rafa, I'm not really sure where to start, you've already showed a lot of emotion. Is happiness kind of setting in right now after all the drama?

**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** It truly is. I think it's more relief right now. I got a chance to speak to my entire family, they all FaceTimed me in a group chat. I couldn't even speak like when I was talking to them.

It's relief right now. I know once I get back to the hotel there's going to be a lot of crying once I personally start talking to them.

Just grateful, man. Just extremely grateful to have had this opportunity and especially such an unbelievable week with my daughter. I'm just extremely happy to be a champion and not have to worry about where I'm going to be playing the next couple of years. That was something that was bothering me for the last like six months and ironic how everything just flipped and fortunately I can just go out and enjoy and play golf.

**Q. We'll get to the golf shortly, but you mentioned your daughter, obviously born on Monday.**

**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** On Monday.

**Q. You had to fly in on Thursday, luckily the plane wasn't delayed. Just talk about this whole week and how it's almost like --**

**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** Surreal.

**Q. -- surreal, isn't it?**

**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** It truly -- God has his ways of staying present and actually making sure that we know he's there.

It has been a surreal week. Probably the best day of my life is or was on Monday. Just couldn't believe that my wife did such a great job and we were able to conceive a baby. Yeah, we kind of knew there was a chance I was going to get here and I was very fortunate none of the flights got delayed and was able to get here on property like at 11:30 and I think I had a 12:58 tee time, so plenty of time.

I was just relieved. Like what, I don't care right now, I'm happy, I just want to go out and hit some balls. It felt horrible on the range that Thursday, like whatever. It has been a surreal, surreal week. It was clearly meant to be.



And I've got to say this, like there's a few times God has been present, like very present and this was clearly one of them. There were a couple things that I thought about during the round. One was I remember back years ago I would always pray for some things or write them down. Ironically, like 12 years later I found the note and everything that I wanted came true, but it took 12 years. You don't pray to have things happen like right now and all those things. Ironically, all those things happened. So I knew back then, oh, He's definitely with us.

I've been praying every day the last year, you know, hoping to get a good week, hoping to just give myself some security and today or this week, I just knew he was with me, I knew my family was with me. When I won in 2019 in Abaco, I remember feeling like very calm and there are a couple sun rays that I would look at, like that's kind of weird, I know He's there.

And today it happened, you know. I was extremely calm. When I three-putted 9, I do remember this, when I three-putted 9, when I was walking to 10 I remember when I won in 2019 in Abaco I made a really bad bogey on my 9th hole and I remember switching my mindset and saying like hey, let's just focus on just trying to hit good shots coming in, forget about the score. Ironically, I ended up winning.

So I didn't look at the leaderboard all the way till I got to the 18th green and I kind of had a feeling that it was meant to be. So just unbelievably happy and proud of the way that my caddie and I kind of worked around the course.

**Q. I just want to ask you about three specific questions. The eagle on 7, I think you said you hit 7-iron to like a couple feet, right?**

**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** 7-iron, I wish I had 7-iron on that hole. I had 261 to the hole. I hit a 2-iron. I kind of flared the driver a little bit but it was fine, it was on the fairway. I remember I had 241 to get over a bunker that's like in the middle of the green and I had 261 to the pin. Fortunately, the wind was not helping, which is -- it wasn't hurting, but it wasn't helping. I was only scared if it went over.

That was the first shot on the day that I actually felt nerves, that I put my club behind the ball and I saw it shaking and I'm like, oh, let's just try to commit to a good swing. As soon as I hit it I'm like, man, that's as good as I can hit it. I was really happy that I was able to really make a great swing specifically at that moment.

I didn't know it was like a couple feet from the hole, so that was a turnaround in the round. Very few times -- I think I was more nervous on the shorter putts because of the wind. I didn't really mind the longer putts or 15-, 20-footers, but anytime I got into three-foot range I just saw the ball kind of wanting to wobble and it's like ah, kind of tentative strokes. That was tough today though.

**Q. And that was the second (inaudible) in your round on 14?**



**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** Yes.

**Q. What was your mindset when that happened and how did you reset yourself?**

**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** The second shot on 14 was probably the best shot I hit apart from 7 all day. It was like I committed to a club that I know I wasn't going to get there and I hit a great shot. I was like, oh, 15 feet, perfect, going uphill. I hit it and kind of mishit it so it didn't really go that much. It was only like eight inches. I saw the ball wobble, so I waited until it stopped. Obviously my mind wasn't there, it's unbelievable how you can do those things, and I missed it.

Ironically, I was not angry and that's something that I would pretty much every single time if I do a mistake like that I would be really upset. I kind of took a little break and kind of, you know, went off the green and just kind of told myself like hey, this is golf, it doesn't matter. Obviously it does matter, but I tried to not really put any importance on it because I did hit a good second shot and we still had some really tough holes coming up.

**Q. You mentioned that on the last hole, you come to the last hole, you hit a piercing shot that the ball goes back over the back of the green. How happy were you to see the lie because it looked pretty good.**

**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** Oh, the lie was perfect.

**Q. How difficult was that shot because that was a heck of a shot.**

**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** Thank you. Yeah, so second shot I think was probably one of the best swings I made all day. I remember yesterday hitting a low shot and it ballooned like Justin Lower's did on 18. I'm like, I just want to make sure I keep it under the wind. I hit it so good it obviously penetrated through the wind.

When I got back there, when I didn't hear any claps I'm like, oh, I think I'm a little long. I knew long was not good. I didn't think it was that long. Very fortunate I had a perfect lie, absolutely perfect lie so I can actually spin the ball.

**Once I saw Justin's third shot that was really close to the hole that spun back all the way down I was like, oh, wait, I think I can actually hit it off the green from here.**

To tell the truth, I played it safe, I told my caddie I'm just going left, I'm going to try to hit the fringe with some spin and just play it left, I don't care. And man, it came out great, it came out with a lot of spin. It landed exactly where -- it's funny how things work. Like you visualize shots, you kind of want it to land there. All of a sudden you hit it and it lands 10 feet off that line. It landed exactly where I felt it had to land for it to stop and it had a lot of spin.



How hard was that shot? Now that I think about it -- at that moment you're not thinking of much, you're like let's just try to execute a shot, but I think that shot was close to nine out of 10 difficulty-wise for me and especially in that situation.

So extremely grateful to have hit a great shot at that moment. I was still nervous on that three-footer. I know I still have a two-shot lead or whatnot, but I'll just top it.

**Q. (Inaudible) from champions on the PGA TOUR (inaudible) like a good champion last year was Camilo.**

**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** Yes.

**Q. You came into the PGA TOUR this year the last guy on the Korn Ferry Tour to get in, No. 30. You come in here with a sense of opportunity, and you mentioned you struggled this season and now you're sitting here as a champion. Did you used to watch the PGA TOUR and say like see these stories and ever think that it would be you?**

**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** Yes, I do watch the PGA TOUR and I always told myself like why do these people who keep having babies keep winning? I'm like, when my wife got pregnant, it's either they already had the baby or just won or wife is pregnant and won. I'm like, God, honey, we've got to start doing something.

It's funny, my game got really bad as soon as I found out I was going to be a father, like extremely bad. Thinking I remember that's something I spoke to my psychologist about and we were trying to figure out why everything has gone so bad the last like six months.

I remember she asked me like, hey, when did it start? I'm like, hey, ironically it started as soon as my wife told me we're pregnant after the Puerto Rico Open. She said, what do you think changed? I said I just know that -- I remember since that day, I'm like now I really want to play well, I want to make money so I can save so I can give her the life -- my mind just completely shifted. I just started focusing on like, man, I want to do as well as I can just to provide for her, which is a great way to think about it, but it completely took me off target. I missed, what, 14 out of the last 15 cuts or something like that.

Yeah, now stories like that do come true apparently. I just can't believe I'm here sitting with you guys and being able to say I'm a PGA Tour champion.

**Q. Rafael, in the past you've been very candid about how tough it is to cope with the pressure of being a professional athlete on Tour. How did you manage that pressure today as this lifelong goal just got closer and closer?**



**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** How did I manage that pressure today. Like I said, it's just different. It was weird today. Like I would normally feel a lot of pressure and know that I would normally not pay attention like the night before of like, OK, who's tied with me and who's like three shots back, what position is that in.

I was embracing the moment. I was actually really looking at like, OK, I know -- like I'm going to be playing and there's a good chance I might have a chance at the end.

But today I honestly did not feel pressure, which is phenomenal. I can't believe it actually truly happened that way. I felt nerves, I definitely felt nerves. I think I've been really fortunate to be in this position before and I really think that all those experiences before and not succeeding actually have helped me.

I think my caddie did a phenomenal job. I think he's equally as -- obviously he's equally as important, but I think this win is definitely because of him as well because he kept on telling me, hey, just stay patient, stay focused. After we missed that short putt on 14, like hey, don't worry about that, we've still got holes to go, let's try to hit some good shots. Kept on reminding me to breathe, kind of focus on my breathing, kind of know where I'm at.

I think it's a factor of everything, to tell you the truth. The support I've had, the job that all the things I've done with the psychologist especially the last five months and just embracing the success and failure. I don't know if I even answered the question.

**Q. Somewhere in there you did, yeah. Speaking of your support system, obviously waiting along 18 green for you to putt out were a lot of the other Latin players on Tour. How much of a community are you guys and what does that support mean to each of you?**

**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** That part means the world to us. We are few Latin guys, but we know how much -- how hard it is, you know, to kind of get your name out there, get your country's name out there and all that.

It's awesome to see Nico, Fabian, all these guys because they know what we struggle and they know that all we want is to try to promote the game of golf as much as possible, especially from Latin America, South America.

It was pretty cool. I kind of knew, I was like close to the lead or in the lead on 16 when I looked right and I see Fabian, Nico. I'm like, oh, crap, you know? I still got -- I've got a couple holes.

But it's awesome because, you know, when Camilo won, when Nico won, we are so happy for them that it's just great to see everybody support each other because we just want everybody to play well and keep, you know, growing the game of golf.

**Q. Puerto Rico is the flag is on your belt.**



**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** Yeah.

**Q. We lost Chi Chi Rodriguez recently. What does this victory mean for Puerto Rico?**

**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** Oh, it's huge. You know, after Chi Chi, obviously Chi Chi was an inspiration for us. I only got to hang out with him very few times, but I know for a fact back home they are celebrating like crazy right now and I can't wait in a week and a half to go back home and be able to sit down with family and friends and celebrate what just happened this week.

But it's huge because we really are trying to promote the game of golf for juniors and amateurs back home as much as possible. There's so much talent back home that I think they just need a little belief that they can make it.

I really think that one of my goals and things I try to do is I try to be not a mentor, I want to be hopefully a role model to the junior golfers back home. I know for a fact this will definitely help them out, for them to realize like, hey, man, he did it, he went through everything, he went through all the stages and all that and he was able to get a trophy on the PGA TOUR.

**All I know is they're celebrating back home, I saw all my family members crying. I know for a fact all my buddies are crying. They won't admit it, but I know for a fact.**

It's huge for Puerto Rico and it's huge for the game of golf on the island. And all I know is we're only going to keep moving forward.

**Q. One last one from me, obviously this win secures your status, you have an invitation -- a probable invitation to the 2025 Masters, \$1.242 million check coming your way, not only a career --**

**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** Jeez.

**Q. -- but also a life-changing win for your family and your newborn daughter. What does that mean to know that this affects not only your career but her young life as well?**

**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** For me, honestly, like I said before, the most important thing for me was job security. That's something we struggle here on the PGA TOUR with because it's so hard to get up here and it's so easy to lose everything.

I've been a pro for 15, 16 years and this year was honestly the first time that I probably would have had zero status anywhere, like if I had not done well this week and kind of



starting back from before PGA Latin America. In the back of my mind I'm like man, it's going to be tough just because I'm older.

I want to provide as much as I can for my family and so money was never a factor in all this. I didn't even -- I honestly had not even realized that I just won a tournament. Like you just saying those things, possible invitation to these things, money, all I wanted was job security, to tell you the truth. That was the only thing in my mind.

Just to be able to know that I have a few years coming up now of not having to worry whether or not I'm in a tournament or not and being able to set a good schedule and kind of mentally prepare myself for all those is just unbelievably huge. That is the most important thing right now for me.

And I just cannot believe that I can go next week to RSM and know that I don't have to worry about having a job coming January. That's the most important thing for me.

**Q. I was going to ask that last question you said about going to RSM. How do you think that week's going to be now given the situation?**

**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** It's going to be enjoyable. I thought about it whether if I won, I would go back home and all that. The truth is I really try to keep my word and commitments, you know, anytime I have one. So I committed myself to RSM, I'm 100 percent going to RSM.

I think I'm going to enjoy it no matter what happens, play good, play bad. I've got to start working with a swing so I can get the ball back up in the air and stop trying to go 10 feet off the ground. No, it's going to be fun. I think I might take Monday and Tuesday -- I mean Monday and Tuesday a little easier, just kind of get back into the rhythm of things.

I remember always thinking about you always visualize yourself winning a tournament, what you would say and all those things. I always saw myself like if I ever get to win a tournament, I just can't wait while they interview me, just say I just want to go back to work.

So I'm actually really looking forward to OK, I've got a job next week, so let me go work. It's going to be a fun week, I think. Really happy.

**Q. You talk about being able to set your schedule. I think back to talking to you at Procure and it was playing from a place of desperation did he say operation really. How different and how nice is it going to be to play from a place of liberation?**

**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** Right now I can't answer that because I have no idea how it really feels. Like I'll step over there next week and just know that I have a -- but it's -- I just can't believe the relief I'll have, you know. Like just knowing that, OK, I can talk to my wife like, hey, honey, we've got a tournament in California, do you want to go to this



one. OK, three weeks later there's a tournament in South Carolina, do you want to go to that.

It will be so nice to just say like, hey, OK, we can set up the schedule with my family and friends and all that and not have to simply like check to see if like, oh, we're first alternate now, we're going to move back three spots, we have to wait to see if somebody else withdraws.

I can't answer that question because I don't know how it feels yet, but I know how I'm looking forward to how it feels though.

**MODERATOR:** Rafa, thanks again. Congratulations on being the 2024 Butterfield Bermuda champion. That's got to be an awesome feeling and good luck to you.

**RAFAEL CAMPOS:** Unbelievable feeling, thank you so much.

