

# The Presidents Cup Media Conference

Tuesday, September 6, 2022

## Cam Davis

Press Conference



**CHUAH CHOO CHIANG:** Thanks for spending some time with us, with the Australian media. Congratulations on earning the captain's pick. How good does it feel to earn your Presidents Cup debut, and is it a phone call you expected from Captain Immelman?

**CAM DAVIS:** It feels awesome to be part of a team I've looked up towards my entire career and before that as a junior golfer. It's something that every Australian, every international player wants to be a part of, especially seeing how big The Ryder Cup is, and still have the opportunity to hopefully be part of a team and turn the tide on the current trend with The Presidents Cup, which has been going the other direction.

But it was a call that I can't say I was expecting. It was a quietly-hopeful-for, and if it a good surprise, then awesome, and otherwise I would have understood why not.

Yeah, I've been playing really consistent golf for the last four months or so now, and to be given an official spot last week from Trevor was unbelievable. I was surrounded by rest of the team. I felt instantly, they all took me in even before I was officially told, and I felt like I was one of the guys.

And yeah, we have all been hacking together at these team dinners as a team, slowly building itself over the last couple of years. It just felt really good to feel like I'm on the same ground as these guys. We are all going to be playing together, and yeah, we all get along great. It's very nice to finally be a part of something like this, and I can't way to take it with both hands.

**CHUAH CHOO CHIANG:** Growing up, what are your earliest memories of the Presidents Cup that sticks in your mind, and what did that do to your in your young career back then?

**CAM DAVIS:** It's pretty hard to single out a particular one, other than I've seen so many highlights of when we got over the line in Royal Melbourne; that's our one win. Just seeing how cool that experience would have been. Obviously at home in Australia on a golf course that I

know, seeing as the Internationals beat the Americans, it's the one shining moment in this competition so far where we're able to get the job done.

I mean, over the years, it's been close but hasn't quite got every over the line. Last time around it was very close as well, so we have got a lot of just, you know, the opportunity to be that team that finally gets it done in the US, it's almost like we are trying to make our own moments now. It's really cool to have the opportunity to do that because, yeah, it would be a massive moment.

Just personally growing up, and not having gotten it done before, watching the International Team, but also to be part of a team like this to get it done, obviously underdogs, it would be an extremely cool moment and I think we are all hungry for that.

**Q. Obviously match play is something you haven't been involved with in a few years but great amateur record, obviously Australian Amateur Champion and Interstate teams matches. How do you tap back into the mindset you take into match play and how different will it be to regular stroke play?**

**CAM DAVIS:** It has been a while since I played like an official match play competition. I actually can think back to the Playoffs last year at the Rocket Mortgage where it was a five-hole match. It felt like match play. It was the first real true match play sort of environment that I had been in in a long time, and I absolutely loved it.

I loved there's one hole at a time because you can be more aggressive. There's less trying to put a round together and more like each individual hole, hey, you're going to beat this guy, and I just love that combination of the freedom to go for it more, and also it's a little more intense being one-on-one as well, and I think that it brings out a lot of the best in me.

I just think it's just an environment that just automatically kicks me into a slightly different gear to what I normally play and I feel like that's still there and I can't wait to see what that's like amongst how many people is going to be out there watching. It's going to be a very cool mix of, I feel



like freedom, as well as -- not intimidation but just it's going to be a really big environment, and I can't wait to see how I stack up against it. I'm thinking that everyone in the team is going to be able to handle that quite well.

**Q. Trevor mentioned in his interview that you were a bit reserved in those initial team meetings, and I guess you maybe sat back and were observing more and getting used to that company. When did you feel comfortable in the company that you're now in? Like the win last year, did it come before that or when did you believe that you are part of that elite world golf situation that you can feel comfortable in now?**

CAM DAVIS: I think winning is a really big step in that. You know, finally beating your peers out there over four days, I feel like I've had the game that just never quite got over the line.

Now actually making that happen was a big moment for me. I got a little too comfortable after that, thinking, okay, I can do this. And the hunger and the drive goes away maybe just a little bit in terms of the preparation required to win a tournament.

I really turned that back around over the last four or five months, and it's led to some really good, consistent golf again. I feel like I'm getting much closer to getting back to where I can get a four-round tournament under my belt and get over the line.

But I would say, actually, just being at the sort of team gathering last week at Quail Hollow, even before I was announced I was there, and everyone there just made me feel so comfortable. A lot of the guys that I've looked up to were all of a sudden treating you as an equal, talking about the golf course and talking through shots. Just being in a dinner environment with them and just having casual conversation. I think actually being a part of the team and knowing you're part of the team, and then mixing with everyone once that's announced, it just brings everybody together, and I just feel so much more comfortable amongst these guys. I feel like they all let me know that they think that I deserve a spot to this team and I feel I have the game to take into this competition and I feel the same about them and I think that mutual sort of respect is a lot more apparent than it normally is when you're competing against everyone, knowing it's going to give you anything because they are almost your enemy out there. They are trying to take that trophy away from you as well.

It's a very cool environment. All the cool memories of being part of a team and work together and bringing the best out of yourselves through that sort of environment is something I can't wait for because I absolutely love it.

**Q. You said that you were hopeful but not expected to have a phone call from Trevor. I'm wondering what the message was from him when he spoke to you and as to why he picked you. Did he explain his reasoning?**

CAM DAVIS: To be honest it was more of a phone call of being part of the team meeting. I wasn't announced. Things were still going up in the air. We didn't know what was going on, but he said, would you be able to come, and I said I would be more than happy to support the team and be there if you need me. It was actually announced at a dinner in our last night there in front of everyone.

It was just really cool to share that moment with everyone. You know, I think he's done a really good job both in front of the entire time but with going up to you individually, as well, explaining why he thinks you deserve to be a part of this team. Like you're trending really well. Your game really suits the golf course. I've been seeing you trend and I've watched you on the range and all the shots that you hit on the range that directly translate to where we're playing; you're on an upward trend.

All those sort of things work together to be something that gives you a real sort of boost in terms of just both how you feel about yourself as a golfer having these guys say positive things but also just a little bit of, I can do this. He's done a really good job of firing everyone up not just as a team but as individuals to get ready for this.

He's definitely been a part of me feeling more comfortable already in this environment and yeah, I'm sure it's just going to keep increasing as we get back together again in a couple of weeks' time.

**Q. You mentioned there that things were a little bit up in the air, and we know what's happened in the past little while in terms of putting this team together. What's your feeling about that and sort of coming in this sort of scenario? I'm sure it doesn't diminish your excitement and enthusiasm at all but given the general mood around the team, and what's happened and who wasn't available?**

CAM DAVIS: To be honest we haven't really talked about it. We knew it was an issue. We knew it was up in the air. But this is what we have. We have a team. We have 12 guys who are hungry and ready to go and to be honest we kind of just didn't let that really get into the team room at all.

It's just we've got 12 guys who really want to be here, 12 guys who are really playing well. And me myself, I know this is an opportunity for myself and those other guys who

have been selected to really push ourselves forward both with our careers and how we feel about ourselves as players.

Yeah, it's just a pretty tumultuous time right now, but I'm just sticking with my plan and my goals and my pathway, and that's led myself to here and now amongst these guys. It's an opportunity for me to take with both hands. So it's all worked out in a way that, yeah, I've got this opportunity that I can't wait for.

**Q. You and Scottie flying the flag, have you had much to do with Scottie while you've been on the PGA TOUR, and was there a message once you were confirmed at the team and what did he say to you?**

CAM DAVIS: I mean, I've known him for quite some time. To be honest I keep to myself quite a lot out on tour. I'm happy to have lunch with guys but I don't really spend too much time mixing with everyone. I'm happy -- I feel like I'm friends with everyone but at the same time kind of keep to myself. So I haven't had a huge amount of conversation with him.

We've had quite a few lunches over the years now but now that we are all part of the team, even before it got announced, because I turned up and kind of showing that I really want to be a part of this team and I'll do whatever I can to help, I think that helps with everyone. Kind of just seeing that I have the drive just like they do.

But yeah, once I got announced, it was just congratulations from everyone. Adam had a few words to say to everyone there at the dinner and a few were directed more in my directions. You know, draw on some past experiences that you had. Winning a playoff to win a tournament out here is an environment and a situation that you can think back to when you're out there and fighting the heat out there in that environment coming up in a couple of weeks.

Definitely a lot of wisdom from him having done this a million times already, going into his 10th. It's cool to have another familiar accent out there to bounce off. It's going to be cool.

**Q. Just thinking back to the 2019 Presidents Cup, it sort of seemed to be a launching pad for Cam Smith on the final day. He beat Justin Thomas who had not lost through this, and was one of the top-ranked players in the world. Do you see this as an opportunity, like a real launching pad for your own career? You talked about feeling like you belong. Do you feel like it could be a bit of a turning point?**

CAM DAVIS: Yeah, there's multiple reasons why. I think testing your game in that environment. Guys can compare a singles match to playing in general a match out there as being more like a final round in a major just in terms of how many people, how many loud it is or every good shot you hit, every poor shot you hit, the reactions you get and just the pressure you feel.

And as someone who has not quite experienced that yet, I think that's a big situation to draw from that you can actually go into with guys having your back, and I think that's a great first introduction to that sort of environment, and guys who have done it before and know how to handle it and can help you along the way.

Yeah, I just feel like there's so many different ways that this can be a help for your career going forward. With a good week here, you can use that to help get over the line in many tournaments to come. I think it's also going to be a driving force once you experience it once; you want to experience it again. You have to keep playing well if you want to be a part of it the next time as well.

Yeah, I just kind of went to experience. I want to bring my best game that I can possibly bring with me to it, and I'd love to see it come out as a successful week because I think we can do it.

It's just going to be a lot of excitement, and, yeah, two weeks feels like it can't come soon enough.

**Q. Just one on Quail Hollow. You said you had your team dinner there, and I guess you played a couple of rounds. Have you played a tournament there and how did you find it? Does it suit your game?**

CAM DAVIS: Yeah, I've played there a couple of times in tournaments the past few years. I never played it with -- they have a different grass. It's overseed when you play it earlier in the year but later in the year it's bermudagrass so it's a different surface. The rough is going to be shorter. It's encouraging hitting a little further. I've been trying to add a bit of length to my game and I feel like it actually suits this place very well. Missing fairways isn't going to be quite as penal as it has been in the past there. It's still going to be difficult, don't get me wrong; I feel like it's going to be a little more geared towards a longer hitter and the majority of the International Team actually has that, I don't think it's going to be playing out of their hands in any way. It's going to be playing firm and fast and very similar to golf back in Australia. I think a few of us already have some experience with that.

Yeah, I can't see why good golf around this place with our team can't lead to a ton of birdies and a lot of pressure on

the other side.

**Q. We know you're a lovely bloke, you're very nice, very kind, can be reserved, you keep to yourself a bit like you mentioned. Have you got some mongrel in you to bring out to take on this very talented American Team? Clearly we'll be underdogs but does that create anything but pressure? Is the pressure on them, and you guys just go out and do your best?**

CAM DAVIS: Yeah, there's always the pressure to perform in front of big crowds and with something big on the line. I always feel like match play bring out a slightly different player in me, a little bit more intense. It's not recklessness. It's just a little more freedom to take on a little more difficult shot if it requires it.

I actually felt like that freedom is something that I struggled to bring out all the time during stroke-play events. But match play; if you go for the shot and it doesn't quite come off, you lose one short hole; You got go to the next hole. You're not making a double. You're not making a quad. You're not losing four shots against the leaders; you're losing one.

And that, I think everyone on the International side can look at that as, you know, added ability to bring out a bit more in their game than they may have ever before. The situation could actually bring out better golf than we've ever played, and even if it is more pressure to perform and try and beat this time, at the same time we are playing in an environment that allows to us free up and go for it. And I think, yeah, everyone on our side is playing good enough golf where if they play with extra freedom and extra positivity going forward with teammates behind you to back you up, I think it's definitely going to create the sort of environment where we get over the line against a side that -- well, we haven't been able to do it in the US yet. It will be cool to be part of a team that can do that, and regardless how it goes, we are all going to come out of this better players for sure.

**Q. Just on that, you're going into No. 1 here. Can you fathom what Adam has done, his 10th cup without a victory. Did you get a sense of how determined he was to be part of a winning side in that speech mentioned?**

CAM DAVIS: He's one of, if not the hungriest guy out there. He's been on the wrong side of it a lot of times. He's more than determined to be a part of the side that gets over the line. I mean, we all look up to someone like that who has been here before. He's able to tell us, you know, if we have had a big sort of situation, experience, what that would compare to in a Presidents Cup.

So it's a little bit easier to prepare mentally for what's coming up. But in terms of the drives and the hunger, that guy is still putting in the work and playing the golf. He's still as hungry as ever and it's great to have everyone on the team, even the guys who have done this many times, feel the hunger and excitement to be out there and the experience.

The competition is obviously a tournament and atmosphere you can't get enough of once you've experienced it once. This is the first of many, but I'd love this first one to go down the way we are all hoping now.

**Q. You and Andrew worked very closely together and quite hard together. Have you had a chat with him about how you go about this week where your own preparations are not really in your control, and how will you go about playing with a teammate and involving someone else in your decision-making given you are, as you say, keep to yourself quite insular in how you go about it all?**

CAM DAVIS: I actually have had this conversation. I've seen articles from caddies about how this week sometimes the caddie/player dynamic gets thrown out the window a bit because there ends up being a lot of player/player communication rather than what you normally do.

I know what's gotten me to this situation. I know the dynamic that has worked best, I think brought out the best golf in me. I think you've just got to keep going with that. I'm not sure what the approach is with everyone.

But I definitely, for myself, I want to keep the work that Andrew and I do the same. I'll let my partner do what he does to hit his best shot if we are in the alternate format or even in the fourball competition. Like you do what you know makes you play the best golf. We are not going to start reading each other's putts when we have never read putts for each other before or anything like that I can't say that happening with me. Yeah, if I want your opinion, for sure, it's great to have another playing mind, like a player's mind to help you out.

But I think working well with Andrew is one of the reasons why I've been able to bring out the golf that I have. He's a massive tool that's really elevated my game and not just the fact that he works super hard but just the way he communicates, as well.

So I want to keep that as normal as possible. That's going to be one of the few things out there that can make each individual shot feel a little bit more like another golf shot without adding too much pressure on is just keeping that

environment the same.

So I can't wait to have him out there with me. I think it going to be really important that I've got someone I really trust on the bag there with me every single shot because I think, yeah, that's definitely going to be one of the reasons playing my best golf is going to have the best chance of happening.

**Q. And just quickly, you mentioned you're more and more comfortable on the PGA TOUR. You won out there and you've played majors. But are you going to allow yourself some time when you're doing this when you're sitting in a room and Geoff Ogilvy and Trevor Immelman are addressing the team and you're with Adam Scott in the room; will you take it all in? I know you are a bit golf nerdy deep down; will you take that time every so often during the week?**

CAM DAVIS: Oh, for sure. I think the entire week I'll be soaking it up as much as possible. It's my first one and it's an environment that I've never been in before. I can't wait to experience every little bit of it, even just arriving there on the Sunday night and just seeing guys for the first time again to wearing the same colors as everyone, experiencing the opening ceremonies and to hear that first tee shot every single moment, I'm going to be taking mental snapshot and keeping that in my brain for the rest of my life. It's something that every player says they never forget and I'm going to try to take this entire week coming up as one big snapshot to take with me. I can't wait. It's going to be so cool and going to be a lot of fun.

**Q. Are you expecting to play with Adam? Did you discuss pairings, and if not, is there someone else within the team that you're friendly with or that you know maybe better than other guys?**

CAM DAVIS: To be honest at this point, not really. I mean, I did play with Sungjae on the Web.com or Korn Ferry Tour when I played out there so I've seen him quite a lot. I've spent more time with him than the majority of other guys. Just got along well with him.

But at the same time, now that we have met up as a team multiple times, to be honest feel confidential with anyone. I mean, no pairings are solidified as of yet. Things always change; can change last minute. So we are not expecting to play with anyone in particular at this time.

But I do know that having seen everyone play and having seen the golf course, there's a million different combinations that could work really well for the entire team each day. So I'm honestly just looking forward to whoever I'm paired with. If it's with Adam, that's great. Hideki,

Christian, anyone on the team, I feel like I can complement their game and bring out the best of both of us.

Yeah, it's going to be cool no matter what, and yeah, I've got no idea what to expect yet.

**Q. You mentioned about distance and your driver. I spoke to Cairn a couple of months ago about the Stack waiting system you've been using but also the driver change. What to you was the big, I guess, difference in getting that extra distance out of your game at the moment?**

CAM DAVIS: Well, using a system like the Stack, I mean, I feel like it unlocks a little bit of an inhibitor in your brain. I've spent so much time since I turned pro slowly losing distance and trying to increase my accuracy by slowly shortening the swing, swinging a little bit smoother. Trying to just make sure I get the ball going straight and to be honest a lot of the time that leads to a steery swing that actually doesn't go much straighter and now it's going a lot shorter.

I think swinging the Stack and just practicing swinging really hard again and just swinging freely and really hard actually just unlocks a little part of your brain that says it's okay to swing hard at the driver. It's something that you're still going to hit the ball and still going to hit it pretty close to the middle of the clubface. You're not losing anything. In fact, I don't think I've actually lost any accuracy because I'm a little freer through the ball instead of steering it.

Yeah, that little bit of extra freedom to hit hard straightaway gained me about five miles an hour. Putting out a driver that equated to a swing like that, that equated to a lot more distance off the tee. I actually think it's worked really well leading into Presidents Cup because it looks like that golf course, the carry I have now is going to be just enough to get over a lot of fairway bunkers that I might have been in six months ago, and every single one of those drivers that you get over that bunker instead of hitting a bunker and a wedge in instead of 8-iron from the back is definitely over the time going to lead to some low scores and closer shots into the green.

I see it as so far since I've been doing that, my play has actually been a lot more consistent, and my driver has been a lot more consistent and leading to some better scores, and hopefully at least some really good golf during a big tournament, namely Presidents Cup. It's been a good power play so far, and I'm definitely going to keep sticking to it.

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: We want to thank all the media for joining us with Cam Davis in your morning. Appreciate

you guys.

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