

# The Presidents Cup

Thursday, September 22, 2022

Charlotte, North Carolina

Quail Hollow Club

## Governor Roy Cooper

Press Conference



GOVERNOR COOPER: An amazing event that's going to attract people from all over the world. It's going to put the city of Charlotte and North Carolina in a showcase, in an international showcase. So I'm glad to be here and excited about everything starting.

**Q. Governor, can you talk a little bit about, obviously, you were here in 2017 for the PGA Championship. We've had many U.S. Opens at Pinehurst. How do you use these weeks for recruiting and promoting the state?**

GOVERNOR COOPER: I think it just shows what a centerpiece we are. I think everybody understands the importance of sports and what an impact economically they can be.

When we look at golf, just golf itself in North Carolina, a direct \$2.3 billion impact and in excess of \$4 billion in indirect impact. So we know that it makes a difference.

When I talk to CEOs, especially across the world, I talk about North Carolina's 520 golf courses. Quail Hollow and Pinehurst and these courses will come up in the conversation.

And when you look at what we have done here with both Men's and Women's U.S. Opens, with USGAs, Golf House at Pinehurst, with the Hall of Fame moving to North Carolina, this Presidents Cup with the Wyndham, with the Wells Fargo Championship, we've just become a centerpiece for golf around the world.

And it affects how people view our state, and I think it makes us more attractive to businesses because we're where it happens. I think business people are drawn to sports, and particularly golf.

So that's an exciting time for all of us.

**Q. Governor, can you talk a little bit about Charlotte's having a moment: The Presidents Cup, a new soccer team, The ACC. Can you talk about why Charlotte**

**particularly seems to be growing in the sports space?**

GOVERNOR COOPER: That win over Chelsea was pretty exciting. I was in the stadium when that happened.

Charlotte has, I think, the ability to be a big city with a community feel. One of the things that I hear from people when they come to Charlotte is it has all of the amenities of urban life, but at the same time people are so welcoming.

I hear the word "nice." That makes a difference to people. And I think that Charlotte can provide anything that any business would need, any sporting team would need. But at the same time, we provide such a welcoming atmosphere that I think that's very positive for us.

**Q. Governor, back in May, when you came to the Speedway and Eric asked you about the sports gambling, it failed by one vote. Were you surprised that it failed by one vote? And then, also, do you expect it to go back up for legislature?**

GOVERNOR COOPER: I was disappointed that it did not pass in the legislature, and I think that there was some confidence that it would, but some last-minute votes changed.

I look forward to the next legislative session where this can be tackled again. I think it's important for us to get out as much as we can on the front edge of this, and not being able to do that, I think, is a detriment to us.

I think economic development-wise, having that in place would be important.

**Q. Would you describe the ride coming in here this morning, entering the club, knowing the experience that we're in for this weekend?**

GOVERNOR COOPER: First, you just gotta love match play in golf. And I think there is an extra excitement about competition with the United States versus the rest of the world. You can see that in the way people are walking, the excitement they had.



I was talking with some of the officials that people were actually waiting to be let in, and they actually ran toward the 1st tee. That kind of excitement is palpable here.

I think that you're going to see that through the entire weekend with President Bush coming and President Clinton coming and maybe even President Biden coming Sunday. I think that just will add to the aura of the event.

**Q. Speaking of President Biden, he said at the Detroit Auto Show, he said the pandemic is over, speaking about big events. Is the pandemic over? Here we are crowded around you maskless.**

GOVERNOR COOPER: Clearly, we are out of the emergency phase here, and we now have effective tools to help us stave off this disease. We have very effective vaccines. We have effective therapeutics. So people now have the tools that they need and the information that they need that we did not have early in the pandemic.

People can make their own decisions about their level of risk and what they're comfortable in doing. I think that's where we are now. It's very important, I'll say right now, to get the new booster with the BA4 and 5 variant, the omicron variant. I've gotten mine. Kristin has gotten hers. I think the last I looked, we had close to 200,000 people in the state have gotten it. Encourage people to do it.

But those decisions are being made by people themselves these days.

**Q. You would say it's not over?**

GOVERNOR COOPER: We're out of the emergency phase. We're going to have to live with COVID for a long time, just like we have with lots of other diseases, but we're out of the emergency phase.

**Q. Did you tell the president he needs to be here?**

GOVERNOR COOPER: I think I should, and he does need to be here. Thanks, guys.

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