

American Century Championship

Thursday, July 9, 2026

Lake Tahoe, Nevada, USA

Edgewood Tahoe

Mardy Fish

Stephen Curry

Joe Pavelski

Press Conference



Q. Steph, can you describe the walk between 17 and 18? It's absolute insanity. And also the young kids, giving you that hat. Can you just describe what that meant to you?

STEPH CURRY: Well, that walk is always great because coming off the energy -- 16, you're coming down, you know what's going to happen on 17. 17 is just a full adrenaline rush, playing that hole and being in front of the fans and the lakeside there.

And the walk is kind of underrated. Good gathering spot. There's a lot of activity going on over there. Fans are awesome, got the Travis Mathew hoop over there, shooting. I enjoy it.

Every day it just keeps getting better and better. And every year it gets better and better.

At the end, right before the 18 tee box, a kid gave me a nice Davidson Wildcat No. 30 custom sombrero. And it's beautiful. And then I turned around -- it's out there. I hit a great tee shot on 18 wearing it. You'll see it.

I turned around and the lady, I guess his grandma who made it, she had one of her own. So it was kind of cool. You never know what's going to happen on that walk.

Q. Steph, you won this three years ago. How challenging has it been to get back to that form and to get back on top?

STEPH CURRY: Well, first it's because of the competition. There's so many great competitors out here. Mardy sitting up here, he's won it twice. Pavelski, who is a stick, he won it last year. He's been close so many times and finally got it done.

I missed it during the Olympics in '24, but coming back, you just have higher expectations now because you've actually won it. And I think that's good. And it's also dangerous because you kind of want to stay composed in the first round and just enjoy yourself and let it come to you.

I have so much fun being in competition with these guys. They bring the best out of you. But more so than just the golf, it's just good camaraderie out here.

You know the guys who have a legitimate shot at it. You kind of want to be there on Sunday just to have a chance because that's what we all kind of play for.

Q. I know Mardy's joked about this, I've got to ask it. Do you have any interest in playing LeBron out here in this golf tournament?

STEPH CURRY: In the golf tournament? Thank you for that. Absolutely.

MARDY FISH: For all his money.

STEPH CURRY: Absolutely. If he can get a jet out here for tomorrow, that would be awesome.

Q. Mardy, I think last year might have been your second worst finish. How motivated are you to redeem yourself after things kind of sputtered away. I seem to remember maybe you looking a little disheveled last year. Are you excited to be able to redeem yourself, maybe?

MARDY FISH: I was just excited I won in 2025. I felt bad for the rest of the competition and I wanted somebody else to win. (Laughter).

And it just so happened to be Joe. He's a great player. He deserved it. But we needed to get him one and then we'll push him away.

No, I didn't play great last year. But I also didn't really care about that. Obviously you want to play well. We all want to play well. We all want to win, 100 percent, no question



about it. And when we get inside the ropes and you start playing, we had an awesome competition that last day in '23.

It was super fun. It was, like, he'd make a birdie on 10. And I'd grab him and make a birdie and say, don't go too far. And obviously the finish was awesome, making that putt and the walk-off and stuff.

So, again, you always want to play well. The whole week is not necessarily about golf. I don't get to see him a lot. We met here. He's a huge tennis fan, I'm sure, but I don't think we'd cross paths a ton. But we have and we've developed an awesome relationship and friendship.

With his whole team, too. He's got awesome people around him, and his pops and brother.

Honestly, that whole group we played in the morning. We usually play on Wednesday. And the group that he's got around him are awesome people as well. And they've become friends, people around him -- Yusuf (phonetic), his barber/bodyguard, in the fedora over there.

And we don't get to see a lot of each other. There's relationships that you've built out here. It's not even just the guys and gals that are playing. It's more the people around, too, the guys that put on the event and stuff. It just becomes a family sort of event. It's super special. It's the best week of the year.

That email that comes through hopefully early in the year, doesn't make you wait that long, but that's the best email all year.

So we really love to come. And we're super thankful to be here. And it's fun. For a couple of days, we feel like pros out there. They put on such an awesome competition. It's not necessarily all about the golf.

Q. Steph, you have famously ranked NBA cities and arenas by their popcorn quality. I'm curious, I'm venturing to guess the clubs sometimes make it on the team charter, perhaps. Are you willing to give me some power rankings of NBA cities to play golf in?

MARDY FISH: Philly.

STEPH CURRY: Philly -- everywhere on the East Coast, since I'm on the West Coast and we only get to go once a year, it's usually in the winter. So it's not -- it's not really favorable for golf. But I go back summertime and visit those regions and play.

New York, Philly, Chicago -- Carolina, Charlotte where I

grew up.

MARDY FISH: Indy is probably pretty good.

STEPH CURRY: I've actually never played there.

MARDY FISH: Wolf Run.

STEPH CURRY: There all on my list.

Oh, the champ is here!

MARDY FISH: Nice of you to show up. (Laughter).

STEPH CURRY: Anywhere I'm going to play golf I'm going to try. LA, obviously, that's where I get to play most of my golf during the year, if it's not at home.

MARDY FISH: Hillcrest Country Club, Bel-Air Country Club.

STEPH CURRY: Great course, terrible host that I have when I go out there. So it's good.

Q. Steph, you've accomplished so many things athletically throughout your career and your life. How would you rank them? Do you have a top three, top four, top five as far as accomplishments?

STEPH CURRY: This is no joke, at my house, I don't have many memorabilia or trophies. I have two trophies that are in my little golf room. One of them was the clutch player of the year, I don't know why that stuck around compared to everything else. But the other one is the trophy that I got here.

So it's the only two that I have visible in my house, so that answers how high that ranked.

But the Olympics was amazing. Championships are great. They're not guaranteed. And anytime you have that experience, it's awesome.

But I've had a blessed career on and off the court. And hopefully I have a few more to experience.

Q. Steph, what is the core of your pitch right now to LeBron, and how legitimately do you think that you are in on this?

STEPH CURRY: I don't have a percentage. It's kind of up to him. I feel like any place he would call and say I want to play there, you'd move mountains to make it happen.

I know we're in that boat as well. So the pitch is, we want

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

to play good basketball, be around people that know how to play the game, hopefully raise our floor on our competitiveness this year. There's good golf in the Bay.

But we're an organization that's been there. He knows that, and that's really self-explanatory. It's just a matter of where he sees himself fitting. At the end of the day, that's up to him.

Q. If it doesn't happen and you guys remain stable, how okay are you with an offseason where you're mostly running it back?

STEPH CURRY: I mean, it's TBD because that's what free agency is about. LeBron is in the situation where the league is waiting. But other than that, it's great to get KP back, it's great to get Mel back. We're in a unique situation, because Jimmy is hurt and Moses is hurt and they're going to miss a good amount of the season. You've got to try to hold the fort down as much as you can until those guys get back, because we do have an idea of who we could be with them. But I know Mike, Steve, Joe, they're doing the best they can to make the right decisions with what's available.

Q. You guys always have kids chasing you around, kids wanting autographs around the golf course. If you could go back to being a kid, for each of you, who would you chase around, which celebrity would you chase around for an autograph, who would you want to meet if you were back to being a kid?

MARDY FISH: I'm from Minnesota. So Minnesota sports. So I'd find Moe Mauer. I'd find Adam Thielen. I'd find Kevin O'Connell. And then Vikings-wise, let's see -- then I'd follow -- these guys would be last -- I'd probably find an actor, maybe like Miles Teller, just to heckle him. Those guys are fine.

JOE PAVELSKI: For me, if I was a kid, I don't have to look too far because my boy's with me, he's younger. Tkachuk brothers, Boldy, hockey guy, that's who you want to go see. That's who he wants to hang out with. He wants a pic with Steph, and maybe Mardy. He's got one already with Mardy.

Q. Michael and A.I., and I was a Vijay Singh guy growing up. I loved Vijay, just watching him play. I'd love to go find a driving range because that's probably where you'd find him beating balls. Exactly. I'd go heckle him on the driving range?

Q. Joe, talk about this being a bucket list type of thing for yourselves, for your friends and families.

JOE PAVELSKI: Bucket list. I remember, it happened in 2014 or '15, I remember saying to Sarah, I was, like, if I ever get invited to that by some chance, just so you know I'm going. I don't care what's going on. So we went to the Finals in '16. Warriors were there, too, I believe. The Bay was buzzing.

Couple weeks before the tournament, J.R. called and said, hey, I think I got you in. Can you make it? I said, yep, don't even need to ask; I'll be there. Then you're just praying for that invite every year because it's incredible. Favorite week of the year.

And then it was always a goal to win and be there. You saw what it meant to guys and the atmosphere and stuff. And to accomplish it last year was special.

MARDY FISH: I remember watching it on TV when I was younger going, like, remembering guys, Al Del Greco. And who is the guy that won like 45 celebrity tournaments?

Q. Rick Rhoden.

MARDY FISH: You're like, Rick Rhoden is the best athlete golfer in the world, that kind of thing. I remembered that. And I remember asking a buddy that kind of knew some people around the tournament if I could play.

The good thing about this place, too, is that they do look for some new guys and some new gals to come out and kind of tend new people or whatever. 2014 was my first one, and I'll never miss one as long as they invite me.

STEPH CURRY: This is kind of full circle for me because I remember my dad played in this back when it was a stroke play event. I can't remember what year. I was a kid loving golf. He's like, I'm going out to Lake Tahoe -- we're living in Charlotte -- I'm like, where is that? He goes and plays that. He had a great time. I don't know if he pissed anybody off; he didn't get invited back for a couple of years.

Then when I got drafted to the Bay, knowing, understanding what this area was and the connection to American Century, then it was kind of, to Mardy's point, to everybody's point, I want that invite. My rookie year I got it and I got to play with Ray Allen and Aaron Rodgers in the first round. I'm like, where am I? To your point, heroes that you got to watch growing up.

Full circle now is it's such an unbelievable family experience with me, my dad, my brother, we look forward to this week. It's our great bonding time because we all live in different places and don't get to see each other that often. And golf is the connection to all of it.



We make the most of this week. It's amazing. Our families being out here. To the point what happens inside the ropes is one thing, but everything else around it is what you remember.

Q. Steph, you and LeBron obviously have one of the best all-time on-court rivalries. How full circle, you got a taste of this in the Olympics, obviously, but how much of a full-circle moment would it be for you to try to win a championship alongside LeBron James, rather than against LeBron James?

STEPH CURRY: Up until probably two or three years ago, it was like a pipe dream question, or even a thought. But that is a part of the allure. Him being going into his 23rd or 24th, I don't know, season, me going into my 18th, the battles that we have, that would be such a unique story in NBA history, sports history.

But a little premature to talk about it other than that.

Q. Steph, I know there was a video or pictures today of Draymond and LeBron together. Have you had a chance to talk to LeBron or do you have plans to reach out to him if you haven't?

STEPH CURRY: Stay out of my personal business. (Laughter).

Q. In terms of age, 38's so young. Golf especially. Where in the NBA it's considered the other end of your career. I think of Connor McGregor fighting this weekend, he's 37. It goes for all three of you on stage, but when you're a competitor, that's part of your soul. I don't think age is a number. Especially in golf, it's a better representation of that. Could you touch on to that drive, watching McGregor compete this weekend, watching you this weekend golf. I think we'll see it again this weekend, that drive in your soul.

STEPH CURRY: Everybody on this stage has accomplished so much in our respective sports and careers. You grind your whole life to be great at what you decided to do and make it to the highest level.

You're right, that spirit never dies. To be able to transfer it to golf is fun. While I'm still playing, it's a nice change of speed, because golf is such a different test mentally than basketball is. But it still taps into the same energy of having expectations, being able to deal with failures, success, the preparation that goes into it and falling in love with the process.

I feel it's going to be a part of my life, hopefully, forever,

and who knows what retirement life looks like, but just even having this ability to come scratch the golf competitive itch while I can is great.

Q. You're probably not surprised by anything anymore. But I was so surprised, especially covering with the Boston Herald, seeing Jaylen Brown get traded. Does anything like that surprise you in the NBA, or at this point, it's a business, and those things happen?

STEPH CURRY: That's what it is. I mean, we all saw what happened to Luka a couple years ago, in the middle of the night, you think you're getting punked by whoever it was that posted it. So the NBA is a wild place. Never should be surprised by anything.

Q. Steph, it's that time of year again. Your brother, your dad, is there a bet this year, if you can share whatever you can?

STEPH CURRY: We did it different this year, which is kind of fun. We're taking our indexes, going to figure out what course rating and all that is, and whatever strokes. I think it's around eight shots I gotta give both of them on the day -- shots -- then we'll take scorecards and create our own Stableford point system based on what they score on each hole. I have to give them eight shots every day. If they make a par on a number one handicap, that turns into a birdie. You give them the extra points. Then we'll tally it up at the end of the day. It's going to be shots-based, not necessarily points-based, if that makes sense.

Q. Who is winning this thing?

MARDY FISH: Joe's winning.

JOE PAVELSKI: Mardy.

STEPH CURRY: I have to say myself. You all picked both of you.

If all of us would say somebody else we'd be lying because we all think we're going to win.

Q. Steph, since I'm from Philly AI means Allen Iverson, so let's talk about practice. How many practice rounds have you gotten in? We were hoping that you would play longer with Golden State this year. You got done in April. How many more practice rounds did you have? How much more comfortable are you with a club in your hand now?

STEPH CURRY: That is one of the bad but also cool benefits of missing the playoffs. I had an extra six weeks

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

that I normally don't have.

I remember Joe was talking about after you retired, it's like a different -- when you have a little bit of time, it does help. Does it mean you're going to go out and play the way you want to? No, but it does give you a boost of confidence that you had a couple of more reps under your belt.

Q. Feel more comfortable?

MARDY FISH: I love seeing him go deep in the playoffs because then he's not playing a lot of golf.

STEPH CURRY: So do 89 other guys.

Q. Joe, 2025 defending champion. You game into this tournament last year with a game face on and a lot of confidence. Looks like it's still there?

JOE PAVELSKI: I guess. Game face -- yeah, it worked out last year. It's one of those times -- going back to being able to play a little bit more -- it really felt like I could get a few reps in and felt comfortable. And knew -- we lost in the playoff, had third-place, fourth-place, seconds, that it was like you get enough close looks, you've got to get something done.

Starting Sunday, go double bogey, single bogey, and I'm kind of thinking to myself --

MARDY FISH: What's a single bogey? I've never heard that before.

JOE PAVELSKI: Double-bogey, bogey.

MARDY FISH: There you go. Nice start, by the way.

JOE PAVELSKI: It was tough. Then found the game and got it going.

It was one of those where you're just -- you have to find a way to get one of those sooner or later. And now having one, I think it does give you a little bit of confidence.

You knew the game was good enough, but you hadn't hit the shots yet or to make the putts to get over the hump. And it's hard out there. You know, three days in that heat with that energy that's out there, and the fans, it's tough. So it was super excited to find that one last year.

Q. You've played a lot of golf together over the years, had some great matches. You're almost co-favorites this year at like 3-to-1, or 2.95-to-1, 2.85-to-1, or whatever it is. We're saying 3-to-1. Deserved?

MARDY FISH: Yeah, I think so. I mean, the last couple winners, and certainly on Joe's side, I mean, I knew going into last year, if it wasn't going to be that year, he was going to win. You have to play well. You can't have one of those days -- there's too many good players -- you can't have one of those bad days where you get 16, 18 points, something like that. It's too far to catch up. There's too many guys and too many good players.

Joe's one, if not the best, player here, and certainly this golf course suits his game really well. Just kind of slapping it around, hitting it sideways and making some putts is what he does best.

Q. What's it like coming back to Edgewood as the defending champion? Do people look at you differently? Do you kind of feel like the man? Anything you've noticed that's different now?

MARDY FISH: That big picture out there.

JOE PAVELSKI: I'm glad we replaced it with a Pavelski picture instead of a Fish one. Check this out, to be honest, the parking pass, you get another 500 yards up here in Lot 1, which I know my crew is pumped about.

MARDY FISH: You don't just valet it?

JOE PAVELSKI: They don't let you down here sometimes.

Few things like that. A little confidence. I think coming in knowing you've won this event and knowing that the game's in a pretty good spot coming into it. It kind of all -- the more you get to play it, you understand the greens a little bit better, how you've had years where you've made putts, some of the shots you've hit.

So it just kind of falls into place a little easier, and I think the extra confidence will definitely help.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports