

BMW Championship

Wednesday, August 21, 2024

Castle Rock, Colorado, USA

Castle Pines Golf Club

Scottie Scheffler

Press Conference



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CHAMPIONSHIP

THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome FedEx leader and World No. 1 Scottie Scheffler to the interview room here at the 2024 BMW Championship. You've had a chance to look at the golf course. I know you played in Colorado before on a Korn Ferry event, but what's your first impression of Castle Pines?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: First impressions are good. Golf course is in great shape. Greens are starting to firm out a little bit.

I think they could get it really firm if they wanted to, it just depends on what happens with those evening thunderstorms you have a tendency to get here. Yeah, golf course is in good shape. I think it'll be a good test. Some of the fairways are pretty generous off the tee but there's some also some other ones where they're pretty tight and the rough is healthy, so I think it'll be a good test this week.

Q. You've played for some pretty big trophies. How would you characterize or categorize the FedExCup in all of that?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I felt like a question I got asked a lot at the Olympics was where does this rank in terms of wins and stuff like that. I have a difficulty kind of choosing. I want to win each tournament that I tee it up in. Being able to win out here is really special anytime you can accomplish that. It's very difficult to win out here on TOUR.

I think the FedExCup is also really challenging to win just because you've got to play really solid golf all year and then you've got to play amazing golf these last three weeks. You can't limp your way into winning the FedExCup.

I think really it's just I think a lot of good competition throughout the year, and it's hard to rate which ones would be better than others.

I just love coming out here and competing, and it's one of the great joys of my life, and it's something that is a lot of

fun for me, and I'm looking forward to doing that in another couple weeks and then defending our Presidents Cup trophy in about a month.

Q. For us regular folk who don't have access to TrackMan and other devices, did you explain what your process is for determining exactly how far your shots are going when you're at altitude?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Do you want me to do it without the TrackMan thing or -- just like a rough percent? You kind of put me in a box there.

Q. Do you hit every single club X number of times, write it down? Are you trying different shots, different heights? How are you going through the process?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, so each week I'm out on TOUR, I typically will check my numbers just to make sure -- I don't ever change the settings on my TrackMan no matter where we are. Teddy has a way that I'm not going to divulge because I think we do a really good job of making sure we're pin high a lot, kind of no matter what the conditions are. That's something that I rely on him pretty heavily for.

So this week he's doing a lot of the math. We have our numbers and how far the ball goes here, and we still have our numbers at home. So we have two ways we're trying to do it, depending on the shot, just to where I know that I can get comfortable with the shot we're trying to hit. So some of that is I have a stock number of what the club goes here, so if my 8-iron goes 165 at home, let's say it'll go like low 180s here, something like that.

We can do it that way or Teddy can do the percentage just based on the time of day. It also changes based on how long the ball is in the air. Uphill shots the ball doesn't have as much time to fly in the air just based on it being uphill, so it'll be a smaller percentage and then downhill it'll be a bigger percentage.

There is a lot of work that goes into it, so it's a pretty big adjustment for us.

Q. You said that winning out here was really tough, but you've managed to do it a few times this year. Is it getting a little bit easier?



SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I wouldn't use the term "easier." I just think -- I was thinking about this the other day. This tournament last year I had a really good final round. I had a couple-shot lead on the back nine, and I think I played the last five or six holes in even par on a very, very difficult golf course and got chased down by Viktor.

This year at THE PLAYERS, for example, there was a couple guys at the end that had a chance to catch me and they didn't. Sometimes the breaks fall your way, and sometimes they don't. This year I feel like at times the breaks have definitely fallen my way. I look at a tournament like THE PLAYERS where I had to come from behind, I look at the Olympics where I had to come from behind. Don't get me wrong; I played great golf on Sunday and put a lot of pressure on those guys, but sometimes players will rise to the occasion and sometimes they'll struggle a little bit, and that's just part of the game. I think a lot of it is just putting yourself in position as much as I can.

I love competing on Sundays with the tournament on the line. It's so much fun. I think about I have so many great memories from this year, being able to finish off tournaments and being able to celebrate and enjoy those wins, and I've been in a great place mentally, but no, I wouldn't say it's easier to win. I would never describe it like that. I think it's extremely challenging to win out here, and I've been fortunate to win a few times this year.

Q. You made some comments last week about how the FedExCup doesn't properly reward the season-long race. Have you thought about what your ideal of this kind of three-week window of these Playoffs might look like or how they might change?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think it's something that we've -- the format has changed pretty significantly since it first came about. You look at some of those early years, I think there was a year Padraig Harrington won two majors and he didn't even qualify for this event because I think the format was like 4,000 points for a playoff win. Now I think it's 2,000 points.

I think there's a balance between identifying the best player over the course of the season and having a good TV product because there would be some years where if you kept the points the same for the entire year and had a true season-long race just based on the FedExCup points, this would be a year where it would not be too exciting of a finish unless Xander was able to win the last three playoff events or something like that.

You have to find the balance between having a good TV

product and also identifying the best player for the season, and right now -- my comments last week, it's not technically a season-long race. Basically the way I would describe it is you have to play solid golf most of the season and then you have to have a really good Playoffs.

It's the FedExCup Playoffs. The winner of the FedExCup played the best for these three weeks in the Playoffs. Some years that would be the best player for the whole year and some years it won't.

Overall, to me, it is what it is, and I'm looking forward to the challenge of being up there on the leaderboard again next week at East Lake. I'll either be -- I don't think I can fall more than to second place. It'll be a good challenge. I'm looking forward to it. I feel like I did my job for the first 95 percent of the year to be in a good position going into East Lake, and we'll see what happens from there.

Q. Do you look at this tournament as anything but a trophy you'd like to win because you're playing this week, or do you look at it in the scheme of the post season?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Well, I think in terms of the season, I've had a good amount of wins, and so --

Q. Seven.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Seven wins, yeah. Well, apparently the Olympics is not an official win, so apparently only six. What was your question again?

Q. Do you look at this as a tournament you'd like to win because it's got history and tradition and you'd like the trophy or do you see it in the scheme of the post season and the road to East Lake, if you will?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: If I was to truly say I want to play my best golf at East Lake, this may have been a week where I would have taken off just because there's so much emphasis on East Lake, and I've never -- I think I kind of figured out this year I don't love playing the week before a major championship, and so with East Lake having so much importance in the season-long race, if I was to truly look at my goal at the beginning of the year is to win East Lake, this would be a week where I would consider maybe taking off, especially with the points lead that I have.

But at the end of the day, I talk about not one trophy being much more important than another. Yeah, I would love to win the FedExCup but I would also love to win this tournament. I've never won a playoff event before, so that would be something that would be really cool to do.



I've had good chances to win them and haven't been able to do it. Also should have a good chance to win next week, starting with the lead.

Overall I love competing and I set my schedule at the beginning of the year to play certain events that I love to play in, and this year was another one of those years. Going into this week I'm excited to play. I love competing. We got the guys that have played the best golf on the PGA TOUR this year here this week, and it should be some good competition.

Q. Can you see if not yourself, someone at the top of the points list skipping an event if it doesn't mean anything? In other words, you not playing Memphis last week, Rory not playing Memphis because you probably won't fall very far and you're trying to pace yourself to the end?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, there's potential for that. To be honest with you, I hadn't really thought about it much just because in my head it was like, we've got the three playoff events, the best players will be there, and those are the events I want to be in and I want to play. You earn your way into these events through great play throughout the year.

Like I said, this week we're playing against the guys that had -- the 50 best guys on the PGA TOUR this year, so it's going to be great competition. It's going to be a lot of fun. That's what I love about this game. I don't play it for money or anything like that. I play it because I love to compete. That's what I'm here for this week is to compete and do my best.

Q. Xander was saying that he got to know you a little bit more at the Olympics, the fact that you guys were on the same team and kind of commuting back and forth to the course and so forth. I was wondering whether you felt like you got to know him a little bit more, and then also, do you remember the first time you ever came across Xander Schauffele and what your impressions were?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Oh, gosh. I barely remember what I did yesterday, so I don't remember the first time we met.

But I will say, playing the team events are so much fun. But when you have 12 guys on a team, you don't spend as much time just because you kind of get put into groups where you might play, and Xander and I have never partnered up in an event before. So with the Olympics being just the four of us and being in Paris, not being in the States, we're kind of in -- not an uncomfortable place but a

place that's new to us so we're all trying to figure it out together. With there only being four of us, you just get to know guys a lot better just because you're spending more time together.

I don't know if I learned, like, a bunch of new stuff about the guys that I'm willing to share out here just because it's more just private stuff, but yeah, I enjoyed getting to know all the guys on the team in Paris. I felt like we had a ton of fun, playing all the practice rounds together, competing, gambling a little bit. Yeah, it was a fun week, I think, for all of us.

Q. You mentioned how hard winning is a couple times during this press conference. When you reflect back on the season, the seven victories, are you at all surprised by your success?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I mean, I don't know if surprised is the word that I would use. But I think I'm very grateful. I've put in a lot of work to get to this point. It's really nice to get some results from that and wins. You look at a year like the year I had last year where it was almost a little bit -- I don't know if underwhelming, but I felt like I could have won a lot more than I did last year, and this year I felt like, yeah, I could have won a little bit more, but I've also won a good amount of tournaments.

It's been a lot of fun having the success and being able to win tournaments is a ton of fun. I'm very grateful for it. Yeah, it's been a pretty fun year overall.

Q. You look at an 8,100 yard course, that's a big thing in and of itself, but doing that at elevation, that's got to be grueling. How are you acclimating to that? How do you think you'll be ready for the challenge that just walking a long course at this elevation will present?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, so the elevation stuff, I think oddly enough, the vacation we went on kind of mid-July or beginning of July, we went to Telluride, which is a little bit higher than here, and the elevation got to me a little bit. So I'm kind of glad I got it out of the way then because I have struggled with it from time to time.

Like Mark said, I played a tournament on the Korn Ferry TOUR here in Colorado and then we also played in Bogota, which is some pretty extreme elevation there in Colombia, and I remember sleeping really bad the first few nights. You have really weird dreams and you wake up in the middle of the night feeling like you can't breathe and just weird stuff. I felt like that experience playing at a little bit higher altitude has kind of helped me adjust to this week. I was working out in the gym yesterday and I was definitely getting out of breath a lot faster than I would at

home, but I feel like I'm doing a good job of getting adjusted, and then the number stuff is something that we've had a system that has worked decent over the past few years, and hoping it continues to work this week.

Q. You mentioned friendly wagers with guys in practice rounds. Could you tell me the go-to format that you have been going with? And are you as dominant there this year as you have been on the course?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: It's funny you ask that. It's usually always a best ball match play just because it's a practice round. You're not -- like if somebody hits it in the water, you're not going to be going back there, like, it crossed here so you've got to actually go back to the tee just because I might make bogey here. It's more just match play.

I played -- Sam and I play a lot of practice rounds together, but he would smoke me at the beginning of the week, just would abuse me. So I started taking him as my partner, and we've been a lot better since I took him as my partner. We'll usually play two-on-two matches or if it's just Sam and me going out, we'll play a little one-on-one match. I think it's a good loose way to start the week.

This week Sam and I played Justin and Max on Monday, and it's just fun. It's a good time with your buddies. The beginning of the weeks are typically more relaxed, and you get to have a good time and cut up and talk a little bit about course strategy and things the guys are working on. It's just a lot more of a relaxed atmosphere to spend time with your buddies. We all love competing and want to beat each other, but at the end of the day it's just fun going out to hang out and just screw around for a couple days.

Q. Billy Horschel when he was in here said that he typically -- some years he hasn't voted in the Player of the Year because it's too hard of a decision. I was wondering if you've ever not voted or felt that way.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I believe I've voted each year. I definitely had the intent to vote every year. I'm typically a poor communicator over the phone, so I'm not going to sit here and say that I definitely voted every year because there's some potential that I thought that I did and didn't do it, kind of like responding to a text.

But yeah, I think I voted every year.

Q. Have you voted for yourself, or is that a weird thing?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, that's a good question. I

don't think I've voted for myself. Maybe I haven't voted in the past couple years when I felt like I had a chance to win. I think maybe I didn't vote then because I don't think I'd vote for myself. But maybe I'll ask the player relations guys and see if I voted the last couple years or not, and they'll tell me if I voted or not. But just thinking of what I would do this year, I think since I'm in the running I probably would just refrain from voting. I think it would be a bit weird to vote for myself.

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