

TOUR Championship

Sunday, September 1, 2024

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

East Lake Golf Club

Scottie Scheffler

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome our 2024 FedExCup champion to the media center. Scottie, you spent 25 weeks at No. 1, the final 25 weeks of the season at No. 1 in our FedExCup standings; longest active streak at the No. 1 spot in TOUR history.

How does that feel to get it done just a few hours ago?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, it feels really nice. Like you said, I've been leading the points list for a long time, so to come in here with a little lead is nice to play the way I did and be able to finish it off the right way.

Q. How do you rank this win? I'm just kidding.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Genius.

Q. I know it's an asterisk, but you technically were leading by seven shots on Thursday. I'm curious how this week, how difficult this week was, given how hard it is to play with big leads, knowing that frankly you could only lose from there. Do you know what I mean by that?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think so. I tried my best to just stay in the present this week, and I feel like I did a really good job of that.

In terms of the lead, it's unusual playing this many rounds of a tournament with a lead, especially a seven-shot lead after the first round is something that I will probably never have at any other tournament besides this one.

So it's definitely a bit of a different feeling. I feel like sometimes this tournament lasts longer than other tournaments. I don't know why. But it just -- like I'm exhausted right now. There's really no other way around it. I'm just really, really tired.

So if my answers are not very good, I'm blaming it on the exhaustion.

Q. Tell us the thought process that you went through

as you walked to the 9th tee and that approach, not only on 9 but 10 and 11 and how you got through that period there.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Well, most of the week I was playing really well. I felt like I was doing a lot of stuff well and I wasn't getting a ton out of it. I had started with a lead and that's why I was still in the lead, only because I started with it.

If it was a regular tournament I think I would have been a couple strokes behind but would have been right in the tournament.

So Teddy did a good job of just reminding me that I was playing well and to continue to do what I was doing. We were still in control of the tournament. I still had a two-shot lead, still in total control, and if I played my best golf on that back nine, then I was going to be most likely holding the trophy. If I went out with a two-stroke lead and played my best, I felt like I was going to win the tournament.

I changed my focus and was able to hit a really nice shot in there into 9 and really changed the momentum of the round.

Q. What happened on that shot out of the bunker?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I shanked it.

Q. Why did you shank it?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: So there's a -- the club, there's this straight part of the face and then over here is the hosel, and on that one specifically I caught too much of that part of the face. That's why it went to the right. It's shaped kind of -- a little curve.

If I hit the straight part it's going to go that way, and then if I hit this part it's going to come towards you.

Q. I know the season just ended, but can you put into words what this year has been like with the birth of your son, a second green jacket, a gold medal, what happened at Valhalla, all in the span of like eight months?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: If you can describe it in words,

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more power to you, because I don't think I can.

It's been a long year. It's been a very fun year. I think emotionally right now I'm pretty drained. So I'm looking forward to going home and getting rest for a week or so before I start prepping for the Presidents Cup because that's a tournament that I really want us to go out there and win.

I really don't know how to put it into words. It's been a very eventful year but it's been really fun. You had the one weird spot there at Valhalla, which -- I just don't really know what to say about it, but everything else has been pretty special.

Q. Not to belabor it, but most golfers have a hard time with the next shot after a shank. That's what you always hear. It's in your head, right, how you're going to hit the next one. Obviously you hit that great tee shot on 9, but still, is that lingering at all, even on that next chip shot that you're hitting -- and when would have been the last time you actually did that? I would think that's pretty rare.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: That actual specific bunker shot, for some reason I need to figure out why, but I shank it a lot more often than I should when I'm on a side slope like that.

Thinking about it on the next shot, not really, because it's a totally different shot. If I had shanked a wedge from the middle of the fairway I'm sure it would have crept in. I remember I had a shank at the Presidents Cup a couple years ago and over the next iron shot you can definitely feel the toe of the club flipping over to make sure it beats the heel there so I don't shank it again.

But this one specifically, since it was a bunker shot, no, it didn't really go into the rest of the game, but if it was a normal wedge shot from the middle of the fairway, then yeah, I think it probably would have been a bit more challenging to overcome.

Q. With this being the final tournament of the season, how does it feel different when you don't win it and how does it feel different when you do win it compared to other tournaments?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Well, I'll keep you posted on what it feels like to win it. I've left here the last couple years being a bit disappointed in terms of -- like you said, it's the last tournament of the year and now that we actually have an off-season -- that's one of the great things about our game, is even though we do lose a lot more often than we win, usually you can come out the next week and try again.

With it being the last tournament of the year, I take a break after this, so there's not much opportunity to kind of get the taste out of your mouth.

This year I'll definitely have a different feeling the next couple days at home being able to win the last tournament, not lose it.

Q. You don't show a lot of emotion on the golf course a lot of times, but what was your mindset after the 7th and 8th holes? Were you aggravated? Were you frustrated? Was there anything Teddy might have said to you?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I was definitely frustrated. Like I said, I've been playing really solid golf the rest of the week. I've been playing really well, and I just happened to have two bad holes in a row, basically. I hadn't really had many bad holes the whole week, and they just happened to come in a row.

Teddy did a good job of reminding me that we're still in control of the tournament, I'm still playing great, just get out and get back to work basically is the speech he kind gave me, is just get back to work, and that's what we did.

Q. What's the best speech Teddy has given you all year?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Well, in terms of freshness, I'd say probably the one after No. 8. You're really challenging me right now having to look in the past. I mean, I don't really have the brain power. I'll probably have to get back to you on that one.

But because it's fresh on my mind, probably the one he gave me walking up 8 tee. Really Teddy give me good speeches all the time. That is why he's such a good caddie. I don't think a day goes by that he is not giving me some pretty decent advice or giving me a good laugh when I need it.

He really is my biggest asset out there on the course, and he's a huge part of the team.

Q. What is it about starting the week with the lead that makes this tournament feel so much longer?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I mean, I guess just starting with the lead.

Q. Tuesday, Wednesday any different than they would be at a normal event?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Not really, but I think playing with a lead, I think can be challenging at times for people mentally. But at the end of the day, two shots for a 72-hole event is not a lot of shots. Like I lost the lead the last hole of the tournament. Technically speaking I wasn't in the lead anymore; I was tied.

And so two shots is really not very much, but I think that is part of the challenge to the format. It's a lot different mentally. It's something that I never would have thought that I needed to prepare for.

When I was a kid I never thought about having starting strokes to start a tournament. I think that aspect definitely makes it feel a bit longer. You're teeing off last. That's a position you always want to be in. But to start the tournament like that is a bit weird.

Q. Was there anything specifically you tried to do this year differently than the previous two years?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Not really. I think I just handled it much better mentally. Like you said, two years ago I had the big lead going into Sunday and wasn't able to get it done, and I lost that lead, I think, pretty early on the front nine and actually played good after that. Just wasn't able to get it done in the end.

Then this year, I think the lead got down to two shots after No. 8, and I just did a good job of really getting back my focus and Teddy gave me the nice speech and I was able to kind of get back into the right frame of mind, and then hit some really nice shots from there on in.

Q. You started working on the putting late last season; you won right away in the Bahamas, but then there was a bit of a lull. When do you feel like the putting really clicked, and how key was that to this week's victory?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I felt like I was kind of gradually building towards something. I had some decent starts to the year. I had a couple top 10s to start and I was close to winning in Phoenix. Then overall I was playing really solid. I knew I was close.

Then I got the hot week at Bay Hill where I was able to kind of improve my putting as the week went on. I switched to the Spider but it wasn't something immediate, where first day I just made everything. It was one of those deals where I had to give it the full chance because it's different than the putter I've used pretty much my whole life.

I gave it a good chance that week and was able to improve as the week went on. Had the big finish on Sunday, and

then I made a lot of putts this year when I really needed to.

I think of the putt to win Memorial, I think of some of the putts I made over the week at THE PLAYERS and the putts I made on the back nine Sunday at the Olympics. I made some putts this year when I really needed to, and that's why I'm sitting here with a lot of wins instead of a few.

Last year I was playing good golf and I wasn't able to make the key putts at the right time, and this year I was. That's really just the difference.

Q. Seven wins; that's a Tiger Woods type season. What does it mean to you?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, it's great. Still don't understand why the Olympics doesn't count. That's a bit weird to me. I think that's part of the greed that goes on in your brain is you say seven, I'm like, I won eight. I won the Olympics in the middle of the year, and for some reason it doesn't count as an official PGA TOUR win. It counts the same as -- no offense to the Hero -- but it counts the same as the Hero World Challenge in the grand scheme of things.

But overall, it's been a great year. I'm proud of the results. It's something I try not to focus too much on, but at the end of the day, being able to win tournaments is a great feeling, and it's what we work towards, and to be able to have as many wins as I have this year is really special.

Q. This post season doesn't always define a great season, as you know. If you were being honest, was there any part of you that gnawed at you that you hadn't won this yet?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, if I'm going to be honest with myself, yeah, it definitely did. I've been the Player of the Year for the TOUR the last two years and I haven't left with this trophy. It definitely, I think, leaves a bad taste in your mouth at the end of the year, especially when I start with the lead.

Granted, it's not a huge lead, but you're starting the tournament ahead of people. You should win the tournament if I'm starting ahead of people. That's how I feel. So maybe the last couple years I've put too much pressure on myself to perform or whatever it is, but this year I did a good job of just staying in it mentally and keeping my head down and just had a really good week and was able to finish it off the right way.

Q. As much as you talk about staying in the present, can you keep your head down and still raise a level of



determination to get it done?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think so. I think last week was a good kind of re-learning experience for me to just keep my head on straight. Last week my attitude was not great, and that's a thing that's been my greatest strength this year has been my attitude.

My whole team reminded me of that after the week, and I'm like, listen, guys, I know I was not in a great mood last week, wasn't in a good place.

So this week my goal to start the week was just to have the right attitude and use what I feel like is my best strength, and that's my mind. That's what Teddy reminded me of at the beginning of the week, and that was really just the thing that I focused on the most was just staying in it mentally, and it paid off.

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