

THE PLAYERS Championship

Thursday, March 14, 2024

Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, USA

TPC Sawgrass

Scottie Scheffler

Quick Quotes

Q. Pretty good round of golf. Would you agree? 12 of the 14 fairways, missed three greens, and it looked pretty workmanlike.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, it felt fairly stress free. I had the really good par there on 18. Outside of the start I played a lot of really good golf. It's nice to only have one bogey around this place and hopefully continue to do more of that the next few days.

Q. What were your thoughts going to the first tee as the defending champion and looking at the scores? They were pretty good early on.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, well, I knew the scores were going to be fairly low today. The golf course is pretty soft, and we had an unusually low winds, I'd say, for TPC Sawgrass, and the scores obviously reflected that. You can't really force it around this place, like I've said a bunch of times, you really can't. It was nice bouncing back after the rough start and just playing a really good round of golf.

Q. The scores were low, but is this course ever easy?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I would say that no, this golf course is probably never easy. There may be a few easy holes here and there, but overall I think it's a pretty challenging place to play golf.

Q. You hit a second shot on 14, 30 feet pin high and you looked ticked off, dropped the club. Are you playing so well that that wasn't a good shot in your mind?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Well, it was a pretty easy shot being downwind, and I was trying to just hit a pretty straight one and I hit a pretty sizable hook from that, with it being downwind. If it was into the wind it wouldn't have been that easy of a shot, but with it being downwind it was fairly simple, especially getting a good number. So it was a bit frustrating seeing it not going in the direction I wanted it to.

Q. It wound up being better than what you thought it



was going to go, right?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I'm not really sure. It was pretty far left of the pin, and it's tough to make those putts.

Q. Us mortals see a lot of danger for your second shot on 18. What did you see there that allowed you to pull it off?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: The second shot on 18 I was trying to keep it below that tree most importantly, and it didn't feel like a high-risk shot because of the way I was going into the ball I didn't feel it was every going to ever come out left. We decided the worst case scenario for us would have been if it just didn't pop out of the rough and it would have just chased through the pine straw into the fairway. It came out pretty nice, and then it did get a little scary because that fairway slopes so much from right to left, but fortunately it stayed up, and then had a nice up-and-down.

Q. You talked Sunday about wanting to enjoy your victories more. What did that look like and maybe how does it carry over to this week?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I was about to say, I don't really think that applies in back-to-back weeks. We had fun Sunday night. Winning is a tremendous feeling. But I had to prioritize getting ready for this week. We'll see what happens the rest of the week, but I think, in terms of enjoying my victories, it's pretty tough when you're playing back-to-back weeks.

Q. So it was a burger?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: It was a burger, yeah. It was a burger, some sparkling water, some cranberry juice. It was tremendous.

Q. When you've got a front pin on 17, that's kind of the fun day in terms of getting it there and if you're in the right spot and everyone gets all excited about it. On the back pins, not as fun. Do you look at the fronts as fun for you, too?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: It's definitely more fun than the back. When the greens are as soft as they are now, it's a



lot more of a challenging shot I think than it appears because you really have to take a lot of distance off. Today it was 124 pin and my 50-degree usually goes about 130 yards, and I hit pitching wedge, which usually goes about 142. I was trying to hit it about a 30 shot with a pitching wedge, which I think, if you're watching it on TV, it's probably something that people don't notice, but you have to take a lot of distance off in order to take the spin off on the ball, because if you hit a full one into that slope it's just going to rip back and it might go through the rough into the water.

Q. What does this place look like for you as a winner last year versus prior to winning here?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Pretty similar. I mean, last year doesn't do me a lot of good going into this year. It's nice to have the experience, but at the end of the day we start at even par. Winning last year doesn't help me at all this year, I would say.

Q. Does it not help you draw back on some stuff you did last year at all?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I mean, maybe. I think any sort of experience when you're playing in the final group especially of big tournaments always helps. I think around this place it's so different year to year depending on weather conditions and stuff like that last year wouldn't be something I'm thinking about too much as we're playing the course this year. But as far as the experience goes, yeah, that's always helpful whether you're playing this tournament or the next one.

Q. When you talk about you couldn't enjoy last week going into this week, you had to get back to work, but you were right back to work on Monday morning. Were you working on something specific or was it a normal week for you?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I would say pretty much normal week. I slept in Monday. We actually got in pretty late Sunday night into here. Slept in a little bit, went and got some coffee, had breakfast with Meredith, and I came out and hit a few balls in the afternoon, doing my normal prep work, cleaning up the things that I may not have loved from last week, and just getting ready to play this golf course.

Q. What didn't you love from last week, especially Sunday?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Well, I think around that golf course, sometimes I think you can just take the confidence from hitting a few good shots and then just keep cruising. At times last week my swing may have felt a touch loose,

but nothing out of the ordinary. It was still just the same stuff we've been working on.

Q. Considering how scores have come down everywhere for the last 10, 15 years, would you have thought someone would have gone lower than 63 around here by now, especially on days like this with minimal wind?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Maybe. It's tough to say just because of where the pin locations are. That would be pretty much a perfect round of golf to get anything below 63. It's birdieing half the holes out here. It's no easy task. Seems like anytime you miss a fairway the rough is still really healthy. It's one of those places it really does open up a lot when you're in play, but the minute you hit one off line, it's -- I think today is a good example; you see I hit 12 out of 14 fairways and I missed the fairway on 18, and it's like, I've got to really, really do a lot just to make par from here, and I think that's something you see a lot around this place.

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