

WM Phoenix Open

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TPC Scottsdale

Scottie Scheffler

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome Scottie Scheffler into the interview room, our defending champion. It was here last year that you got the first of four victories on the season. If we can get some comments, just reflect back to that and also how much you're looking forward to this year.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, it's good to be back in Phoenix. Got a lot of good memories here. Obviously it's a special tournament for me being the first win, and it's definitely a lot of fun to be back. As far as this week goes, it's exciting. This will be the second elevated event I've played this year, so great field this year, and should be fun.

THE MODERATOR: What's the state of your game coming into the week?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, it's pretty good. I feel like I've been playing some solid golf. I've been a little bit on the outside looking in on Sundays, so hoping to fine tune things a little bit and hopefully be in position to win on Sunday versus kind of chasing from behind.

THE MODERATOR: There's no other event like this one on TOUR. What's your mindset, and what does it take to be successful at this event?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, it is a little different. The golf course is in great shape. Greens are always really firm, and you've got to deal with the environment here, but it's something you've got to embrace. It's a lot of fun. I think a few times a year being able to play with this big of a crowd is pretty special for us as players.

Q. Scottie, from a year ago coming in here winless and now four wins, you've got a green jacket in your closet, that's a pretty whirlwind 12 months. I'm assuming that's been the most transformative 12 months of your golfing career, and if not I'd like to know what is.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: No, I think it's definitely been a lot different for me coming out to tournaments and stuff, but I

don't really feel much different than I did sitting here last year. As far as playing, I'm just always trying to get a little bit better, and the golf stuff for me doesn't change too much; I'm just showing up and trying to do my best. Hopefully that'll put me in a good spot going into Sunday.

Q. How has life changed in 12 months for you?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: You know, like I said, life outside -- life on the golf course is a bit different just with more stuff going on and people kind of know who I am now versus a year ago at this tournament. Maybe a few people from the Ryder Cup, but definitely going back to a year and a half ago before that, pretty much nobody.

It's been fun kind of trying to manage that and go from there and find more efficient stuff to do at the golf course with my time just because there's more that comes with showing up at events. It's all fun; getting to have fans and people cheering for you is a good time. I'm very grateful for it.

Q. As a big Cowboys fan, do you find it weird that you can't really watch the Cowboys on Sunday if you're playing well in a tournament?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I hope I can never watch the Cowboys if I'm playing golf. Yeah, the Cowboys is something I typically will never miss a Cowboys game. And I got to play with Emmitt Smith today, which was a lot of fun, and I'd never met him before, so that was really cool, just kind of pick his brain on some stuff and have a good time.

Q. What did you pick his brain about?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Just little random stuff. You can tell he's still very, very competitive. When he comes out here to play golf, he's trying to learn, he's trying to do his best on every shot. It's kind of fun just getting a little peek into his mind.

Q. Have you watched your Netflix episode?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yes.



Q. What did you think of it?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I thought it was good. I thought they did a good job. I think there was one part where I started cracking up laughing and they caught it, a conversation between me and Teddy that I didn't know that they caught, and Meredith and I got a kick out of it.

Q. Did you learn anything watching it?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Did I learn anything from watching it? Not really. I didn't really know what they were going to do with me in the show. I think they did a really nice job. The episode was interesting. I haven't been able to see anything else, but hopefully everything turns out really well, but I was happy with my little pieces in the episode.

Q. What's your fondest recollection of winning this tournament, and anything specific from the playoff that you remember fondly?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Well, fondly, I remember making that putt to finish the playoff. It's always nice when those Playoffs end and you're the one holding the trophy, not the one walking off the green.

But yeah, it was really cool coming back. I played the back nine on Monday when we got in and I can remember pretty much every shot that I hit that day, which is unusual for me. I usually forget pretty much everything. When it comes to golf, I don't have like a very -- I wouldn't say I don't remember a lot, but I definitely don't have that memory where I can recall every shot that I hit.

So it was definitely a little bit weird playing the practice round and being like, oh, yeah, I remember this, I remember that. I remembered everything, which is weird.

But it's all great memories. This place will always have special memories for me being the first win and being able to close it out in the playoff. I did a great job of grinding out some pars there to start the playoff and obviously the last putt on the third playoff hole was big.

Q. Just wanted to ask about "Full Swing" again. Why was it something you wanted to participate in, and how much is it going to help grow the TOUR, grow the game, once it comes out next week?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I wanted to participate in it for that reason. I wouldn't say I was a huge part of it. I didn't give them as much access into my personal life as a lot of guys did, but it was a good experience, and I think

that was what -- when I originally signed up for it, I don't really think they wanted very much from me, and all of a sudden I started winning tournaments and stuff and they were like, we need a lot more stuff now. It was kind of a tough balance, but it was a lot of fun.

I think it's going to be great for the game. I think it's going to get a whole new audience watching golf, and it should be great for our Tour and good for the game of golf, as well.

Q. This week you have a chance to return to the No. 1 position, and when you did it in Austin you said you didn't feel any different. I'm curious, is it a goal of yours to get to No. 1, or is it more of a reflection of other goals that you have?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I would say it's more of a reflection, but I like being No. 1 in the world. I don't like being No. 2.

It's just kind of one of those funny things. Right now I'm ranked No. 2, but I would say I'm not playing the second best golf in the world; I think Rory and Jon are pretty much neck-and-neck for playing the best golf in the world right now, so the rankings are funny. It's just an algorithm. You don't get any extra trophies or anything like that for having it for a short period of time, but it's more of a reflection of other things, I'd say, but I don't like being No. 2. I'd rather be No. 1.

Q. Have you settled on the menu yet for the Masters dinner?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Not quite. We've got some ideas. I'm excited about it. Hopefully the guys will like it, too. I'm a little bit weird about my food. I don't really branch out too much. We'll see what they think.

Q. Would you be willing to wear a mic and talk with the CBS crew during a broadcast upcoming?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I'm not sure. I had the opportunity to do that a couple times when I was on the Korn Ferry TOUR and I declined it. I usually try to do my best to stay in the moment and kind of forget about everything else that's going on around me, so that would be something I'd have to really think about, which I haven't done yet, but maybe I will more in the future. I haven't been approached yet, so I haven't really had to think about it. Maybe I will now. We'll see.

Q. You led the TOUR in greens in regulation last year. Just wondering why you think that is, what the strategy is you're using that helps you hit so many



greens.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Well, I didn't know that until now, so that's a good stat. I don't like missing greens, so being able to hit the most is a lot of fun.

I would say from 2021 to 2022 I really improved with my iron play. I was a really, really good driver of the golf ball my first two years on TOUR. My driving stats actually went down slightly last year.

I think it's because I'm -- I don't know if more streaky is the right word, but I hit it a lot further this year, so with that the dispersion gets a little bit wider. But obviously I was able to take advantage of being able to hit it a little further and get some wins.

But as far as hitting a lot of greens, I think that's part of playing consistent golf. I think when you see the best players in the world, most of them are very, very consistent ball strikers, and so I was able to kind of make that jump from '21 to '22, and hopefully I'll continue to improve.

Q. I saw you practicing with kind of an extended alignment stick in the ground at an angle. What exactly were you working on there?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I don't know how to explain it because I really just started doing it in the last week, but sometimes I guess I feel like the club gets behind me, so that right there -- I'm probably never going to hit it; it's more just there so I have a little feeling of where the club should be. Not anything overly complicated, just kind of more of a feel thing.

Q. Everybody talks about 16 here. Could you talk about 17, if you like the hole, and what do you typically do, what clubs do you hit, do you attack, do you lay up?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I've never laid up on 17. I think one of the things that's so great about this golf course is getting the reward for good play. I think you see that a lot on the back nine; when you're hitting really good shots, you get rewarded for it. You can birdie almost every hole on the back nine when you're hitting the right shots, and then all of a sudden you start hitting it off line and it becomes difficult.

So as a player, I think that's what you really appreciate about courses, and 17 is a hole like that where if you hit a really good tee shot, you're going to have an eagle look or have an easy up-and-down for birdie, and if you don't hit a good tee shot, you're going to be struggling for par.

As a player that's something that we really appreciate.

Q. What club do you typically hit there?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: It depends on wind, but usually 3-wood or driver.

JOHN BUSH: Scottie, as always, thank you for your time. Play well this week.

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