

Arnold Palmer Invitational

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Bay Hill, Florida, USA

Bay Hill Club and Lodge

Scottie Scheffler

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome the 2022 champion of the Arnold Palmer Invitational presented by Mastercard, Scottie Scheffler.

Scottie, what a show that was out there. What a battle it was. If we can just get some thoughts on what's going through getting your second victory in your last three starts on the PGA TOUR.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, it feels great to be able to win here. To be completely honest with you, right now I'm exhausted. This course is a total beat-down trying to play. I'm very pleased I didn't have to play any extra holes today.

THE MODERATOR: You moved to No. 5 in the World Golf Rankings, into the top five for the first time in your career, you move into No. 1 spot in the FedExCup, and you're heading to THE PLAYERS Championship. How does this change your goals going forward?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I wouldn't say too much. I really don't look too far ahead as it is. For me I like being out here. I like competing. Just keep doing what I'm doing. Try to hit some good golf shots and have some fun out here.

Q. First of all, can you kind of go through the options and the hopes that you had on 15 and 16 as you played those holes?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: So 15, it is so hard to get the ball on the fairway on that hole. I tried to hit kind of a slice driver, and I just toed it, and it came out with not as much cut as I needed to. I actually had somewhat of a shot out of the pine straw. I was trying to hit like this low hook runner and get up there around the green somewhere.

I don't know what happened. It just didn't come out. There was pine straw in front of me that I couldn't move. There was a leaf behind my ball. It was kind of one of those deals where there wasn't a huge penalty if I didn't pull it off.

I didn't think I was going to hit it 30 yards, though. I thought I'd hit it at least through the fairway. But to have

that putt go in for par was huge.

Then 16, my ball ended up in a weird place off the tee. I didn't hit a great drive, but I didn't hit it that bad. It was a pretty big penalty for not that bad of a shot. Then I was just trying to get it back out in play with a pitching wedge, I think. The way it was sitting in there kind of in the sand with my stance -- I don't even know if I chunked it, to be honest with you. I was just trying to swing hard and hit the ball. It was sitting so deep, it may have just been in a hole. I may not have been able to make contact.

The next one, Teddy and I are kind of sitting there, and I maybe could have gotten the next one on the green. But it wasn't worth the risk because the ball was just going to go over anyways most likely. We decided that a wedge into that green would kind of guarantee me a ten-footer for par at the worst. I hit a nice layup shot and a really, really good wedge and then a great putt.

You want 17 and 18 too?

Q. Those were pretty big, but you just had to putt it really good, it looks like.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah. Those lag putts at the end were pretty tough. It's not really a comfortable position having to hit it to 50 feet and try and two-putt with the lead. But I just trusted myself and played conservative the last two holes, and pars were good enough.

Q. Were those two-putt pars, were they just as difficult pars as the two previous ones?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I mean, 15 and 16 -- 15 was brutal, just I got up and down from 150 yards out of the rough. 16's an easy par-5, so there's a little bit of shock when I have to lay up and try to make par from 65 yards versus going for the green in two. That was probably the most difficult just because I expected to have a really good look for birdie at the worst and all of a sudden I'm grinding for par.

For me to stay in it mentally and keep grinding on that hole was huge.



Q. Congratulations. Can you explain, please, if your mindset has changed post-Phoenix? When you win again so quickly after winning, it looks as if a switch has been flicked or something in your head. Is that a fair comment, or was it just a continuation of the same?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think just a continuation of what I've been doing, what I've been working on. I put a lot of work in at home on my game and then in the gym. So my body feels great. I've been able to play some good golf, and I've been hitting it really nicely.

I've just made little improvements over the years, and I'm starting to see them pay off a little bit, which is really awesome.

Q. Could you speak to just how difficult it was out there. I think six guys shot 80 or higher, only two guys broke 70. Did you feel like you were just skating on then ice the whole day?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, par is a pretty good score on every hole out here that I can really think of. I'm never upset with a par.

I thought today, after the way yesterday went, I thought they'd take it a little bit easier on the golf course, but the setup was harder today than it was yesterday, which surprised me a little bit.

Kind of went into today thinking I need to shoot maybe a couple under, and it turns out even was good enough. The way the greens are, making putts out here is so hard. There's not a lot of friction on the greens, and with the way the wind is blowing, any little bit of a gust has such an extreme effect on the golf ball. It's so difficult.

Q. Scottie, you're always so humble when asked to talk about winning or confidence or anything like that, but was there a moment out there today where you really drew back upon Phoenix or some of the other successes you've had?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I think Teddy and I did a good job of kind of staying really patient today. I made some silly mistakes at the beginning of the round, some bogeys here or there. I kind of just kept telling myself basically that I feel like I'm good enough to win. So I don't really have to do anything crazy. I just have to play good golf.

Today was so challenging. It was such a grind. I think mentally just staying in it was the most important thing.

Q. Can you please explain, your demeanor is very, very even keel. Maybe some stuff churning inside obviously. But how does that manifest itself in a tough condition like this, like a U.S. Open type condition? Do you think that is an advantage to you because you remain kind of on an even keel?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I mean, I'm glad it looks pretty even keel from the outside. I think I'm pretty fiery on the inside. I just -- when you get on such difficult golf courses like this, you just have to kind of keep your head down and know that mistakes are going to come, you're going to get bad breaks, you're going to hit really good shots that turn out really bad. And it's just stuff that can happen out here just because the golf course is so difficult.

Today and really all this week I did a good job of kind of fighting back, really just kind of battling the golf course the whole time.

Q. Scottie, just to follow up on that same theme, you've got a really difficult golf course, and guys like Gary Woodland and Rory McIlroy, guys who have won U.S. Opens. I know it's not a U.S. Open, but just in terms of the difficulty, did it sort of feel like one?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Definitely on the weekend with the way the wind was and how fast the greens were -- you know, like I said earlier, I was surprised they continued to push the setup today. The greens, I think, were faster than they were yesterday, which really surprised me because yesterday borderline got out of hand, and today was just brutal again. So it was definitely pretty difficult.

Q. Scottie, you said you're glad it looks even keel even though it isn't, but you thrived at the Ryder Cup. Phoenix is a nuts scene. And then this golf course is a whole nother level. What does it tell you about yourself and your ability to just kind of handle this kind of difficult situation?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: So deep down, whatever I'm doing, I'm really competitive in it, it seems like. My wife will tell me I'm competitive more playing board games or whatever we're doing. I'm usually really competitive. So when the conditions get really tough and the fields get really good, I get excited. That's why I practice, to come out here and compete. I work hard, and being in these moments is really fun. I kind of like the challenge of harder golf courses and harder conditions.

Q. Could you tell us a little about your battle with Viktor Hovland and also your views on him both as a competitor and a player.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: First of all, Viktor is just a tremendous player. He hits the golf ball so solid, and he doesn't really have any weaknesses in his game. He just hits it really good. He putts it good. His chipping is improving so quickly. He's a tough competitor.

We had some battles with him at the Ryder Cup this year. This is the first time we've been down the stretch together. He's won a few times out here. He's an extremely talented guy. I'm very pleased to be able to come out on top this time. I'm looking forward to battling with him again in the future.

Q. What do you think allowed you to win today?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: That two-putt on 18, I guess (laughter). Honestly, I don't really know. I had my head down all day. I kind of just tried to stay patient. I didn't make any mistakes on the back nine. I would say that's probably really where I credit the win.

I guess my last bogey was No. 9, and then the back nine I had one birdie and eight pars, which was pretty difficult. I'd say I'd probably give credit to that.

Q. I also wanted to see if there's any way you could compare this with Phoenix, that being your first win, but was there any more sense of this being more rewarding given the nature of the test that you had to endure?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, Phoenix was a little bit different. Going down the stretch, you're having birdie looks on pretty much every hole on the back nine. Out here, other than probably No. 12 and 16 and maybe 4, you're trying to just make a par on every other hole on this golf course.

So it's just a totally different golf course, different atmosphere. I'm pretty pleased to be able to win on two very different types of tournaments.

Q. What was more satisfying?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I don't know. Winning is pretty fun regardless. I'm not going to choose favorites.

Q. Scottie, what is your relationship? Did you ever get to meet Mr. Palmer? Did you play Arnold Palmer Cup? When's the first time you ever played this course?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: So the Palmer Cup was the college team event, right? I never got to play in the Palmer Cup sadly. I think the only opportunity I had when I

actually made the team was my senior year, and I had an opportunity to play in Memphis like my first week as a pro. So I had to take that versus playing the Palmer Cup. I would have loved to have done it.

I think I met him a couple times when I was younger, but I didn't really get to spend too much time with him. It's just one of those things you kind of watch his legacy and you know he's such a great guy on the golf course and off the golf course. If you know the work he's done, whether it's here at Bay Hill through the Palmer Foundation, he's just a really special person we all look up to.

Q. In what ways did your sisters and your parents kind of shape you and your personality if you look back on it now?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: So my mom worked when I was a kid and my dad stayed home with me and my sisters. So I would say a lot of my personality probably comes from my dad. My dad is fiercely competitive like I am.

My parents, they made a lot of sacrifices to put me in a position where I'm able to do this for a living, and they made a lot of sacrifices when I was a kid. My sisters as well. They've seen a lot of golf tournaments in their lifetime, probably a lot more than they've wanted to. I'm very grateful for the sacrifices they made and obviously had such a huge impact on my life.

THE MODERATOR: And your grandma is here. She seems to be a star.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: She is. Grandma is 86? 87, golly. 87 next week. How many holes did you walk today?

SCOTTIE'S GRANDMA: All 18.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: All 18. So good genes. Let's give grandma a round of applause. All 18 holes.

First win, it was really special just having me and Meredith there. Meredith obviously knows me better than anybody, being my wife. She knows how hard it is when I don't win. So being able to celebrate a win is pretty special, and to have my parents here for this one is extremely cool with all the sacrifices they made growing up. I'm just really pleased.

Q. You joked about the two-putt on 18, but there was a lot of people struggling with putts of that length. How did you feel as you approached that one? The third stroke.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: So both the two-putts on 17 and

18 were pretty difficult. With the way the wind is, if I get a gust, it could be from that length, I mean, an eight-foot difference probably on where the putt ends up.

Fortunately, 18's kind of sheltered. The wind is across. So when I hit my putt, I didn't think the wind was blowing very hard, so I didn't have to worry about it.

But 17, it was whipping pretty good when I hit my putt. So just a lot of feel. I was fortunate to just lag them up so close. The one on 17 actually hopped like three or four inches in the air halfway or else that one may have gone in, I don't really know. I was just happy to see it a few inches short. I was glad to get out of there with a couple of two putts.

Q. I was told to ask you about the sweater. Do you like it?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, it's pretty warm (laughter). It's a little hot outside. It's pretty warm, but it fits nice. It's pretty cozy. It feels good.

Q. When you mentioned Meredith a minute ago, it just made me wonder, do you take things home from the course very well? And on those lines, how soon do you move on to the next one as much as you're an in the moment kind of guy?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I've gotten significantly better over the years at handling failure. I don't place my value in golf. It's kind of a tough balance because I spend so much of my time trying to improve and to be good at this game.

You've really got to look at the motivation for why I play. For me, I have a relationship with Jesus Christ. That's why I play golf. I'm out here to compete because that's where He wants me. He's in control of what happens in the end. So just really staying the course and staying faithful and letting Him be the guidance for me versus anything that I do.

Q. As competitive as you are, what's the relationship?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: That's not my value. That's not where I place my value. Meredith's not going to look at me any differently if I win 50 times out here or lose my card next week or whatever it is or get kicked off the TOUR. I'm very fortunate to have people around me that love me just the way that I am, and getting to go home to that is really special. Meredith's got the same smile whether or not I shoot 86 or 66. It doesn't really matter to her. I'm very fortunate for that.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations once again to Scottie

Scheffler.

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