

Arnold Palmer Invitational

Thursday, March 2, 2023

Bay Hill, Florida, USA

Bay Hill Club and Lodge

Scottie Scheffler

Quick Quotes



Q. How would you characterize your round today?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Pretty good. I played pretty solid. I think I had a few putts that were going in that didn't, but other than that, I hit it really good.

Two bogeys, a little frustrating, but it's a pretty hard golf course and it doesn't take much to make a bogey out here.

Q. How did you find the course today playing?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Pretty tough. Fortunately the wind was down a little bit this morning for us. Greens are ridiculously firm for a Thursday morning. It didn't really feel like it out there.

But it's in good shape. The fairways this year are a bit softer than they were last year, which I think is rewarding more good shots off the tee. A few of the doglegs out here last year I felt like it was really hard to actually get the ball in the fairway. I hit a lot of good ones that didn't stay in.

This year with it being a little softer it's rewarding more good shots off the tee, and then going into the greens it's still extremely challenging.

Q. What's the value of getting a good one in under your belt knowing what's coming tomorrow with 22 sustained and gusting up to 30?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, we'll see what happens on these greens. It better not blow too hard or they may need to slow them down or something. I really don't know what they're going to do.

But yeah, that's how I feel like I remember this golf course is playing in that kind of wind. I think my rookie year here it was like that almost -- I remember it because, I know for sure it was the last two days because I shot like 75, 75 on the weekend and didn't really move down the leaderboard.

So it's definitely a challenging place, but like I said earlier, just try and get the ball in play and go from there.

Q. What was the challenge for you in a new year to reflect on what you did last year, but not rest on your laurels, and kind of create new goals for 2023?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I've never been a huge goal setter. I've always done my best when I just stay in the present. So I didn't sit back and reflect on last year and look towards this year. When I sat and reflected, I was trying to reflect, and then when I'm out practicing, I was obviously very focused on what I'm doing and just trying to get a little bit better.

Q. Was there any extra comfort level of, hey, I won here, coming back to the next tournament?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Well, yeah, this is a golf course that is, I would say it's very challenging to bring a lot of confidence to because like there's no really easy holes. It's kind of a strange golf course when it comes to that.

But I appreciate the fact that this golf course is very challenging and I feel like it's a place where I can just try and hang in there. That's what I did last year. I didn't play amazing for four days. One of the guys I played a practice round with this week asked me what I did so well last year, and I just told 'em I survived. That's really what it felt like.

This place is brutal and it's only going to get harder as the week goes on. This is Thursday morning. It's typically the easiest conditions. So we'll see what happens as the week goes on.

Q. Do you expect this afternoon's scores to go up or?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I mean, it depends what happens with the weather. If the wind starts blowing 10 miles an hour, I'm sure, but if it doesn't blow or if it calms down, it might play easier. Who knows. No idea.

Q. That run of yours last year, what did this victory do for you momentum-wise?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think it was great. I think this was a golf course that was really challenging. The way I



finished out down the stretch last year definitely gave me a lot of confidence going forward. Where I wasn't playing perfect golf or anything close to it on Sunday and I was able to come from behind and win with some really, really great pars on the back nine. I think I birdied 12 and other than that I had all pars. Thinking about the pars on 15 and 16 and the 2-putts on 17 and 18 were a tremendous way to finish out a tournament.

Q. We're firmly in the Scottie Scheffler defense portion of the schedule. Is it weird retracing your steps, kind of fun, what's it been like?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: It's kind of fun. It's nice kind of getting all the memories and stuff out of the way early in the week. But it's also good having the experience on the golf course and knowing what it does throughout the week. And, yeah, it's definitely important and it's good to have success, but everybody starts at even.

Q. Between Ryder Cup and today when do you think you played your best golf?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Between the Ryder Cup and today? I would probably say my best tournament was probably the Masters. In my head that's probably a 5-shot win. I don't really include the 4-putt. I think that's forgotten news. But I would say that's probably some of my best golf.

Phoenix I won in a playoff.

Here I won by one shot.

Austin was pretty close too. I don't know how well you can check the scores in Match Play, but I played some really, really good golf that week. Especially as the week went on.

Q. What were the highlights of today's round for you?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Birdie on 8's big. I kept it in play a lot. I think I only had to hit out of the rough maybe one time the whole day. From the fairway. I had to do it a couple times going into greens. But staying out of the rough here is pretty important. I don't know if you've been out on the course yet, but it's pretty heavy.

Q. Going back to your college days. When you hurt your back, how difficult was that and what did you think that could do to your career?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I didn't really, wasn't really thinking about my career at the time. I was just trying to figure out how to play golf. Because I was playing through

it. Because it wasn't like a serious injury. It was just bad, bad kind of aches and pains and it affected my swing. My body didn't move the way it needed to move to have an efficient golf swing.

As I've continued to work on my body throughout the years I definitely learned a lot of valuable lessons along the line. It's something that in the, at the time in college and in high school I did a little bit to work on it, but I wasn't as committed as I am now. Now I'm extremely committed that being in the gym is a huge part of my routine. I'm not going in there and lifting heavy weights, I'm just trying to get the right movement patterns and stay healthy.

Q. As much as you've said that you prefer to live in the present, which you say that pretty much every day, how do you balance that with --

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: It's a daily challenge.

Q. How do you balance that with thinking ahead to the Masters? Shots you're hitting and stuff like that?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I would say the only thing is just like a little bit of shot shaping. As I continue to try to improve there's little shots there that are special on that golf course. As we're leading up I'll continue to work on 'em.

But it's a tough balance. Because the majors are always kind of in the back of your head. I mean, they're the biggest challenge, they're the hardest tournaments against the best fields. I think in the back of your head you're always preparing for those types of situations and the really hard golf courses.

So the Masters I'm sure is in the back of my head, but when I'm practicing on a daily basis -- if I'm working on my wedges maybe I'm thinking about a shot there and like just little stuff like that.

Q. Have you ever found yourself faced with a shot at a tournament that says, This reminds me of something from Augusta?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: No, not necessarily. Unless I had to hit a big draw off of 1 tee box. That would be kind of the only one. I would think of like number 10 or 13 or something like that.

Q. This is the fourth designated event and they have delivered, it seems like. The top players together going head-to-head more often. Do they feel different to the players, to you?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I would say a little bit. I mean, it was rare for us to have these occasions where everybody would kind of be here in the past. This year it's been definitely successful. I think you look at the guys on the leaderboard each week kind of reflect what we're going for with the new schedule. You look at Sentry and you had Collin and Jon going down the stretch.

Then in Phoenix you had me and Jon and Nick Taylor, which was obviously a great story and he played great golf. I think that's the stuff that we're trying to gain. I mean, if you have a guy, like a Nick Taylor, that gets hot, he's going to get into those events and he's going to play well and make some noise. Hopefully, it's going to continue to reward guys that are playing their best golf.

Q. On Augusta, you talked about going to Augusta and getting some of the reflections away right before you go tournament week. What do you look forward to seeing the most?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I've never done it so I'm kind of looking forward to staying on property, having dinner, just the little stuff that goes with being there that you don't really get to enjoy during the tournament.

Q. Who are you going to go with?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: That's a secret.

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