

# Zurich Classic of New Orleans

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TPC Louisiana

## Scottie Scheffler

## Ryan Palmer

### Press Conference

HALEY PETERSON: We'll go ahead and get things started. Good afternoon, everyone. We would like to welcome Scottie Scheffler and Ryan Palmer here in the interview room at the Zurich Classic of New Orleans. Gentlemen, welcome.

I want to get some opening comments about how this duo and partnership started.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: You want me to go?

RYAN PALMER: Go ahead.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I'll go. Ryan, I've known Ryan since he's been working with Randy Smith. We have the same coach at home. We workout together in the off-season. Same trainer, same -- we play a lot of games at home. So it was a pretty seamless decision. We'll have some fun.

RYAN PALMER: Yeah, I knew -- obviously when Jon and I won here a couple years ago, he made it pretty clear earlier in the year that he was not playing because he's playing next week.

So I want to play with guys that I know real well, good friends of mine. Not just because obviously the big talk around is I keep playing with guys that are top ranked players. Well, they want to play with me, which is a good thing.

No, I approached Scottie back in February at L.A., and I knew Bubba was playing with Harold, and they played last year. And knowing Scottie, I knew he wouldn't take four weeks off. So I kind of had a good way in there, I thought. I knew he wouldn't play in Hilton Head, wasn't going to Mexico, wasn't playing the week before the Nelson, so I was like there's no way he takes four weeks off. He can't. That's kind of how I put it.

The thing that really sealed it was I sent a picture of me



and Jon with the trophy, but I imposed his face on it.

HALEY PETERSON: Photoshop?

RYAN PALMER: Yeah, Photoshop. I think that got him.

We practice a lot together at home with Randy. I met Scottie back in high school before he went to Texas and just kept up with him. We play a lot of golf at home with Jordan and Romo and stuff. Of course we work out together. Being 45, I don't have the strength he does, but I try to keep up, which is fine. We have a good time doing it.

Just good friends. We play a lot of practice rounds together, and that's kind of about it.

HALEY PETERSON: Ryan, as you spoke to, a tournament where you have found a lot of success, 2019 champion. What about this course and the format fits well with your game?

RYAN PALMER: I enjoy playing this golf course, coming here even before it was a team event. I just enjoy playing here.

I think I'm just at ease with this place. I love coming to this city, my relationship with Sean Payton. We play the Pro-Am together every year with he and Drew Brees. It's a week where I feel like I'm at home. It makes it relaxing.

It's just kind of a fun format because you let loose, maybe you're more relaxed. I should take it to other tournaments, this relaxation. Then I played two years with Jordan, who's a close friend. Jon Rahm became a good friend, and now playing with Scottie. It keeps me relaxed. I just kind of let my game take care of itself, and I've played well here.

I guess it says a lot when you're relaxed and enjoying it.

HALEY PETERSON: Scottie, this is the first time we're speaking with you since your win at the Masters. What did you do with your time in between, and has there been any specific moment where you've really been like, wow, and this sunk in?



SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I wouldn't say it's really sunk in. I've had a good stretch recently, but I took a little bit of time at home last week to just relax. I was a bit drained. So I did not do much last week at all.

I just chilled at home. I spent a lot of time in my backyard. I went out and started practicing again on the weekend. It was nice. I took a good five days off, and for me, that's a decent amount of time.

I felt refreshed when I got back out Saturday. Then we spent Easter Sunday with my family. Monday I was just itching to get back out on the golf course. So I guess Ryan was right, taking four weeks off in the middle of the season is too long for me.

This is such an easy event for me to come down here and play. Playing with Ryan, I know I'm going to have a good time, and we're looking forward to this week.

HALEY PETERSON: I heard you received a letter from President Bush. Mind sharing your story on that?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, his handwriting is really hard to read, if he listens to this. I hear he's a good artist now. He's got to do some work on his handwriting.

Stuff like that is pretty cool. To have someone like that to reach out just to congratulate me is pretty special. That's probably kind of the only moments I've had where I kind of sit and reflect on what's happened the past month and a half, two months. Obviously the Masters is such a different event than the rest of them.

Just getting some messages like that from people I've looked up to for so long is really special.

**Q. Ryan's played with Sean and Drew a lot, New Orleans royalty. Scottie, your thoughts on getting to play with those guys today? You had probably one of the biggest gallery out of any of the Pro-Am guys today.**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I don't think many of them were out there to see me and Ryan play. We had some fun today. Drew and Sean are both good dudes. I never met them before today, and we had a lot of fun. Ryan obviously knows them really well. We had a good time.

They're pretty much just normal guys like the rest of us. They get frustrated playing golf. I mean, we had a good time. Just fun, normal guys.

**Q. To bounce off that, Scottie, you were almost taunting Payton at times and Brees at times when they**

**were on 17. How much of this week are you just kind of having fun with it, for lack of a better term?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Definitely the Pro-Am days we're having a lot of fun out there. We got to keep it light, especially with those guys. Like Drew's still really competitive. You could see he was getting a little fiery out there, which was kind of fun to watch. Sean's a good sport. We had a lot of fun with those guys today.

You know, it's nice having it light today, and we'll still have fun tomorrow, but it will be a little bit more business. Wednesdays you've got to relax and save your energy for the rest of the week.

**Q. Apologies, boys, if the answer to this, especially Scottie. What's your ceiling, do you think? 4 in 6 is pretty impressive, not done since Jason Day's run in '15. Where do you think you can take this?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: For me, I don't look too far ahead. I don't pay attention to that kind of stuff. People kept asking me last week at the Masters, I think they kept saying 3 out of 6, and I had to remember if it was 3 out of 5 or 4 out of 6, like I couldn't remember what it was. I really just try to stay in the moment.

For me, that's fun for you guys to talk about. It's nice to be on a good run. All I'm focused on is this week and getting ready to play with Ryan. Goals, expectations, nothing like that changes for me. I just like being out here playing golf.

**Q. Ryan, just finished a live interview with Jason, so we were making fun of him for suggesting that you're chasing the top players, where, in fact, they come to you. Is that correct?**

RYAN PALMER: Yeah, word out there is I'm chasing ringers, but I kind of put it out there, they're asking me to play. I've been out here long enough. Maybe I can give a little veteran advice.

Yeah, there's been a lot of chatter out there for sure. Justin threw it out there, obviously getting it started with the average world ranking. I had to go back and look and see what rank those guys were when we played together. It just happened to be they were top ranked players, and now I've got the No. 1 player in the world playing with me. But I look at it as they're playing with me, so I've got a little bit to add to it.

I think these guys are great. They're unbelievable golfers, professionals, you name it, how good they are. It's great to be that close with them from a friendship standpoint. And it just shows, you're still here trying to beat each other week

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in and week out, but deep down there's more to it than just golf. That's what I've enjoyed the most.

**Q. His form in Texas at home is likely pretty impressive?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: How many years have you been on TOUR?

RYAN PALMER: 19.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: This is his 19th year on TOUR. It's not like my older brother I brought in off the street. It's funny with that, there's so many talented guys on TOUR. Ryan is one of the best ball strikers out here. 19 years on TOUR, and that speaks for itself. Four wins? Yeah, the guy's got the resume.

I've bounced stuff off him for years, coming out of college, playing professional, playing the Korn Ferry Tour. He's got so much experience out here. I look up to Ryan as a person and a player, and I've learned a lot from him.

We have fun at home. It was pretty easy, when he asked me to play -- it was well before I was No. 1 in the world. It was after one TOUR win. It's not like he started chasing me last Saturday.

RYAN PALMER: The joke became he had to win twice. After he won twice, we firmed it up (laughter). That was the joke behind it. You've got to be a multiple winner for me to come to you (laughter).

That's what it turned into. No, it's been fun watching it. There have been some entertaining ones, to say the least.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Now we're playing golf.

RYAN PALMER: Now we're here.

**Q. It's not like you could offer him an NIL deal that would do the trick. Scottie, two questions. One, it's a natural question to ask, have you worn the green jacket anywhere interesting or fun? Two, not that long ago -- I mean, everyone comes on the TOUR, obviously you had great credentials and all that stuff, but everyone kind of wonders, am I going to make it out here? Not that long ago, you were in that spot, how am I going to do out here? Now with all this success, how have you gone from that to this? Do you still remember those thoughts you had not too many years ago?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I would say nothing really changes for me. I just kind of stay in the moment. As I've

gone as a professional, I went to Q-School, I played the Korn Ferry Tour. This is my third year on TOUR. I haven't really been out here that long. For me, I'm just trying to learn and continuing to improve.

Fortunately for me, I'm surrounded by a lot of guys out here who are really talented, Ryan being one of them, where I can just learn from watching them play. For me, nothing really changes. I'm just trying to get incrementally better.

Of course I remember the times where I had to get up-and-down at Q-School to get my Korn Ferry card, and trying to chase my first win on the Korn Ferry Tour, and then going from chasing my first win to trying to be No. 1 so I didn't have to worry about reshuffles and getting starts.

Those things won't change for me. I'll always remember that time. There's more pressure when you're fighting for your career. There's less pressure now where I've had some success now. I would say there's more pressure going into the final round of Q-School than there is Masters Sunday because, if I fail at Q-School, I've got a whole nother year where I don't have anywhere to play.

I did Monday qualifiers on the Korn Ferry Tour for seven or eight events. It's a tough life. You go out there and shoot 6-under, and you don't get to play the tournament. I think I shot -- you guys would have to check me on the stats. Anywhere between 35 and 40-under in seven times trying, and I got into one of them, and it was the one I shot 4-under because the wind was blowing 30 miles an hour.

Those things don't change. I look back on those because I performed under like the most immense pressure that I could have had, and now that I'm out here, not that there's less on the line, but it's simple. I'm just trying to stay in the moment and execute shots.

**Q. The green jacket, have you worn it any place?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: No. Just at home. When my wife asks me to do stuff at home, sometimes I'll grab it out of the closet and look at her, huh, really? It hasn't worked yet. (Laughter).

Yeah, I've just had some fun with it at home. I haven't really done anything special. I haven't taken it out of the house. I think I'm the only one that can take the jacket off property. So I want to do a good job of representing Augusta National well, and I got to bring it back at the end of next year. Since I'm almost the representation of the green jacket outside of the club, I'm treating it with respect. I'm not going to do anything crazy with it.

**Q. I have a question for each of you. First with Ryan,**

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**do you remember the first time you heard about  
Scottie being in Texas or seeing him play?**

RYAN PALMER: Yeah, I met him when he was in high school still. I got to know his family, his dad real well at Royal Oaks Country Club, where he's a member at and Randy Smith is. We both work with Randy.

I remember hitting balls, and he was 5 foot nothing in high school. I'll never forget when he came back from school, from Texas his freshman, sophomore year, and he was almost 6'2", and I was like, my goodness, who's this guy?

So I just kept up with him and following him and seeing him here periodically at Royal Oaks with Randy, and seeing him progress through the Korn Ferry, and you could just see he was something special. I told Randy, it's a matter of when he wins, they're going to come floodgates in. You've seen the last month, month and a half. Once you get that first one, the monkey's off your back. He's showing what he can do.

But you never know, when you see somebody young in high school, college age, what they're going to be like. You've seen some of the greatest college players ever can't make it out here, have not made it, so you just never know. I think that's why the Korn Ferry is so great because you learn how to compete and shoot low numbers and win out there, and it just carries over into the PGA TOUR as well.

That was my route, 2003, when I played it. And you see a lot of great players have taken that road to get here. It's just the beginning for Scottie, and then there's going to be plenty more coming.

**Q. Scottie, this is for you. Do you remember going to  
a tournament growing up and actually following Ryan?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I don't remember following Ryan in any tournaments, but fortunately for me, growing up at Royal Oaks around Randy, I was exposed to tons of professional golfers, Ryan being one of them. We had Harrison Frazar, Justin Leonard, Colt Knost, Ryan, Martin Flores, Gary Woodland, Anthony Kim used to practice out there.

I was surrounded by these guys that are really good at golf, and I've always been a great visual learner. When they would be out there, I would camp out at Royal Oaks all day. Summertime, I would be out there the entire day.

What I would do is follow these guys around, and they were nice enough to let me do that. At 10 years old with me chirping at them while they're getting a lesson, a lot of

guys probably won't have the patience for that. These guys, for me I was fortunate enough that they let me hang around.

I learned just by watching them. Watching them hit balls, chip, how they practice. For me I was able to develop at a young age a lot of skills that guys I was playing against at that time didn't have because they'd never been exposed to it.

And you can be taught stuff by a great teacher, but it's so much different when you can actually watch and see it. If I see Ryan playing on TV, I've seen the shots he hits at home. I know what he's doing, versus just seeing it on TV or watching -- like when you actually see it in person, it's so much different. So I've been fortunate to learn from these guys from a young age.

**Q. One question for each of you. First off, Ryan, the  
11th hole lost the tree, the big tree just short of the  
green. I want to know how different that hole plays  
now.**

RYAN PALMER: Not -- it will play a little bit different, but you get down there far enough -- fortunately, he's not a short hitter, and I can get it out there with the old guys for sure. No, I'm kidding. It will depend on the wind because, if you get it downwind, you can almost take it over as well. But there's so much room to the right to bring it around from the right to the left.

But it does make it visually, it's just a driver, 3-wood all day. There's nothing to think about anymore. I think it will play a little easier. I think the scoring average will be a little lower just because of that visual effect that you get each and every year we had before because a lot of times I'll have to do this shot where I would have to cut it instead of hook it, depending where the pin was. Now it's hit it as hard as you can and get it around the green. It doesn't matter.

It will definitely take that stress off the second shot for sure. You'll see guys hitting 3-woods more often than not.

**Q. Scottie, you mentioned the letter from President  
Bush. Who else sort of you wouldn't expect has  
contacted you about your win?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I would say -- I'm not really on social media. My wife has showed me a few things that people have posted, like Michael Phelps posted me in one of his stories, and then Zeke from the Cowboys sent me a message. Just random stuff like that where I'm able to sit back -- Michael Phelps is just insane. The guy is one of the greatest athletes ever. For him to reach out and post

something about me or whatever is pretty cool.

That's kind of some of those moments where I'm able to sit back and kind of reflect on what happened and just be really grateful for it because stuff like that doesn't come around too often. So it's pretty special.

**Q. Ryan, just because you have been -- you have played with so many top golfers at a similar kind of phase in their career, I guess how have you seen Scottie handle these last two months?**

RYAN PALMER: He's the same guy when I saw him at Dr. Van Biezen's office where we train. He walked in, and he's no different than he was six months ago.

That's what's so unique about him is he's just such a humble and down to earth guy. I've listened to plenty of interviews, he'll never change. His upbringing has been so great. His family, I know them all, and they're such great folks. That's what's so great about him is somebody will be thrown in that limelight so fast, and to do what he's done, and then being home it's like nothing's changed.

Even seeing him this morning for the first time playing today, it's the same guy I've cut up with for the last two years on TOUR playing practice rounds, and that's what is very unique. You don't get that very often. It's such an individual game, but he's taken it to where he knows -- he's got such a great team around him and a lot of good friends around him as well from back home.

No, he's the same guy, it seems like to me. Nothing's changed on the outside for me. So it's pretty remarkable to watch a guy like that do what he did, has been doing, and nothing's changed. It says a lot.

HALEY PETERSON: Scottie and Ryan, as always, thanks for taking the time to join us. We wish you the best of luck this week.

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