

American Century Championship

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Lake Tahoe, Nevada, USA

Edgewood Tahoe

Steph Curry

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Steph Curry.

Q. A lot of guys have been asking, hey, they're thinking you've had a little bit more time to prepare your golf game this year. Mardy Fish on media day said, well, Steph's not playing with Justin Timberlake because he can't make it, so he might be concentrating a little more. Tell us about your chances for American Century Championship.

STEPH CURRY: I'm always excited to be here. I love the event so much. It's become kind of a family tradition, with now me and my dad and my brother in the field -- teammate Andre Iguodala. A lot of familiarity with the surroundings, all the energy the fans who support it and bring. I'm obviously very confident in my game every time I come out here and just a matter of can you hit shots.

One thing I'm going to do is going to have fun first and foremost and enjoy the competitive environment out there.

I think the key for me, obviously, just getting off to a good start so I keep myself in it and hopefully with the unfortunate extra time that I had with the playoffs ending a little sooner than I wanted to, the golf game will benefit from it. We'll see how it goes.

Q. This might be a little bit of a reach but your good performances here, usually, the following year, you've done really well in the NBA Finals. Is there anything to that?

STEPH CURRY: Yeah, because that means that I probably -- I don't know if I'm following the pattern right, but last year we won a championship, and I had probably three weeks before I came here, which it's a quick turnaround. The year prior, I had plenty of time to kind of knock the cobwebs off and play a little bit more before I came up here.

I like that cycle. Don't win a championship in the league,

play well here, then go back and win another championship out there on the court. Hopefully I can manifest that for the next, what, 11 months; that would be awesome.

Q. When M.J. was here, when he used to play here, he said that when he retired from basketball, he would eventually win this. Of course, he had other things kind of take his attention away, but do you sense maybe that that might be something -- is that a legitimate thing, do you think?

STEPH CURRY: Honestly, I feel like the way I'm approaching where I feel my game is I have the game to do win it now. I can say it all I want to. I finished fourth twice I think. So it's in there. It's a matter can I put it together for 54 holes and balance the fun and the focus that you need to have to play all three rounds and play great.

So my goal has always been to try to do it as an active NBA athlete. I got a few more years left to do it. We'll see how it goes.

Q. Last year you finished third in the long-drive competition.

STEPH CURRY: I beat Patty Mahomes by one yard. I don't know what's going to happen in the afternoon wave, but I got him by a yard.

Q. Is it important for you to win it?

STEPH CURRY: I swung like it, absolutely. (Laughter).

Q. You brought up a good point as far as an active player. Only one won it as an active player. That's Mario Lemieux. And I know Joe Pavelski came close last year with being --

STEPH CURRY: That was in the playoff, right?

Q. Basketball question, a lot of moves have been made in the Western Conference over the last few weeks, obviously you made a pretty substantial addition, too. How do you evaluate what the Western



Conference looks like going into this season after, I think, a number of teams had what they would classify as like disappointing regular seasons going into the playoffs, how do you think the competition is going to ramp up this year?

STEPH CURRY: I think the competition is always high. A few surprise teams every year, but you kind of know who the top echelon of the West, of the East is. Obviously Denver winning. They're a very complete team, and they played amazing. Jokic is awesome, Jamal Murray. Every other team is making adjustments trying to get better. Even when you win, you try to get better every year.

Some moves may seem drastic. Some might be a little fine tweaks. But I think every team is trying to take stock of what they have. For us, it was about trying to make the pieces fit a little bit better to try to give us more versatility on both sides of the ball.

We understand our core is back, and adding CP, some other vets that will really help us to fill out the rotation and increase our depth. We've got two young guys who are in their third year, JK and Moses Moody, who will be huge, have huge opportunities to take another step in their career.

That's where we are. We feel like our team makes a lot more sense this year. It's just a matter of going out and playing, letting the season unfold and understanding what we need to beat the best of the best in the West. There's a lot of good teams, and we want to be one of them.

Q. What do you think about the midseason tournament and the idea of single elimination, knock-out type stuff in the NBA, not something we've seen before.

STEPH CURRY: It's fun for fans to have something new to kind of lock in, especially early in the year. For us, it doesn't change the regular season schedule in terms of the amount of games we're playing, just the championship game that there's a lot on the line monetarily, the trophy, the narrative of who is kind of the best team in the early part of the season.

It's something different. The venue in Vegas will be fun for a lot of fans to come in just for those two, the semifinals and the championship game. But it will take an identity of its own over time. It's hard to kind of predict what it's going to feel like or look like from a fan perspective, a player perspective.

But again for us, as players, unless you're in the championship game playing for the prize money and the

trophy and the pride and all that, it's still 82 games. It's just under a different narrative.

Q. Update on "Underrated." I saw some really good social posts with your nonprofit, traveling with them this summer, empowering youth, increasing access to golf. Just an update from you.

STEPH CURRY: We're currently in our second year. We increased the field that is coming to each venue that we have from 48 to 96 now. That's equal across both the boys and girls, fields, that we have. We have amazing courses hosting our tournaments.

We were at The Park in West Palm Beach. Last week we were at Firestone in Akron. They're going to Paiute in Las Vegas, Chambers Bay in Washington, and then they're coming down for the tour championship at Lake Merced in San Francisco.

Increasing the field, and obviously the championship venues that are giving kids a first-class experience. It's been an amazing journey so far. We've had some amazing partners that have been part of making this a success. DJ Khaled came out to a stop and gave the kids a lot of good energy. Butch Harmon coming to a stop in Vegas to talk to the kids.

We had Gil Hanse come talk to the kids about course design and his experience in the industry. So it's the competitive atmosphere that we give them, the competitive experience, but also trying to instill in them some of the life skills and workforce skills that can help them even if professional golf is not in their future. But we also hope there's a few that can crack the professional tours and get more reputation on the tour.

Q. Just a life question. July is Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. I think about all the hats and roles you wear -- dad, son, champion, your job -- but Black men don't often have a space to say, hey, I'm not okay, hey I'm not doing well. I'd love for you to speak to that, because I don't think there's anything stronger than saying I'm not doing okay. What do you feel?

STEPH CURRY: All that needs to be -- I think access to therapy or outlets that can help through tough times or even just developing the right perspective on the challenges that life throws at you. Kevin Love and DeMar DeRozan in our league have been huge champions of promoting self-help and self-care and mental wellness and mental health.

My sister is a huge proponent and champion of mental health awareness and has used a lot of her platform to



speaking on that. No matter what background you have or what industry you're in or what level of success you've had, you have to take that seriously. You have to find the right space to deal with life and all the highs and lows. But it needs to be talked about more, and I think it is.

Q. Are there any lessons you take from basketball and apply to golf and vice versa, any lessons from golf that you apply to basketball?

STEPH CURRY: The next-shot mentality is huge. You've got to have a short memory on both the basketball court and golf. Obviously the basketball court it's a little more reactive so you don't have much time to dwell on what's going on. In golf you have a long walk from the next shot to the next shot to deal with the thoughts that's going on between the ears. That next-shot mentality, you have to have a bit of amnesia out there.

Also, in both sports, when you find that flow, just to be able to stay in that space for as long as you can and enjoy it and lock into whatever is producing the right shots, the right visuals that you need to see. For me, when the ball is hitting the net every time, there's no better feeling, in either sport. Golf is a little harder to find it. You have to be a little more patient and deal with, I guess, how the game of golf can humble you. I think that was probably the biggest similarities for me.

Q. You achieved a great deal in the golf space. You just won the Ambassador of Golf Award, founded the Underrated Golf Tour. What are you most proud of in your achievements in golf?

STEPH CURRY: I think just the fact that I've turned a passion -- I started playing when I was 10. For a long time, it was just about me playing, who I got to play with and seeing how much better I could get at the game and maybe showing a member guest or two and turning that passion into an opportunity.

You just mentioned four amazing either entities or honors that I've had. The fact of being recognized for that effort so soon because I feel I just got started on this journey of creating opportunity, scholarships, a platform for especially Black and Brown kids around the country that need to get golf clubs in their hands a lot earlier in life and developing a pipeline for them to pursue golf at the highest level but also get access to the world of golf that we all have benefited from in some way, shape or form because we're all here, that's what I'm most proud of, I guess, in general because it's not easy to do. I've had a lot of great people and partners and sponsors and brands that have joined this mission with me. I'm excited about where we are and the future.

Q. I was talking to Butch Harmon the other day about your session with him out at Cypress Point. He said the biggest key for you is calming the nerves when you play in the tournament tomorrow to the weekend. Can you compare like the nerves that you feel stepping up to the first tee tomorrow to competitive golf tournament to playing in a high-pressure situation like the NBA Finals?

STEPH CURRY: I think I've said it before. I get way more nervous on the first tee of any event than basketball. I still get butterflies and all that on the court, but that's my happy place.

As much as I think I'm preparing for American Century Championship, I still know I don't know all the ins and outs of learning the game at the highest level. It's a never-ending journey on that front. It's no surprise that on the first tee -- and even the adrenaline rush you get through the four hours and some change hours that you're out there, I love it. Me and Klay played in a match against Kelce and Mahomes and Clayey talked to him after I haven't felt that much adrenaline in a long time.

It's something about this game, I don't know how to explain it. But it brings a lot out of you.

Q. That one you hit on 13 last year, 97 yards out, splashed it in, would you say that is the greatest golf shot you've hit? And also would you admit how many times you've watched that video?

STEPH CURRY: It's 1B to my only hole-in-one. It's 1B because it was in the tournament, it was out here, I love this place and the reaction I got from the crowd.

I watched it probably 40 times that day. (Laughter) and I probably watched it that many times since.

The people that -- all my guys, my dad, brother, everybody who is staying at the condo with us, they're probably sick of hearing the highlight, the volume and the commentary just because how many times I watched it. But again, it's an out-of-body experience on that one.

Q. If you could pluck a power from any of your fellow competitors, who would you want to steal an attribute from? I've asked a lot of people this. People said your jump shot. In respective professions, would you want Alfonso Ribeiro's dance moves or something like that?

STEPH CURRY: In golf terms, I want Mardy Fish's tempo because I just love watching him swing.

MARDY FISH: Thanks, man. (Laughter).

STEPH CURRY: Oh, he's right there. That was not planned at all. Not planned at all. Sweetest tempo I've ever seen, big fella.

MARDY FISH: Thanks, man. (Laughter). What about the putting stroke?

STEPH CURRY: Only, what, Saturday of 2021 -- 2020, sorry.

MARDY FISH: 2020. Only for four hours.

STEPH CURRY: Only for four hours. (Laughter).

Probably, I don't know, we're close in that respect. But I still just love watching Mahomes creativity, the way he sees the game. I feel like everything is in slow motion. He'd probably say the same about me. But I love watching him play.

Q. If it's not going to be you, who would you like to see get this thing done come Sunday afternoon?

STEPHEN CURRY: Wardell Stephen Curry I -- Dell Curry. I'd like to see -- we call him The Originator. I'd like to see him get it done. Sorry, Mardy.

Q. We had your pops for media day. He mentioned the car ride over, that's when the bet is determined. Curious what the bet is. But I also asked him about Caleb and Cody Martin. We covered them down in Reno for the University of Nevada. Carolina guys. Pops was with them in Charlotte. Caleb just played in the Finals. Do you cross paths with those guys? What do you think about their respective games?

STEPH CURRY: I've played against both of them. They're amazing athletes. They have a toughness and a grit to them. Obviously the ability to make it in this league, especially at the wing position, is extremely difficult, and you have to kind of have that toughness and know-how and I'm sure they've all come a long way from when you all covered them in college.

Q. Do you have the bet in place at this point?

STEPH CURRY: We're still working on massaging up the handicaps in the sense -- I spot both of them points. I think right now the soft agreement is I'm giving my dad 12 points total and my brother 45. So I've got to play well.

Q. I cover the Knicks when I'm in New York. Donte DiVincenzo question. What are some of the things he

did for you and what are your thoughts on him signing with the Knicks?

STEPH CURRY: Super happy, super proud of him. We had a good conversation the last off-season when he was trying to figure out what he wanted to do. I know he's coming off injury and trying to find a situation that could help him establish who he is as an NBA player and how much value he brings to winning teams.

And he proved that above and beyond with us all year. He knows how to play a game. You can tell he won at the highest level in college. The Knicks got a good one, and I'm happy that he got his fair share of CBA, too. It was good.

Q. Follow up on Donte DiVincenzo. How did he impact you guys, and what's your impression of him after spending a season?

STEPH CURRY: He's all about basketball. He's all about winning. He brings great energy to the locker room. I used to call him "the vet" even though he's still on the younger side just because he has that kind of spirit about him. He plays way beyond his years. And he's good on both sides of the ball.

He can play-make better than most people probably realize. So he fills a lot of holes on a team and he's not selfish in the respect of, I know he wants to start and be that guy, but he also understands where value can be created on a team no matter what the role is you're asked to do. He bought in right away, and he got rewarded for it.

Q. What's more pressure, hitting a game-winning 3 or beating your dad in this tournament?

STEPH CURRY: More pressure -- beating my dad in this tournament because the game-winning 3, it's all confidence, you let it go and you live with the results.

But I made two -- it had nothing to do with the outcome of the tournament -- but I had two clutch putts and two clutch holes on 18 to beat my dad in years past, and I've gotten more joy out of those than a couple of game-winners, for sure.

Q. What are the text conversations looking like between you and your dad going into this thing, coming out of it, as far as that friendly-fire sort of thing coming into a tournament like this?

STEPH CURRY: Last year, we used to have the lake bet, which kind of died off a little bit. But what I did to replace it, I made these heavyweight championship belts for the -- I

forget what I put on there, but it's the Curry golf belt, whoever, one of the three of us wins, gets to take the belt for the year, and caddie gets one too.

So all we get is pictures of where that belt is in his house over the past year. He has a nice little spot on his mantel that he put it up. I get all those pictures just to remind us who's got the belt and who's the reigning champ.

Q. You're talking WWE style belt?

STEPH CURRY: Oh, yeah, big one, too. Like the Canelo type, walking in the ring. Got some good weight to it too. You might see it on the 18th green on Sunday for one of us to take. If one of us is not winning the tournament, we'll have our own championship belt presentation.

Q. 12-to-1 odds, you're going off at the Caesars Sportsbook. What do you think of when you're out there? You've been off for a little while. How are you looking at your chances for this one this week?

STEPH CURRY: I'm very confident, and golf is so fickle that way, if that's the word. You just never know what's going to happen. Just come in with the right attitude and just try to have fun. Try to treat it like a tournament, not necessarily how serious it is, but try to have fun and play like a normal round.

For me, I have gotten better as the days go on. If I get off to a good start and give myself a chance to be in it and feel that energy, I feel like I'll respond really well. Other than that hole-out on 13 last year, I had a rough two days to start and I finished strong. Just get off to a good start tomorrow, just have fun.

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