

Skechers World Champions Cup supporting Shriners Children's

Tuesday, December 2, 2025

Clearwater, Florida, USA

Feather Sound Country Club

Darren Clarke

Soren Kjeldsen

Jesper Parnavik

Thomas Bjorn

Alex Cejka

Miguel Angel Jimenez

Bernhard Langer

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome Team Europe to the Media Center here at the Skechers World Champions Cup supporting Shriners Children's. Joining us on stage is captain Darren Clarke, vice captain Soren Kjeldsen, vice captain Jesper Parnevik, Thomas Bjorn, Alex Cejka, World Golf Hall of Famer member Bernhard Langer, and World Golf Hall of Fame member Colin Montgomerie.

We'll start with you, Captain Clarke.

DARREN CLARKE: Obviously it's wonderful to be here representing Team Europe again. I think Monty phrased this perfectly last time two years ago when we had a great event at the Concession.

Our day is off representing Europe and Ryder Cups and stuff were all past us and now we have the opportunity to do it again.

To be here captaining this team is a wonderful honor for me. I'm delighted to do so. I just hope we can improve on our third place finish last time. We have an exciting few days ahead.

SØREN KJELDSSEN: Very excited and honored to be here. It's great group to be a part of, legends of the game. Really looking forward to it. It should be a great week. I'm



looking forward to hanging with these guys all week.

JESPER PARNEVIK: For this week I have made all the mistakes I can make this week. I got lost driving here. I couldn't find the 1st tee in Sunday's match with Darren. I couldn't find the 10th tee yesterday. And I just today figured out how to work the shower in the hotel.

(Laughter).

We're all good. On a serious note, this team, it's been a few years since we've done this at the Ryder Cup. Everyone on the team has done the Ryder Cup, know how special it is with team play, especially in golf since we're only playing for ourself most of the time. We're all really looking forward to this.

THOMAS BJØRN: I was fortunate to be part up in New York this year for the Ryder Cup, and you come into this environment and all the things that go through that team, you can hear in this group of guys as well.

It's just what we are, what we've always been part of. I know all the years we played Ryder Cups we still carried into this group of guys, the way we talk to each other, the way we treat each other.

Hopefully we can emulate what they did in New York and go out and put in a great performance this week.

ALEX CEJKA: The boys said it already. We play the same Tour. We have great chemistry all year long. A tournament like this week is nothing else than a regular tournament for us. Chemistry-wise, we all like each other. We really play well. Hopefully we can do a little bit better, as Darren said, than the last time.

ANGEL CABRERA JIMENEZ: Look for me, it's a great honor to represent Team Europe with these great players and a lots of history on this table here. For me representing Europe, as I do in the Ryder Cup, as I do in the first Champions Cup a couple years ago. To me it's a great honor to be here.

BERNHARD LANGER: I think Miguel needs to loosen up a bit. He's a bit tight this morning. Otherwise, we're doing very well. (Laughter).

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No, it's always very special when you represent your continent, your Tour, your country. And a team like this, we have a great captain in Darren, and every team member is very unique and very special. Different countries represented, but we all play for Europe.

I was fortunate enough to play ten Ryder Cups and be a captain, and that was some of the best moments in my life. This is the very next best thing. So we're excited to have the opportunity to compete as a team against the other two teams and to show that senior golf or over-50 golf is still at a very high level.

I think you will see that the next few days. I'm thrilled to be back with some of my partners from the Ryder Cup. I played with many of these guys together on the same team and even in the same match. It doesn't get any better than this. I'm really thrilled. I was really excited when I heard that this is going to happen again.

Like we heard before, this could be a 100-year event. I truly believe so. We've just all got to do our part and make it exciting, which we plan on doing.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: I'd just like to start by asking Jesper how the shower actually does work. I haven't quite found out, and I've been here three days, Christ.

JESPER PARNEVIK: Anyone who knows knows.

(Laughter).

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: How does it work?

JESPER PARNEVIK: I think you put -- turn one button down and this way and pull one. There is always water coming out of the wrong one.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Okay. There's a dinner tonight. I must try tonight.

BERNHARD LANGER: They want you to smell good.

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Absolutely. Great honor to be here. Of course it is. Any time you put a European shirt on I'm thrilled. As Bernhard was saying there so rightly, ten Ryder cups, I managed to play in eight of them, so 18 between us. It's an honor to sit next to him on any level. To sit next to these guys is an honor as well.

Let's hope, as Darren was saying and everyone was saying, we have a good team. We had a great team on paper, but it's not played on paper. It's played out there.

Let's hope we can do an awful lot better than we did on our first occasion. All I can say is I'm delighted to be here. A long way from London to come, but at the same time, well, well worth it to be part of this team and part of this great group of guys. We just look forward to playing.

THE MODERATOR: We'll turn it over for questions. We'd like to refer to no questions about showers ever again, please.

Q. Darren, clearly your team is racked with nerves this week. How do you possibly keep them loose? On a serious note, in terms of the captaining duties, I think we have a pretty good sense of what a Ryder Cup captaincy looks like. How different is this week on a practical level?

DARREN CLARKE: It's very different. This is -- as you can see, this is a little bit more relaxed right now, but make no mistake, when it comes to Friday morning, we're all proud Europeans. Quite difficult when you're trying to suggest to two Hall of Famers what they should be doing and stuff. It's a little bit different than that, playing Ryder Cups.

But Friday morning when the gong goes off, we will be ready to play.

JESPER PARNEVIK: I'm going to jump in. I think we're starting Thursday.

DARREN CLARKE: Yeah, Thursday. Yeah, when Thursday comes along, we are here to try to win this week, make no mistake. We laid it out the first day at Concession and didn't have the best couple of days. We want to do ourselves probably a little better than we did last time and get ourselves right in the mix.

With this team I firmly believe we can do that. We have a mixture of we're all experienced, as you know. We're playing on the Champions Tour. But we have a mixture of guys that have been there, done it all before, seen it all before, and we're planning on competing with each other nearly every other week.

It's not too difficult to get a really good European team bond. That's what comes to us. Whenever we used to go play Ryder Cups, one of our mantras on the European side was you park your ego outside on the Monday morning and pick it up on the Monday after the Ryder Cup.

This team, we have no egos here. We're all just trying to help each other and do the best we can do this week.

Q. How about the format? It's unusual, to say the

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least. We don't see it really ever. Strategically, how are you approaching it?

DARREN CLARKE: Yeah, I think it would be remiss of me if I didn't give a quick shout out. Charlie Besser, the man who came up with this idea is sitting right behind you with Intersport, and Peter Jacobson and Brittany Janus who is right at the back there, so all the stuff she's worked tirelessly the past three, four months to make everything easy. I want to give Intersport a big shout out for what they have done.

They've also come up with the format for it. The format, you can't think about it. Regular tournaments, you make a birdie, you make a bogey, okay, I've got to get back and do this. This one is hole by hole by hole and then see how the totals work out.

If you try to keep track of everything going on, not many of us could do it. Jesper definitely could not do it, so you've just got to try to play as well as you can and get as many points as you can for the team.

Every point, every half point is different because you're taking points away from the other team's ability to go further as well. It's different, but it's amazing to think the last time came down to the last hole in concession a couple of years ago. So I would expect this also to be close.

Each hole is massively important. It's difficult. We get a much better idea looking at the scoreboard on Sunday afternoon when it's really coming down to it.

Q. Kind of the opposite tack of the first question, Darren, or any of the former Ryder Cup captains that's are sitting up there, what is -- without getting into the state secrets that you're never going to divulge anyway, what is the thread that runs through this event, as it does the Ryder Cup? What's comparable?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: I think, as you've just seen, we tend to enjoy it, right? We're here for enjoyment, and I'm a great believer, if you enjoy something, you're usually quite good at it. We enjoy it, and therefore, we're quite good at it.

BERNHARD LANGER: Yeah, I think it's the camaraderie and just the team effort. It's so different from any other tournament where you just play for yourself, and if you mess up, you pay the price for it and your caddie maybe. But it's a team event. We stay pretty loose generally.

Like Monty says, enjoy it. Don't let the pressure overwhelm you, which can happen in a Ryder Cup. So this

is part of the success story, I think, that we have in Europe, just having a good time and enjoy just being a part of it. It's like the Olympic games.

Only one or two or three win medals, but just being there is a wonderful thing, and we're thrilled to be here and represent Europe.

THOMAS BJØRN: For me it's always been like we get asked that question a lot, what is it that we do that works so well for us? I think it's always, as it's hard for people from the outside to pinpoint it, I think sometimes for us it's quite difficult to pinpoint it.

But the one thing I always said, once you walk through the door into a European team room, there's just a special atmosphere about that room and you don't really want to leave it.

To say what it is is difficult, but I think it just comes from the people in the room really. A lot of times it extends beyond the players. It extends to a much bigger group of wives and girlfriends and caddies and a whole setup around us, and we just carry that with us.

It's a unique atmosphere that's just difficult to say what it is, but it's a fantastic atmosphere to be a part of.

Q. Also, from a pairing standpoint, with the format that is in use this week, does that make it any different in terms of how you would prepare your pairings as compared to a Ryder Cup where it's straight up match play?

DARREN CLARKE: Yes and no. We take a look, if you go back to a couple of years ago with Concession, Bernhard played with Alex, and they got on great together. It was Alex, I think he said it at the time, Bernhard was his hero growing up, and to be able to play in a tournament representing Europe meant an awful lot to him.

I don't profess to be a very clever man, but that may be not too clever, not too smart to split those two up. They enjoy each other. We all enjoy each other's company. Anybody can play with anybody on this team.

Thomas and I fortunately won, Strick's team won earlier this year, so there's a chance that him and I could be playing together. Then you've got Monty and Miguel --

ANGEL CABRERA JIMENEZ: I have to play --

DARREN CLARKE: You have the teams now. The thing is, with our team, because we know each other so well, anybody can play with anybody. That's just who we are.

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There's no language difference, no nothing. We can go out with whoever it is.

It may not be the biggest secrets in the world I've given away there, but there's a good chance that might well happen on Thursday. Thanks, Jesper.

JESPER PARNEVIK: Pairings are out.

DARREN CLARKE: We shall see. Does that make a difference? If there's more players, then there's maybe more strategy involved than where you position those players. Then because we're not redrawing, which I'm a huge fan of, in between, there's no change in position of those players. What you get on the first day, they go out again on the first afternoon. So we're not changing that up.

The players' games, if you look at them, whatever's in the afternoon where you're picking the best drive, everybody plays very similar. There's nobody that hits it 400 yards long. So there's no real big thing. In terms of what we have, we will be just fine, whichever pairings we have.

Q. I have a question for you, Darren. What are you looking forward to most about playing on this course?

DARREN CLARKE: The course, whenever I got here and watched most of the guys, the little clip they done on Instagram and that stuff and watched all the holes, it was very interesting. I got here Saturday evening. I usually come here twice a year to go tarpon fishing, and I've never actually come and played golf.

To come here to Feather Stone and see how good it is, the condition is just amazing. They really pulled out all the stops for us. It's an incredible effort on short notice coming here.

The course is fair. It's going to give you opportunities for birdies, which is exactly what we want because then it's going to make it exciting for everybody that's watching both here and on TV. The hospitality has been great. Everybody couldn't be more welcoming and helpful and what have you.

In terms of coming to a new venue for the first time for us, this ticks every box. We're very fortunate and thankful that we're here.

Q. This question is for Bernhard. It's got to be kind of cool playing in a tournament that is sponsored by the company that also sponsors you. Every pair of shoes in my closet are Skechers. Unfortunately, I don't own a pair of Skechers golf shoes. What do you like most about the shoe since you've been wearing it since the

Masters?

BERNHARD LANGER: I'm thrilled that Skechers is the title sponsor here. I think it's a fantastic move because they're a growing company worldwide, and they make a wonderful product.

Well, I believe I've probably had a chance to try their shoes. I came across them two years ago, and I was immediately excited about the slip-ins. But what I like about the golf shoes specifically is the comfort that they provide and the stability. That's what I look for. I'm in these shoes six to ten hours a day, and I need some comfort to make it around that long, that many hours, but I also need the stability because we put a lot of stress on our shoes.

Like Nicklaus says, the game is played from the ground up. We're pushing off the ground and creating a lot of Torque, and the shoe has to help you do all that. So I've been extremely excited to be wearing these shoes, and I've done very well with them, and I plan on continuing to use them.

Q. Did they come up with a signature golf shoe for you?

BERNHARD LANGER: I don't know that yet. We haven't talked about that at this point in time, but who knows?

Q. Pickle ball shoe too?

BERNHARD LANGER: I wish I would have had their pickle ball shoes. Maybe I wouldn't have hurt myself if I was wearing their shoes then.

Q. When you've been playing in international or representing your country for around 30 years, how much with all those wins and losses has the pride you have in representing Europe and also the rivalry with the guys on the other two teams grown over time?

COLIN MONTGOMERIE: Yeah, very few losses.

(Laughter).

Great pride, great honor to be part of this. When I set off on my journey in 1991 at Kiawah Island on the European team -- I mean, Bernhard, Seve, Faldo, Woosnam, Lyle -- it was just incredible to have that set and to go through that journey, if you like. Then you go through the next era, the Darren, the Thomas, the Luke Donald, the Poulterers of this world, Harrington, fantastic group -- Jimenez here. Fantastic group of guys that I've played alongside in the Ryder Cup. It's a great time.

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This is, as Bernhard was saying and we're all saying, you feel that the time of representing Europe is over, or was over, and then you reach this 50 years old and this opportunity through Intersport has been given to us again that, okay, let's make -- let's try and make the European side for the World Champions Cup. I think it's superb.

I was so glad to play two years ago, thoroughly enjoyed it. I think the point system worked remarkably well. Nobody quite knew how it was going to work, but it worked extremely well. To come down the last hole, the final game tied was quite amazing. 219 points each or something incredible.

We look forward to having a close match between the three of us, the three teams, and I'm just, as you say, very honored to be part of it.

Q. This one's for Thomas. Thomas, we're a couple weeks, a couple months now removed from Europe's success at Bethpage. When you look back at that week, what's your most defining memory? Maybe something we didn't see on TV.

THOMAS BJØRN: For me it's how that group just stuck together through some pretty hard days on the golf course for them and how they stood up for each other, and everything that came at them from the outside just made them stronger as a group.

Luke has a very unique group of players. I've said publicly as well, I know Monty has said I very much back him to do it again because I feel like this group of players is his players. He's had them twice. They've been very successful. It's hard to see that not nine or ten of them are in the next team.

So it's his players. He understands them. He works well with them. To see how that group went through what was really tough on the golf course, how they just became stronger and better. I think it's a very -- for me it was a very special thing to see. I've always said within of the best days I've had in my life on a golf course was the time I didn't play, and that was the Sunday at Medinah to watch that unfold.

But I have to say the whole two weeks we spent pretty much in New York was pretty amazing, and I think this is a great time for European Ryder Cup team, and therefore I think Luke is the best choice for captain going forward because he understands this group better than anyone.

Q. Did you learn anything about any player in particular that you didn't know before that week?

THOMAS BJØRN: Not really. We had 11 of them in Rome, and you could hardly tell the difference between the one you changed. So we very much knew what was coming at us.

They're just a group of guys that really do understand each other well, and we've all been part of some great Ryder Cup teams of the past. I've been in that team room 10 or 11 times. I work with the three guys here as a vice captain, two of them. I've seen a lot, and I just have to say, as much as I've been part of great teams, this team is very unique how all 12 of them stand up for each other and work together.

It's just a very good time for European Ryder Cup teams.

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