

The Ryder Cup

Monday, 1 September, 2025

Farmingdale, New York, USA

Bethpage Black Course

Team Europe

Luke Donald

Shane Lowry

Sepp Straka

Jon Rahm

Matt Fitzpatrick

Ludvig Aberg

Viktor Hovland

Press Conference

NICK DOUGHERTY: The wait is nearly over for the 45th playing of the Ryder Cup, a warm welcome to Sky Studios on the outskirts of London and the home of televised golf in the U.K. and Ireland, also, though, where we will host Captain Luke Donald today where he will bid to make his European side whole and we will find out the 12 that will face the United States at Bethpage.

Under four weeks to go. It's a long old wait between but more than worth it, the biannual contest as continents collide, Europe versus the United States. On the back of victory in Rome, we heard Keegan make his team up, the six are now 12 for the United States last Wednesday. Today we will find out the 12 players to represent Europe at Bethpage Black, one of the great sporting cities in the world of New York will be the backdrop.

Without further ado, we should welcome our captain who has led by example both as a player but also in the driver seat.

Two more years, and welcome to an icon of European teams, it's Captain Luke Donald.

We have walked this road before two years ago, Luke, as a Ryder Cup Captain for the first time, usually one go. That's usually what you get. You did a fine job in Rome and you're back again with the responsibility. How has it been



this time around?

LUKE DONALD: Yeah, two more years. Two more years, they shouted. I can't believe we're back here again. The time has flown by. But it was the greatest privilege of my golfing life to be Ryder Cup Captain in Rome. I've obviously dedicated the last three years now of my life towards this.

I understand exactly what the Ryder Cup represents and absolutely delighted to be able to share the next six players that are going to form out our team.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Right before we do that let's remind everyone at home about the six we already have, the automatic qualifiers for the 2025 Ryder Cup. When you look through them, they look well to us, Luke. What do you make of your first six?

LUKE DONALD: Incredible. Incredible players. Incredible people. You could just go down the line, Rasmus what he did showing such heart and grit to get through automatically. Tyrrell had very limited start to make it automatically. Justin just keeps defining his age and time. It's nice to have Tommy, FedExCup Champion. Rory, obviously a giant, and Bob, we all know what he did two years ago, unbeaten as a rookie. He is a much better player than he was two years ago.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Six lines to go to the Big Apple but we need six more so rather than keeping them waiting, let's get stuck into it. Your six Captain's picks. Please give us the first one to represent the Europeans.

LUKE DONALD: Yes, pick one, first up we have a man who thrives in the biggest stages and whose passion for the Ryder Cup is second-to-none. A major champion, he is making his third consecutive appearance for Team Europe, my first pick is Shane Lowry.

NICK DOUGHERTY: There we have it. The first captain's pick.

Shane, great to see you. Many congratulations. How does it feel to be wearing the blue of Europe again?



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SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, thanks, Nick. Honestly, it's unbelievable. It's been a stressful few weeks, stressful year trying to make the team, and obviously I'm very grateful that Luke and his team have put their faith in me again this time, and hopefully I can repay them by producing the goods in Bethpage in a few weeks' time.

NICK DOUGHERTY: I think a lot of people watching felt like Shane is one, Shane is one. For you, how easy of a decision was this and what does Shane add to the team?

LUKE DONALD: He obviously was very close to making it automatically, lost by four points. I think we see in that highlight reel what Shane brings to a Ryder Cup, his infectious energy. He understands the team above everything else more than most of the guys, and it's just really great to have his energy and his vibe in the team room. But one hell of a player, as well.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Nice words from your captain, Shane. In 2021 after you played your first one, after it, you found it quite tough going back to regular golf because of what it meant to play for Europe.

What is it that it means to play for a European side in the Ryder Cup?

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, I remember the comedown afterwards from being there with the team and how much I enjoyed the whole experience, even though in 2021 we got beaten quite badly.

But all my focus then after that was kind of put into making that team in 2023, and try not only making the team, but trying to win the Ryder Cup back.

I had an amazing week in Rome, and we did a great job. Everyone, Luke and everyone involved, did a great job, and I was, you know, grateful to be a part of that team.

You know, I honestly feel like I get up every morning and one of my main goals is always working towards, you know, whatever Ryder Cup is next. So Bethpage is very close, around the corner, and I've put a lot of work into it this year. I feel like it's been at the forefront of my mind for a long time now, and I'm very excited for the next few weeks.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Well, you've had a taste of a Ryder Cup in the United States. How do you think this one is going to be?

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, obviously Whistling Straits was a bit different where there was no European fans at all. I

know there won't be as many European fans as Americans this time but there will still be a few, and I imagine the few that come will bring their support. There's been a lot of talk about what it's going to be like at Bethpage. If there's one thing I know for sure, I know Luke Donald and his team had have us ready to go when it comes to that Friday morning.

I'm excited to get to work with everybody behind the scenes and like I said just really excited for the next few weeks

NICK DOUGHERTY: Thoroughly deserved and we'll look forward to watching you at Bethpage Black, Luke Donald first Ryder Cup captains pick reminder. The first one is in the books. It's a really good start, Luke. It's a really strong start. Let's move on to your second captain's pick.

LUKE DONALD: For my second pick who is a two-time major champion continuing the great Spanish legacy in the Ryder Cup, he is proudly part of Europe for the fourth time, my second pick is Jon Rahm.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Is it even really a Ryder Cup if there's not a Spanish player on the side?

For you this is your fourth go around. What does it mean this time?

JON RAHM: It's a different feeling. I did not think I was going to be as emotional as I feel right now being picked, even though Luke called me and told me a few days ago.

It's going to be special. You know, it's going to be special. I cannot wait to be in Bethpage. New Yorkers are going to be incredible fans. It's going to be difficult for us. But I'm looking forward to hopefully having a better show than the last time we did in the U.S.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Jon is obviously a stalwart, and he's also one of the best players in the world. What is his role within the team?

LUKE DONALD: I think John really sets the standard for us. He's someone that does a lot of his action through just his processes of being meticulous with what he does. He's usually the first person up. He's the last person out of the team room, things like that that you notice with Jon. It's amazing what he understands, the history of the Ryder Cup, what it represents, and obviously wants to follow in the footsteps of some amazing Spanish players that have led the way, the Sergios, the José Marias and of course Seve who we idolise in the Ryder Cup for what he represents. Jon takes that history under heart and plays like this because of that.

NICK DOUGHERTY: There's been one other Ryder Cup in New York State. It was in Oak Hill, 1995. I believe the European side were victorious there. Jon, you're going to be a part of that attempt again in New York State.

What is that challenge? Try and explain to us, having played so much golf in the United States and been part of Ryder Cups both home and away, what is that challenge going to look like in New York.

JON RAHM: It's difficult to explain. I think the biggest challenge for most of us, like Shane said, the Ryder Cup in Whistling was a little different during COVID, right. So the environment might be the biggest challenge but it can be used to your advantage.

In my experience, New Yorker fans can actually be quite fun. They are very funny, very creative. So if you approach it with the right mindset, I think it can be a really, really fun week. Stressful, yes, but it could be very productive.

So I'm looking forward to being with the rest of the group and hopefully have a great go at it like last time.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Just before we let you go, when we were getting ready for this I saw you come online, is that a baby Yoda that's behind your head there looking after your Memorial Tournament trophy?

JON RAHM: Yeah. We have Bilbao right there, and then we have a picture of me and Seve, I forget who did that for the Masters, a picture of me and Kelley and Baby Yoda. A bit of a Star Wars fan here in the office. And then there is not quite six-foot Darth Vader but it may or may not be in the corner.

NICK DOUGHERTY: So there we have it. Great to hear from Jon, the second member that you picked. Perhaps no surprises there. Let's remind ourselves of how that looks now: Shane with company and Jon as well.

We have two of the six, take us on to your third captain's pick.

LUKE DONALD: My third pick is someone who made his Ryder Cup debut as part of our winning team in Rome two years ago. He was the first Austrian to win on the PGA TOUR. Has won twice this year on the PGA TOUR in 2025. My third pick is Sepp Straka.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Good vibes only for Sepp Straka, back again. Many congratulations for making Luke's side to face the United States.

How do you think this one will feel the second time around for you in Ryder Cup?

SEPP STRAKA: Yeah, it's incredible just watching those videos that you just showed. It gets you really excited. You think that making a Ryder Cup would just be checking off a list. But no, it just makes you want to be there so much more the next time around and really thrilled to be a part of this team.

NICK DOUGHERTY: We saw the moments, last time, you and Shane, two strong men for a European side. Shane is on that side again and we have already seen now is one of the captain's picks.

How special were those moments the first time in terms of inspiring what you've done this year?

SEPP STRAKA: Incredible. Yeah, Shane, I could not have picked a better partner. Felt like we had an instant connection from the practise trip on, and yeah, he was incredible to kind of lead me around my first time and brought a lot of energy, obviously. He was always fun to kind of lean on in those high-pressure moments and yeah, just made it really fun, and yeah, looking forward to some more good memories here in New York.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Luke, you're heading to the United States, Sepp has done a lot of his heavy lifting in the United States, two wins this season. How important was that in the selection.

LUKE DONALD: Very important. You always want to see who you're up against. Sepp, only, outside of Scottie Scheffler and Rory McIlroy, nobody has won more times on the PGA TOUR. He has been performing at a very, very high level, I think five top 10s in elevated events this year. His game speaks for itself. Quiet, reserved character but has so much fire in his belly and really excited to have him back in the team room.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Great vibes from Rome and many congratulations on being one of Luke's captain's picks today. We look forward seeing you at Bethpage. Remind ourselves of who we have so far, three picks in, you've gone well. You've gone strong, Shane Lowry, Jon Rahm, Sepp Straka.

Take us on to the fourth.

LUKE DONALD: Okay. So for my fourth pick again someone who is making his third consecutive appearance in Europe in a Ryder Cup, he was one-half of a record-breaking foursomes victory in Rome two years ago,

he was the first Norwegian to win on the DP World Tour and the PGA TOUR. My fourth pick is Viktor Hovland.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Megawatt smile of Viktor Hovland always in place.

Great to see you, and huge congratulations. What are the emotions that being picked for a European side evoke?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: It's unbelievable. It feels awesome to be here with you guys and I can feel my palms are getting really sweaty, and I'm super excited to get going and seeing everyone.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Scheffler and Koepka, 9&7, that was not something that we expected to see, the biggest-ever victory for a European side at the last Ryder Cup.

Try and describe what the motions are, if you can try and put it in place for people who will never know what it's like to represent Europe in a Ryder Cup. Try and express what that feels out there in that moment.

VIKTOR HOVLAND: It is hard to describe. Golf is an individual sport, and you get up every day and it's just you on the golf course practising.

I do really miss the team aspect of golf that we had for myself in college, and when you get to represent 11 other guys, your captain, vice captains, and all the fans that are rooting for us, it definitely feels like you're part of something a lot bigger than yourself. And I think deep inside, that's ultimately what we want to do.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Luke, you could argue you have more than a handful of pillar players, like the stand-out strong players. What is the value of someone like Viktor who is clearly one of those? What is the value of having someone like that on the side?

LUKE DONALD: I just look at his energy and his smile, Viktor is one of my favourite humans. He really is a good guy. I'm always so impressed with how dedicated he is to his craft, how much he puts into it, how much he wants to succeed. He was a lion for us in Rome, and he will continue to be that in Bethpage.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Some people would still question how human Viktor is certainly when you watch him play the sport.

How much would you have learned from 2021, that was a tough experience but you have experienced it. How much can you carry that through with what you now to be even better in 2025?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, without speaking too much about the results from '21, it was very valuable for me just from one perspective of getting to being in a team room and literally legends of the game, guys that I've looked up to my entire life; and just to be in that team environment and play against a very demanding U.S. crowd, especially when we didn't have any European fans there.

I think I was a bit more timid there in '21. In '23, kind of being on the other side of the pond, and coming off the best golf of my career, I was just way more ready for the experience.

So I'm hoping to channel that, even though we won't be at home this time around. I think we're all going to be ready when we stand on the first tee.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Good to hear. Another worldly athlete here in Viktor Hovland part of your team.

Congratulations, reminder of how four look so far: Shane, Jon, September, Viktor. Two to go.

Take us through it.

LUKE DONALD: So now I would like to introduce another Scandinavian. He is the other half of that record-breaking partnership in Rome, he was only three months into his professional career when I announced him as a pick on this show two years ago but he has a Ryder Cup win and two PGA TOUR titles since then. My fifth pick is Ludvig Åberg.

NICK DOUGHERTY: We've got Viktor and now Ludvig, as well. Congratulations on making a second Ryder Cup Team. Funny enough, Luke just brought it up there. Three months, you had barely been a professional and there you are donning the blue of Europe.

How different of a player do you feel this time around heading into your next Ryder Cup?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Well, first off, thanks, guys. I definitely feel more experienced this time. Last time it was like you guys mentioned, it was so short into my professional career and I felt like I had the most amazing week in Rome and it was the first time that I sort of got to experience those things and be in the locker room with those guys, with all the legends.

I was really proud to be a part of that team, and I knew that I wanted to be there in the future, as well.

NICK DOUGHERTY: I remember in those early stages



before you selected him, you said to me, I think this guy is a generational talent. Why did you think that for the last Ryder Cup?

LUKE DONALD: Just what we'd seen. There's the few players I've played with throughout my career, and you just see them for the first time and know that they have something special.

Obviously I got a little bit of heat before Rome happened when I picked him, new out of college, never played a major, almost won the last two Masters, though. I think he's obviously situated himself as one of the very best players in the world, and winning on the PGA TOUR, and the accolades just keep coming. He's only starting in his career and he's already proven that he can hang.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Before we go, excited to be reunited with Viktor, the magical memories of last time?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, I heard you guys talk to Viktor about the 9&7 that was one of highlights of my career so far. It definitely brings a little smile to my face. I just love thinking back to it and, you know, if we get to pair up again, that would be amazing.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Luke, let's just see the five you've got with one remaining. It looks really good so far to add to the six automatic. Take us through our last and final captain's pick.

LUKE DONALD: Yes, my sixth pick, someone who is representing Team Europe for the fourth time, he's a major champion having won the 2022 U.S. Open, and he's actually celebrating his birthday today, and so we have two reasons to congratulate him. My sixth pick is Matt Fitzpatrick.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Matt Fitzpatrick, you're in transit, travel delays. You're a Ryder Cup star, and yet travel eludes no one in terms of the problems with it. Many happy returns.

How does it feel in terms of a birthday present getting that call from captain Luke Donald?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Thanks, Nick, yeah, it's always exciting. It's a nice birthday present and to spend the day talking to you guys.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Luke, this feels like it was a tough one. We know one of the hard bits of a captain's job is obviously making some tough calls but making some happy ones too. How did this go about the decision for you picking Matt Fitzpatrick?

LUKE DONALD: Matt himself said he didn't get off to the best start this year, and was struggling with his game a little bit. And he's one that has turned it around impressively. I think nobody has statistically been as good as Matt has in the last three or four months.

I challenged Matt to go play the last two events in Europe and getting to the last group on Sunday, the last two weeks, I think just showed us everything that Matt has. He's playing tremendous golf right now, six Top 10s I think in his last eight starts, and really, really impressive to see how much his game has come along trying to make this team.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Matt, there's a thing that's a real thing for most golfers. It's called Ryder Cup-itis and it means when you get down the home strait, they tend to play worse because it means so much. You did the opposite as Luke was just talking about there.

What does that give you in terms of belief and confidence in yourself going to New York?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, there's a lot of belief after the last few weeks, obviously. Like Luke said, I felt like I turned my game around from the start of the season, and to finish this Ryder Cup run with the form I've showed is obviously a real positive. Obviously it would be lovely to continue that into Bethpage.

NICK DOUGHERTY: It went down to the wire but here you are part of the six captain's picks to join the 12 and represent Europe in the Ryder Cup. Many congratulations.

MATT FITZPATRICK: Thank you.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Let's just remind you as well, I think we have still got all six, here they are, let's have a little look, six captain's picks. Look at those happy, smiley faces, Luke. You've certainly made their day and probably earned a favour, as well.

Ladies and gentlemen, these are your six captain's picks. Nice to hear and see what it means.

Let's remind everybody now what the completed team looks like. You talked about the six you had. You've talked about now we've met the six that you've acquired to make all 12. When you see them stacked up like this and when everyone watching around the world gets to see your 12, what do you feel? What are the initial feelings?

LUKE DONALD: I feel amazingly proud of these guys and how well they have played. Obviously a lot of continuity



from Rome. It's unusual to have so many people coming back but just shows how good these players are.

Even though we have a lot of continuity, this is a different animal, to play away in America. We understand how difficult that is. I've looked at it from very different angles to try and get us prepared for this amazing challenge ahead.

NICK DOUGHERTY: There's been a greater carryover from a European side as we've seen this time, 11 of the 12 that teed it up in Rome are here in this team, as well. In fact, all of the names are the same, in fact, apart from the Højgaards have switched out, and it's Rasmus this time around.

Can you be ready to face what we are going to face in terms of a different vibe of playing at home in Rome and playing away in New York?

LUKE DONALD: As I said, it's a different animal. It's a different challenge. Obviously having the chance to do it again doesn't mean we're going to do the same things we did in Rome. That's about implementing new techniques. I've really tried to look hard at exactly what this will require.

I'm very aware that we have lost three of the last four away Ryder Cups by significant margins, and it's a tough challenge. It's a tough environment. But I've tried everything I can to give our team the best opportunity.

NICK DOUGHERTY: All right, Luke, well, we wish you well. Thank you so much.

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