

U.S. Open Championship 2024

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

Village of Pinehurst, North Carolina, USA

Pinehurst Resort & C.C. (Course No. 2)

Scottie Scheffler

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Please join me in welcoming Scottie Scheffler to the interview area.

Scottie, a lot has transpired over the last 48 hours. Talk us through getting here and what your prep has been like.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, we finished up in Columbus on Sunday and then did all the stuff afterwards. Flew in, ended up having to fly into Fayetteville and drive an hour over here. Made it in pretty late Sunday night. Came out yesterday afternoon, did some chipping and putting out on the golf course, and today I played the back nine. Tomorrow I'll play the front. Thursday will be the tournament.

Q. Overall reaction to the course from today?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, course is great. In good shape. I think the areas around the green are extremely difficult to play out of. I think the golf course is going to play pretty tough this week, but it'll be a fun test.

I think the golf course is great. It's extremely challenging. I don't really think they have to do too much to trick it up with the way the greens are if they want the scores to be high. So it should be a good test and a fun week.

Q. You were out with Teddy yesterday chipping and putting mostly. What are your thoughts about your plays around the greens and what you might be using and that kind of thing?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Well, I mean, a lot of the areas around the greens here are quite different, and a lot of it depends on the lies that you get. It's grainy Bermuda, so if you get a good lie, you can be a little more creative with what you want to do. If you have an iffy into-the-grain lie, you're a bit limited in what you can do around the green.

It really depends on the lie and then it depends how big of a slope there is that you're trying to get it back up onto the green. A lot of that is going to be missing in the right spots. But there are certain holes out here that there isn't a ^ great miss, you've just got to step up there and hit a great

shot.

Q. You have improved with your putting this year. Can you describe what was going on as you stood over a putt in your head, what you were thinking about before you started working with Phil, and what do you think about now as you stand over the ball?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I mean, going now, I'm trying to get as visual as I can with what I'm trying to do. Before I used a ^ line on my ball, so sometimes I'd be trying to match up the line on the back of the putter with the line on the ball. At times I'd almost get a bit confused.

Nowadays I feel like I am getting much more visual with what I'm trying to do, seeing kind of what I want the putt to do versus maybe playing a little bit of a guessing game before.

I'm putting the ball down and lining it where I feel like it should be lined up and then hitting the putt.

Q. Was Chambers or Oakmont your first Open?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Oakmont.

Q. Of all the Opens you've played, what's the biggest lesson you've learned?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: About the U.S. Open?

Q. Not the British (laughter.)

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think a lot of it's patience. And then there's certain areas of the golf courses where you can't really fake it. You just have to step up there and hit great golf shots. There's certain holes out here where, like especially some of the par-3s where there's not really a place where there is a good miss, it's just you just better just get up there and you better hit it right where you're looking or else you're going to be in big trouble.

A lot of that is just being committed to what you're doing. I can't really worry about where the ball is going to go because I am going to hit a lot of really good shots this

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

week that just don't work out, and you're going to make bogeys hitting good shots. That's just the nature of how difficult the golf course is.

But what I appreciate about this kind of course is a lot of the areas around the greens are all fairway, and so it may be extremely difficult shots, but there's always opportunity. Sometimes when there's heavy rough, there's not really much opportunity for a great shot.

I appreciate more having the playability of the run-off areas more than heavy rough surrounding every green. It definitely provides a little bit more variety, a little bit more excitement and a little bit more creativity around the greens. I believe it's a better test than just having heavy rough over the back of every green.

Courses like this I think are a lot of fun to play.

Q. Last weekend when you triple bogeyed that hole, you seemed to stay a little bit calm. How did you keep from getting frustrated from your bad shots?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: That's a good question. I was very frustrated so I'm glad you couldn't tell.

I think I learned over the course of my career to stay as patient as possible. When I made a triple on that hole, I really didn't hit that bad of a shot, it just hit a tree and went out of bounds.

I kind of reminded myself I was playing good golf and as long as I kept a good head on my shoulders I could continue to go about my day and was able to bounce back nicely. I.

Think that's something you learn playing more and more golf, is that bad breaks are going to come but it's more about your response to those things than really receiving the bad break because over the course of a 72-hole tournament you're going to get plenty of bad breaks and hit plenty of bad shots. It's more about how am I going to recover from those shots.

Q. A lot of players have come in here and said great things about you, and Xander even mentioned the state of your game in his winner's press conference at the PGA. Have you heard any of that? And what does it mean to hear your fellow players say such things?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Well, yeah, I think it's nice to hear a little bit of good things from my peers because I think we all try to bust each other up at times when we're out there playing and competing. I think that's part of the friendship bond, is you want to mess with your buddies, so to hear

some compliments every now and then is definitely nice.

I always look back on being selected for my first Ryder Cup team, of kind of having the vote of some of the guys. I wasn't really a proven player out here yet. I hadn't won on TOUR. I got the vote of some of my peers to be on that team and was able to perform well. So that's something that I always look back on and am very grateful for.

I'm very grateful those guys wanted me on that team and I felt like it was a big moment in my career. So I'm very thankful to have a lot of the friendships that I have out here and it's a joy to be out here playing with these guys and competing with them. It's a lot of fun.

Q. When we think of coaches out here, I think many of us think of technical stuff and the swing and whatnot, but can you speak to what Randy gives you in terms of course strategy and your actual plan, almost like X's and O's?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Like X's and O's stuff?

Q. In terms of the actual course and your plan of attack.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think as far as the actual course goes, a lot of that falls on Teddy. As far as Randy goes, Randy is back there kind of making sure that I'm working on the proper things going into the event. He's not one really to overthink things, and he knows when to step in and when to kind of just let me go.

I think that's one of the most important things with a coach is, especially with Randy, he can almost tell sometimes when I'm not really swinging it my best, and he'll step in. Then other times when I'm playing really well, he'll kind of sit there and watch and we'll hang out and have fun.

He's always done a good job of keeping things loose because at times I think I take myself a bit too seriously when I'm out there practicing. Randy is definitely not a guy that takes himself too seriously.

Q. We're working on a story about your technique, how you shape your shots. Is there any one tip or technique you can give the average weekend golfer on what you do to hone and drill that part of your game?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think a lot of it is just trial and error, learning what shots work, learning what shots don't. A lot of it goes back to my practice and preparation.

When I hit a shot in a tournament, it's not a shot that I haven't hit before. I'm never trying something that I haven't

done. When it comes to putting time and practice, I put time and effort into my form, and then I usually go right into hitting and creating shots. That's always a huge part of how I practice and prepare.

When I'm out there on the golf course, I am never trying to do something I haven't done before. I can always look back and remember practicing that shot and hitting it on the range and hitting it under the gun because it's something that I've done before. I'm never doing anything that is out of the ordinary to me, I don't feel like.

Q. Xander said after the PGA that some of the guys in your group text like roasted you over what happened at Valhalla with you. I don't know if you saw yesterday a fan drove into a Louisville golf club with a fake policeman dragging along his car. Are you able to laugh about that sort of stuff now?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, it's kind of hard not to laugh about the guy who did that. But I didn't see any videos. Xander did tell me about it yesterday. He got a pretty good kick out of it.

But yeah, I think that's part of just having good friends. If all they did was make fun of me, it would be different. It wouldn't be as fun. But they're great guys, and they're great friends. So you've got to be able to look in the mirror and laugh at yourself, too.

Like I said, I don't love reliving it, but sometimes being able to laugh about it is a good skill, too. When they make jokes, it's definitely hard not to laugh, especially with some of my good buddies, they're pretty funny with it.

Q. Is there a sometime during this run where Randy has given a good piece of advice that has kept the good play going?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think Randy is really good at giving me kind of the right pieces of information. I remember after the first round at the Masters, I was not feeling good about my swing at all the first day. I felt like I was using all hands and kind of -- I was fortunate to shoot what I shot in the first round based on how my swing was feeling.

I remember going to the range after the first round, and Randy was like, great job, great round, yada-yada-yada. I was like, Listen, my swing felt pretty bad today. We need to figure this out.

About five minutes later he gave me a little tip with my grip. I hit a couple shots, felt exactly what I needed to feel. Then it was over from there in my head. Like I felt what I

needed to feel, and then I hit about five more balls, felt what I needed to feel and then went out and continued to play.

Randy has always been really good at not overthinking things and giving me a little piece of advice. I mess around with him a lot, but he really is kind of a savant when it comes to the swing. He has such a good understanding of my swing and where I need to be.

Whenever I have a question, he usually is able to come up with a pretty good answer, and if not, then we can go to a little bit of trial and error. But sometimes he just nails it like he did that week.

Q. What was the tip?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I'm not telling you. (Laughter.)

Q. How has it been compartmentalizing Scottie Scheffler the golfer and Scottie Scheffler the dad over the last little while?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: You know, with some of the circumstances that have been going on outside the golf courses, it's been a bit more challenging.

But overall I feel like when I'm at home, having Bennett around, it's almost easier to not be on my phone, not be watching TV. I just want to hang out with him and hang out with Mere, and rocking him to sleep puts me to sleep. Being at home is fun. I haven't been bored at home in quite some time, that's for sure.

Time is always filled, and it's filled with great things, hanging out with my son and hanging out with my wife. So that part of it has been really nice.

But yeah, some of the circumstances around the golf course have made it, I would say, a bit more challenging.

Q. How aggressive can you be here on this golf course, or is it mostly a defensive approach?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think it's a mix because, like I said, there's certain holes out here where you have to just step up and hit a great shot. Some of the par-3s, Teddy and I are walking around trying to figure out where you miss it to certain pins. It's like, there's not really a good spot here, you'd better just hit it in the middle of the green and try and two-putt. There's a lot of that out here.

I think it's kind of fun, too, when there's not really any hazards on the golf course. It's not like we're hitting over ponds or your ball is rolling back into water or into bunkers

you can't get up-and-down out of. There's definitely some areas where you're going to be extremely challenged, but I feel like there's always opportunity.

Since it's fairway, there's opportunity for great shots. The landing area may be literally this big in order for you to hit a great shot, but there's always opportunity. I feel like you're never out of the hole, but you're also not too far away from making a huge number. You've really got to manage your way around the golf course and execute where you need to.

Q. Your five wins this year, players that have done that in the past, Tiger a couple times, Jordan Spieth, Justin Thomas, have you talked with those guys about handling this kind of run?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I haven't really discussed that with anybody. I try not to think about the past too much, and I try not to think about the future too much, and I just try and live in the present. Sometimes it's easier and sometimes it's a bit harder.

I feel like coming off of last week, I was really excited and celebrated for a few minutes there, but my mind kind of just goes on to the next thing. I was getting ready, trying to get out of there and trying to prep for next week.

I'm not thinking about my wins anymore. All I'm focused on is this week and getting ready to play. Just because I won last week doesn't give me any shots against the field this week. We all start even par, and the field is level again starting on Thursday. Last week doesn't really matter.

Q. If you went back a couple years, a couple months to when you first started winning, can you recall a time where you first felt that there was a target on your back like there is now, and is that something you had to learn how to deal with?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I still don't feel like there's much of a target on my back. Like I said, when we start the tournament week, we're all at even par and it's not like anybody is out there playing defense. When I play with Xander and Rory here Thursday and Friday, they're not going to be saying weird stuff to me out on the golf course or trying to block my putt from going in the hole. We all kind of got to go out there and play our game.

As far as a target on my back, even if there was, there's really not much we can do in the game of golf. Most of it is against the golf course and playing against yourself.

Target on my back, I don't really feel it, and I don't really think about it much, no.

Q. How does it feel to be by far the best golfer in the world?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I guess it's kind of going to have the same answer as the last one. I try not to think about the past. I try not to think about the future. I try to live in the present. That's how I've always been. I try to be present where I am.

When I'm home, I try to be the best husband and father I can be, and when I'm out here, I try to be the best golfer I can be. I try to give my best to each and every thing that I do, whether that's working out in the gym, practicing out here getting ready for a tournament, practicing at home, or spending time at home with my friends and family.

I try not to overthink things, I try to live one moment at a time and soak it all up because you never know how long it's going to last. Just try and soak up the good times when you can and fight through the bad.

Q. In hindsight, it can be easier to talk about how important patience is on a difficult golf course, but when you're in the tournament mode in the setting, what is the inner dialogue when a shot doesn't go your way or you hit a shot and it rolls off? What are you telling yourself to try and reset for the next shot?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I think that's a really good question because a lot of the stuff that we all talk about is much easier said than done. It's much easier to step up there and say, hey, just be committed to your shot, but it's a lot more difficult when you just bogeyed the first two holes and you're sitting there with a 9-iron and you're playing 30 feet away from a pin and you know it's a pin you can't attack, but it's a 9-iron, and you're like, I can get one back here, and you try and force it and then all of a sudden things just get out of hand.

I always try to remind myself of just being committed to what I can control, and I'm not worried about the results out there. I try to do my best to execute the shot. And like I said, over the course of a 72-hole tournament, I'm going to get plenty of good breaks and plenty of bad ones.

It's all about responding to the bad and kind of rolling with the good and doing my best to control what I can control and execute.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports