

# The 151st Open

Press Conference

Tuesday, 18 July 2023

**Scottie Scheffler**



OLIVIA McMILLAN: Ladies and gentlemen, I am delighted to welcome World No. 1 Scottie Scheffler to the media interview room. Thanks for joining us.

You've been incredibly consistent this year, particularly in the majors. With this being the last one of the year, how much more does that motivate you?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I'm not really sure. I think I always get excited for the majors. They're my favourite tournaments to play, best fields, usually the best golf courses. I wouldn't say any one of them is more important than the other, but definitely excited to be here and excited to see what this course is like in tournament conditions.

**Q. On the talking points of your consistency, which a lot of people are talking about, can you identify a way coming into this season that Rory and Rahm's success helped you to sort of elevate your game or inspired you to elevate your game to such a consistent level?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I'm not really sure. I think I'm always striving to get a little bit better at a time. Any competition is healthy for sure.

Yeah, I would say just keep trying to get a little bit better. It's nice when you get to actually see the results because a lot of times in this game you put in the work and the results are never really that immediate.

So it's nice to be able to look back at the last year or two and see some good results.

**Q. Specifically, how did you get better?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I just keep trying to get a little bit better at a time. I don't focus too much energy on one area of the game. I try and keep things pretty even across the board. Always working on the short game, putting, and hitting the ball.

I don't try to overthink things. I try to keep things as simple as possible, and right now that recipe has been working quite well. Just trying to do more of it, just trying to hit it a little bit better, chip a little bit better and putt a little bit better, and

hopefully the results are continue to improve.

**Q. On a satisfaction level, are you good with what you've got and you hear the word consistency all the time with you anymore, or would you rather have more wins and a bunch of other missed cuts? Satisfaction level.**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Satisfaction level difference between the two?

**Q. Yeah.**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I mean, I have no idea. It's really fun winning. It's not as fun finishing third. You know what I mean? I mean, it's great to have good results, and I'm very proud of that. I'm very proud of how I've competed all year and continued to put myself in position.

Looking back on the year, I feel like I've just been on the outside looking in a few tournaments going into Sundays. I don't think I've had very many 54-hole leads. And so you might remember better than I will --

**Q. You should remember --**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I should, but I don't.

**Q. As it relates to links golf, how often do you hit shots that you've never practised?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I would say a decent amount this week, especially around the greens. I wouldn't say at home that I chip very much with a pitching wedge or 9-iron just because when you're in the States you're much more dictated by the lie and the grain that you see around golf courses.

Especially where I live in Texas you are very dictated by the grain in the Bermuda, and then as you go up north you're very dictated by what the lies tells you you can do with the ball, and over here every lie is pretty scratchy and you just have a lot of options.

So like today I chipped a lot with my pitching wedge and 9-iron and that's something that I'm just not able to practise, but it feels pretty natural.



**Q. 15 top 10s out of 19 events this season already. Do you feel like you're flying under the radar coming into this week?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I'm not really sure where the radar is. I do my best to not try and pay attention to things. I don't know if I'm under, above, on anybody's radar. I don't really try to pay attention to that stuff. I try to prepare for each event the same way.

Outside of last week, I think that was really the only tournament where my preparation was a little bit different; whereas I just tried to get as much rest as possible.

After Travelers I think I played six out of seven with two of them being majors, and being in contention in both of those majors. By the time I got home I was pretty wiped. I only hit balls a few times and played golf once in those two off weeks.

Got to spend some time with family and friends at home and it was good. Definitely didn't practice as much as I typically would in my off weeks, but it was refreshing and it was a good reset going into the rest of the year.

**Q. Your biggest win last year was the Masters, and biggest this year was THE PLAYERS. What's your satisfaction level this year compared to last year so far?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Are you asking to compare the two years?

**Q. Yeah, like are you equally satisfied this season as last season, or do you need a victory this week to almost follow it up?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I wouldn't say that I'm probably more satisfied with last year, but I wasn't even close to becoming satisfied with last year's season. Golf is one of those games where I don't think you ever really achieve that satisfaction. I think you're always asking for more.

I think if you asked me when I was in college if I could be 27 and have, I think, six wins, a major, and a PLAYERS, I'd probably say, yeah, I'm satisfied.

But then you get on the other side and you win one tournament and you want to win two, and then two turns into three. It's just never enough.

**Q. What was your first experience with links golf prior to playing in an Open, and do you recall liking it? Did it take some getting used to, and how do you feel that's evolved?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: So first links experience would be the Scottish Open, 2021 maybe. I think my first Open was at St. George's -- yeah, so '21 would have been the Scottish Open.

I really like it. It seemed like a natural progression. Like I said, out here you can be extremely creative. Basically around this golf course if you just avoid the bunkers you can do whatever you want, but any time you're in a bunker, I mean, it's pretty much a stroke penalty they way the bunkers are shaped this week.

In terms of links golf, I just think it's really enjoyable. I play Renaissance each year and it's very fun, and then we get to the Open and then I start getting really used to links golf and I just want to play a lot more of it, and I get a little sad that I've got to be done with it until next July.

**Q. What have you made about what are the specific facets of this course, maybe particularly the new 17th?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: The one thing I've noticed about this golf course is anytime I'm hitting -- anytime my ball is going towards a bunker I'm very nervous. I'm just going to try and avoid the bunkers at all costs.

I feel like at St. George's a lot of the bunkers had a tiny bit of an upslope before you got to the wall face, and here it seems like the faces of every bunker is almost a downslope going towards it.

I don't think that's something I particularly like in a golf course. I think it doesn't reward the good shots as much. If you're closer to the green you end up closer to the lip, and if you get a worse shot and barely get into the bunker you actually have a play.

So I would prefer if there was a little bit of slope there, but that's what's so special about the majors. Every golf course is different and it's a challenge, and I'm just going to do my best to stay out of them this week.

**Q. 17 is a short par-3, isn't it, but crikey, is it a test.**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, that's another one of those holes -- I was talking to a few of the guys earlier today. There is not really a high-percentage play. You just have to hit a really good shot, and if you don't, I would say missing it left of the green is a little bit better than right.

That bunker is pretty treacherous on the right. But as far as that hole goes I'm just going to try and hit a really good shot, and that's pretty much all you can do.

**Q. You can get some pretty filthy weather conditions in The Open. How do you cope with that? Are you comfortable with that?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I grew up -- where I grew up in



Texas we play in the worst of the heat and it seems like the worst of the cold. I'm pretty used to all the different conditions.

I always liked going out and playing golf whenever I could, so I play golf in all kinds of weather at home, even now. A little cold weather never really scared me away from going and having a game.

It's just part of it. I think it's fun.

I also think the Scottish prepares you really well for the weather we see here, because it seems worse up there than it does down here. I mean, last week we had rain, wind, and the last day it was blowing 40. It's really good preparation just getting used to the elements.

**Q. Is there anything you particularly enjoyed about being in the UK the last couple of weeks off the course?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I haven't really done much off the course. My wife and I like coming to Europe each year because we usually try and stay for a few days and go on vacation and that's always fun.

One year we went to London and it was fantastic just getting to walk around and see the city and enjoy some good food. It was a lot of fun.

**Q. When you get to your status and No. 1 in the world, a major champion, you get asked questions about the state of the game and the divide and all the stuff that's going on. Rory has been in that position for a long time. I wonder how you think he's handled it.**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think he's done a good job. I think you have certain guys that like to be in that position and then other guys that like to avoid that kind of stuff, and I'm glad that Rory seemed to be one of those guys that enjoyed it and put himself right in kind of the forefront of it. I wouldn't say that's necessarily my style.

Yes, it matters to me, but I also like coming out here and competing. That's my main focus typically.

Not that focusing on the mergers is a bad thing. We need people to be there, and Rory has done a great job, is kind of one of the leaders for our Tour. But there's also a number of other players that have stepped up, as well.

We're all trying to do our best to help improve the Tour. It's just some people I would say would do more of it sitting here versus behind the scenes, and that's just how people want to go about their business.

**Q. Along those lines do you have in your head a solution for how this should work out, and do you want to be a part of the solution?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I would like to be a part of the solution, but I don't know what that solution is.

**Q. This year has been difficult regarding the question that I'm asking, 12 elevated events, the Ryder Cup year. Being World No. 1, do you think there's a responsibility that you have to play in other parts of the world which you've not been able to do as yet? Would you like to play in a place like, say, Dubai where I come from?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I'd like to see more of the world playing golf. I feel like the position where I am in my life that's more likely than when you start a family and stuff like that. It's a little bit easier for me to leave and travel now because my wife comes with me.

But when that changes things will look a little bit differently. But yeah, I'd like to go work in different parts of the world, but I only have so many events I can play throughout the year. There's still other things I like to do outside of golf, and a lot of that is spending time at home with our friends and our family.

So yes, I do -- I would like to play in other parts of the world. It's just there's only so many days in a year.

**Q. Will it be a little easier next year when there are eight elevated events and designated events and no Ryder Cup?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I'm not sure. I haven't really looked towards next year, to be completely honest with you. I've been pretty focused on this year.

Next year will be a Presidents Cup year. I don't know exactly where that'll be.

I've considered coming over and playing more events in Europe in the fall, and now that we actually have more time off in the fall in our TOUR schedule. That's really the time of year where you can kind of make those things happen. That time of year is also football season at home, and that's my time to be at home.

**Q. I don't know if this is old news, but do you still have the old station wagon at home, or have you replaced it? And if you are still driving it, can you tell us how long you've had the car, how many miles it's done, what the story is with that?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: So I do still have the car. I don't drive it as much. I recently got a different car. It still sits in front of the house, though. It's a 2012 Yukon XL. My dad bought it. We went to the Masters in 2012. I went with -- oddly enough,

there was a kid on my high school golf team who got tickets for all of us and my dad went with my sisters, and he drove his Yukon there to Augusta. Something happened with the engine where the car was basically totaled and he was like, I can pay 10 grand to fix engine or I can just buy another car here.

His car was old at the time, and so he bought another car there, and it was the one that I have now, so it's got a Masters GMC logo on the back of it.

Yeah, when I went to college, I think I had like an old Honda Accord and I liked his car more than mine, so I think I finally wiggled my way into taking his car, and he got some other Honda or something like that.

I put a new transmission in it right when I turned pro. I drove it for a few years and it treated me nice, and it's still out in front of the house.

I'm going to definitely give it back to my dad, but yeah, he's definitely not going to get rid of it or anything like that. It'll probably be his ranch car.

**Q. Do you know how many miles it's done, and do you know what your longest road trip would have been in it?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: So I didn't do any damage to this car. My dad did all the damage in a short period of time. He would drive everywhere. He drove us to -- I remember once when I was a kid, not in that car specifically, but he drove us to San Diego from Dallas, which if you don't know is about a 22-hour drive. He did that with four kids probably under the age of 12 at the time. I think I was 10, so my sister was 12, so 22 hours in the car. That's a pretty long time.

When I'm home I go to the golf course, to the gym, and a restaurant that's usually within five, ten minutes of my house. So I don't really put too much miles on the car. Most of that credit goes to my dad.

**Q. You won a major last year. You're the current World No. 1. How would you view a year without a major, without winning a major?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: A year without winning a major would be pretty similar to the other 25 years of my life, I guess.

No, I think that I like to focus more on the way I approach things and my attitude than I would the actual results. Yes, it's so fun to win majors, but I'm not going to sit at the end of the year and look back on the year and be frustrated or upset because I didn't win a major.

I step up on the tee at every tournament hoping to win, and every time I don't win I'm usually pretty frustrated. That's kind

of the nature of the game is at the end of every year you're usually fairly frustrated Tiger didn't even win that much, he lost a lot more than he won.

It's not like other sports. As long as I show up with a good attitude and play with a good attitude, that's mostly what I try to focus on. At times I'm really good at that and at times I struggle with that, but that's what I focus on.

**Q. A lot has been made about your consistency. A lot has also been made about your putting. Do you see it as the same problem as the media sees it?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Definitely not. I think that most of what has to happen is something has to be created into a story, and for a while it didn't really seem like there was much of a story behind the way I play golf.

I think I was viewed as probably a touch boring and didn't really show much emotion and whatever else you could think of.

But I think I had back-to-back tournaments that I could have won where I putted poorly, and all of a sudden it became this thing where like I'll watch highlights of my round, and even the announcers, any time you step over the putt it's like, well, this is the part of the game he struggles with.

And it's like, if you say it every time and you guys see me miss a 12-footer it's like, oh, there it is. He's struggling again.

It's one of those deals where I don't pay attention to it. The things that I'm working on right now I feel very excited about. I'm hitting a lot of good putts.

Pretty soon, a lot of those good putts will start falling in the middle of the hole instead of dodging around the side of it.

I have a lot of faith in what I'm working on right now, and I'm hoping to see some results soon.

**Q. What kind of car did you get yourself?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I did not purchase a car myself, so I guess I'll have to skirt that, but it's a Cadillac, and it's awesome. A sponsor thing.

**Q. You mentioned Tiger a minute ago there. I wonder if you could share any memories of him winning here in '06, watching it as a kid at the time.**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I don't really remember watching it. A lot of my Tiger memories are all on YouTube. I really do get a lot of value out of watching that kind of stuff, and I did watch his win here on YouTube.

It's a pretty valuable tool really. You get to watch so much cool stuff. Yeah, I'd say most of my young memories of Tiger are just watching him win a lot and seeing him make all the putts, whether it was here at The Open or the putt at Torrey always stands out.

What I appreciate about Tiger is I feel like a lot of times you ask him questions he's very eager to help. Besides the divot video that everybody saw this year. He tried to keep that one a secret from me. Still got to get the answer on that one.

He's in a different position in the game now than where he was as more of a spokesperson, and we hope that he can come out and play more, but we're very appreciative of all the years that we had with him, watching him play, and the few years that I got being able to compete against him.

**Q. To follow up on what you just said about YouTube being a valuable tool, does that mean that you watched Tiger's performance here to get some insight into playing Hoylake?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, just to see the course. I had never seen this course before. I didn't really know anything about it, other than the fact that it was really firm and he only hit one driver for the entire week.

Anytime I'm coming to a new course, I try to learn something about it before I get there versus just coming in blind. It really is a valuable tool for me.

**Q. Have you ever played courses on PlayStation or anything like that?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: No, I was never into video games. If I played golf courses on video games, it would probably kill my confidence.

OLIVIA McMILLAN: Scottie, thank you very much for your time today. We wish you the best of luck this week.

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