

The 153rd Open

Press Conference

Tuesday, 15 July 2025

Scottie Scheffler



STUART MOFFATT: Good morning, everybody. I'm delighted to welcome the PGA champion and two-time Masters champion Scottie Scheffler to the interview room. Scottie, welcome to Royal Portrush. How are preparations going for this week so far, and how much are you looking forward to the challenge of contending for The Open at Royal Portrush?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: It's going well. Got to play some holes yesterday. Golf course is good. It's in really good shape. Seems like a fun place to play. Played the back nine, got a few holes in on the front before we got delayed again.

Overall it was a good day and good use of the course.

Q. The last two guys who were in here were talking about how they paid more attention to ball trajectory playing links golf. Is that something you agree with, that you're thinking about it more than you would playing parkland? Then sort of as a follow-up, if there's anything else you can think of that you have to think about more in links golf than you would otherwise.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Not only the trajectory, but I think the amount of bounce you're going to play. Like if you got a 150-yard shot into the wind, depending on where the pin is, I might hit three different clubs, just based upon wind direction, where the pin is, the type of shot I want to hit, if I need the ball to run, if I need the ball to stop, just little stuff like that.

So I would say trajectory is a huge component, especially in terms of how much the wind is going to affect your ball because you can hit it low, but if you hit it low with spin, it's probably going to come up pretty far short. If you hit it low without the correct amount of spin, then it's going to go a pretty good amount too far.

So I think not only trajectory, but spin control as well I think is really important.

Q. From a tactical angle, is there any part of you that likes having to think about more of the stuff, or is it kind of a pain? You'd prefer the other way where there's fewer elements to --

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I wouldn't say that I'm a guy like, if I stepped over -- let's use a 150-yard shot as an example, into the wind, I'm not thinking about how much spin I want on the ball. I just try to have a picture of what type of shot I want to hit and match the club to that. There's not a lot of thought that goes into it for me; it's more just getting a picture of what I think is correct and making sure it's not too far off with my caddie Ted, and then we go from there and I try and hit the shot.

Q. You kind of touched on this already, but in the four or five years you've been playing links golf, how does it fit your strengths? Do you feel like there are any weaknesses you have?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think it fits my strengths because I like to do things very creatively, and I think out here you kind of have to. I think each year we come over, I start learning a bit more and more.

I guess one of the weaknesses would just be it's a little bit fresh. My first time coming over and playing links golf was when I was a professional. I never came over and played as an amateur.

I feel like I'm learning more and more each time I come over here. Each golf course is different too. Irish links so far is quite a bit different than Scottish links. It's a bit greener over here. You have to play a lot more shots into the air. This golf course has a few false fronts on the greens, which I would say is a bit unusual for links golf.

A lot of times people talk about running it up, but a lot of times it's difficult to run it up with a false front on the green, especially playing here into the wind.

There's a lot of different shots you have to play. It's an interesting golf course, and from what I've seen, it seems to be really fun to play and very fair.

The pot bunkering here is also very different than the other links courses that I've played where, in terms of these bunkers, I think it's going to be quite rare for you to see guys with one foot out of the bunker with their knee up on the side where they're only -- I think some of the links courses I've played, it was kind of hit or miss when you went into a bunker what kind of lie you were going to get. There's some times you're going to



be putting the ball into the middle of the bunker just to have another shot, whereas these there's a lot more slope into the bunkers where the ball kind of funnels into the middle. I would argue that might be a little bit more fair than two guys hitting a similar shot and one guy has to putt it back into the bunker and the other guy has a clean lie.

So I think I would prefer this type of bunkering just in terms of fairness. So that's another good thing about this golf course.

Q. Scottie, you're once again favored even though you haven't played that much links golf. Does that put extra pressure on you? How close do you think you are to solving the riddle of links golf? You were seventh last year, so you're clearly improving.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I could not care any less about being the favourite or not being the favourite. We all start even par and the tournament starts on Thursday. That's pretty much all that matters.

In terms of links golf, I love the style of golf. I think it's really fun and you have to be creative. You have to hit a lot of really good shots. There's a challenge to it, but I think it's a lot of fun.

We'll see how the weather turns out this week. Weather has a pretty dramatic effect on how the golf course is going to play. You can play your practice rounds and prepare, but ultimately when you step on the tee on Thursday, whatever the weather presents is going to be probably the strongest part of the test.

Q. Scottie, how will you define a successful year for you? Is that something you kind of write down before the year? Does that change year by year?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: It doesn't really change year by year. I don't look at wins and losses or stuff like that. I don't sit down at the beginning of the year and say I want to win X number of times; I want to win this many majors; I want to win this many tournament events. That's not something I do. That's not something that works for me.

I have some dreams and aspirations that I'm always striving towards, but at the end of the day, I try to stay present. I try to practice hard each and every day. I feel like for me, when I start looking too far into the future, I think I'm a bit of a procrastinator. That's how I was in school.

If I want to look at my career and say I want to win, let's say, five majors, I think sometimes when you're a human, you just have that invincibility where you're just like, I'm going to play professional golf my whole life; this stage is never going to end.

Ultimately, it's not, and I'm only going to be doing this for a finite amount of time. What works best for me is just to stay

present, continue to put in the work, which I would argue that's the most fun part for me. I love being able to practice, and that's what I enjoy doing, and just try to get the most out of myself each day.

Q. It seems to me that you care about as much about being ranked No. 1 as you do about being a favourite here, which is not a lot. I don't know if that's a fair assessment, but there's a lot of guys we've encountered over the years that have been uncomfortable being at the top and No. 1. I'm curious what about you do you feel like makes you feel so comfortable? Outwardly, it seems like you just kind of cruise along and nothing really fazes you.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think the rankings are -- being No. 1 in the world is a great accomplishment, I think, as a golfer. As a professional, to be ranked as the best in the world, I think, is a huge career accomplishment. I don't think it should be taken lightly. But you don't become No. 1 in the world by thinking about rankings. You don't stay No. 1 in the world thinking about rankings. Each tournament is its own challenge.

It's funny, it's like, look at this week for example. What's the best-case scenario? I win this golf tournament, and then I'm going to show up in Memphis, and it's like, okay, listen, you won two majors this year; what are you going to do this week? That's the question you're going to get asked.

If I come in second this week or if I finish dead last, no matter what happens, we're always on to the next week. That's one of the beautiful things about golf, and it's also one of the frustrating things because you can have such great accomplishments, but the show goes on. That's just how it is.

It's great to win tournaments. It's a lot of fun. Sometimes the feeling only lasts about two minutes, it seems like, when you're celebrating, and then it's like, okay, now you've got to go do all this other stuff, which is great, but sometimes the feeling of winning only lasts a few seconds. It's pretty exciting and fun, but it just doesn't last that long.

Q. The difference between creativity and conditions, a lot of times people use putters around the greens from distances maybe even 20 or 30 yards out, but it sounds like you're saying in this golf course that probably is not going to be the case because it's greener and because the false fronts and things like that. How much do you like using a putter from distances?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: This golf course is greener, but that doesn't mean it's not firm. It's just the grass, I'd say, is slightly different. We're going to get some rain this week.

I always found it interesting when I watched links golf and I wondered why people were using so many different clubs,



because in the States you just use a 60 because you need to get the ball to stop. In order to control the ball in the States, especially on the golf courses we play, you need spin to be able to stop the golf ball just because the greens are so fast.

Here it's a different challenge because it's the firmness which makes it challenging. Trying to apply a lot of spin and hit these low, nipping wedge shots doesn't provide the same amount of control that it does in the States. Here, it almost seems like the quicker you get the ball on the ground rolling around the pin is the quicker the ball is going to be able to stop. But if you hit shots in the States with a lot of topspin, it's almost like the ball is never going to stop rolling.

Here the challenge is judging that firmness to where you can get the ball rolling around the pin, where when you're playing in the States, you've got to get the ball to stop around the pin. It's just a bit of a different challenge. Some shots it may be the putter. Some shots it may be a 9-iron. Some shots it might be a spinning shot.

I think over here, a lot of the shots we play aren't dictated by grain as much, and in the States we get dictated a lot more by the grain we see. I would say that would probably be the biggest difference.

Q. Do you have a comfort level of a distance you'd say at some point you can't do that?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: No. I mean, it may be like 70 yards. I really don't know. It could be far. It could be short. Sometimes -- I mean, the lie really does dictate a lot. There's golf courses over here are not nearly as manicured as the courses we play at home. I think this is a bit more of a natural setting where, if you hit it into the stuff, you may get a great lie, you may be in a bush. You just don't really know when you hit it offline. That's why you've got to try to keep the ball in the fairway.

That also can be a big part of the shots you play around the greens. If I'm sitting in heavy grass, I'm going to have to play more of a 60-degree type bunker shot because you need the speed to pop the ball out of that heavy grass. If you're in kind of a wispier lie and it's thinner, then I'm going to try to get the ball running around the cup somehow.

Q. You have a pretty variable work schedule in your profession. I'm wondering how obsessed you are with sleep and a week like the last couple weeks where you're changing time zones a lot, do you have any jet lag tricks?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I wish I had some better jet lag tricks. I think you'd probably have to ask some of the guys that do a bit more international travel than I do. For me I just kind of try to ride it out. I try to stay awake the first day I get in and then go

to sleep, but I typically don't sleep great that night. Then my wife will come in, she'll take a nap, do basically whatever she wants and then sleep great all the way through the night. I don't have a good answer. Just ride it out.

Q. You seem a lot calm and composed always. I mean, rarely do we see any flashes of frustration. Have you always been like that? You always seem to be in contention, whether you're five or seven behind. We can't call you fiery. What would you call Scottie Scheffler, and have you evolved into that?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I would say that I still get very frustrated. I think at times I'm better at masking it. I don't think -- I think at times this year I may have gotten overly frustrated. I think it's just part of the game. I think part of the game is controlling your emotions and controlling your mind.

I've definitely gotten better at that over the years. I'd get a bit headless at times when I was growing up, especially when I was young, and I even see it in my son now. He's 14 months, and I'm like, this poor kid's got my personality. It's tough.

I had a high level of frustration growing up. I still do today, but I'm better at masking it and controlling it and using it more as a strength to help me focus versus just trying to -- I think when I was young, I would either hold it in or kind of blow up. Now I think I do a better job of holding it in but also getting it over to the next shot and almost sharpening my focus to where I'm in a better spot after a bit of frustration than I am before, if that makes sense.

Q. Control it in what way?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I have no idea. Maybe if you see my wife this week, you can ask her.

Q. You're the world No. 1. When do we see you in other parts of the world? Why are you hesitant to travel to, say, Asia? Don't you consider it as part of your responsibility being the world No. 1?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think the greatest competition we have right now in the game of golf is the PGA TOUR and playing in the States. I'm playing where the best competition is. Week in and week out, I believe that's the PGA TOUR. For me to play against the best players in the world, that's where all of them are.

Would it be nice to play an international schedule? Yeah, I'd love to be able to travel the world and play golf. There's a time and a place for that, and right now, with the way my life is, it's not really the time or the place. I'm starting a young family, and travelling across the world to play golf would be great, but at the end of the day, that's not my priority nor my responsibility.



My responsibility is to my family first, and that's where my priorities lie.

I'm blessed that my wife is able to come out and travel and support me for the moment, and eventually that will stop. Maybe then we'll play more of an international schedule. Right now I'm just chasing the competition. Right now I believe that's on the PGA TOUR, and that's where my priorities are.

Q. Rory was speaking in the last week about the art and science of golf. He sees himself as more of an artist. Where would you put yourself? Are you more scientist or artist?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I would say, when it comes to playing, I'm definitely more of an artist. But I like to joke with my coach at home that I'm trying to be a robot (laughter).

I like to use the technology we have to continue to get better, but at the end of the day when you're -- you're practising to go out and play. You're not practising when you're playing, if that makes sense. I have ways that I practise to try to get better, but when it comes to playing the golf tournament, we're playing the golf tournament. I'm not playing golf swing. I'm not playing games like I do on the TrackMan at home. I'm playing a round of golf trying to shoot the lowest score possible. I think at the end of the day that's what I'm focused on is playing the game.

Q. Just another one on links golf. Is there anyone in the game, current player or former player, who you've actually gone to to try to pick up a few of the secrets of this format?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I like to ask guys questions. I feel like I can learn a lot from the players out here. There's a lot of talent on Tour. I feel like we could always be learning. So I like to ask guys questions. Sometimes I try not to make it too obvious whether or not they're going to give me an answer or now. I like to ask questions. I like to learn from guys. I learn a lot by watching too.

For instance, playing with Bob last week at the Scottish Open, I got to learn a lot. Playing with Adam Scott as well, he's had a great career out here, and I feel like I can learn a lot from him.

There's a time and place to compete, but at the end of the day, we're spending 5, 5-1/2 hours out there, and sometimes we can have a little bit of time to chat. I had some good chats last week with Bob last week about links golf, and I feel like I learned a little bit from him as well.

Q. Could you give an example?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Not going to share any trade secrets (laughter).

Q. Slight change of pace. How much do you read? Do you have a book on the go that you keep by your bedside? Is it by any chance a golf book, or don't you read at all?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: You're asking me about books?

Q. Yes.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I have a devotional book that I read on my iPad. I have another book that I'm reading right now, which is definitely not a golf book. It's another spiritual book. Basically that. My Bible is pretty much it. I'm not really a huge reader.

I have read a couple books about golf course design -- sorry, I shouldn't say read. Skimmed would probably be a better description of that. Just to learn, just out of curiosity. I did that a little bit before Bennett when I had a little bit more downtime.

Now there's not much downtime when I get home. It's kind of sprinting around chasing the little man, so I don't get too much time to read. Basically just Bible and a couple other books. Nothing about golf.

Q. Just wondering what differences or unique challenges there is to putting on links golf as opposed to back over in America.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think getting adjusted to speed is always kind of the most important over here. It's a little bit of a slower green speed, and that's just based on necessity because you get much more -- the elements are much more of a factor. So the green speeds can't get that fast because we could get one day with wind and all of a sudden the golf course becomes unplayable. Getting used to the speed I would say is the most important. Outside of that, putting is putting. Golf is still golf no matter where you're playing.

Growing up in the States, I feel like we're used to playing a lot of different styles of golf. Especially when you're young, you grew up on so many different golf courses. When you're playing -- when you get to the PGA TOUR, everything is so perfectly manicured, but when you're growing up in Texas, we were not playing the best golf courses week in and week out. We were playing everyday golf courses that everyday golfers play. You learn to play in a lot of different conditions. If it's summertime, you're playing on hard pan, cracks in the earth, playing in cold weather, warm weather. Growing up in Texas, you see a lot of different stuff.

Q. What is your earliest memory of this Open?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: The Open Championship? I always liked being able to wake up early in the mornings and turn on



the TV before my parents would get up. My dad probably wouldn't -- actually, I know my dad really doesn't like us watching TV first thing in the morning, but Open week at home, if I was up early, I would for sure just sneak downstairs and turn on the TV. I think that would be one thing he would let me watch because he was interested in it as well. If I was 10, 12 years old going downstairs and turning on cartoons or whatever I would watch back then, he'd probably make me turn it off, but The Open Championship was something we could watch together, and he was an early riser as well.

It was always really nice, relaxing time getting to watch The Open and just being curious and hoping one day I could make it over and play.

Q. It was announced last week that LIV Golf is going to reapply for rankings points. Do you think having them included would be a better representation of the top players in the world?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think having the ability to rank all the golfers in the world is really important. When you have guys always playing a different schedule, it can be very hard to rank player versus player. That was always difficult for us, I would say, in amateur golf because you have so many different tournaments and guys aren't playing against each other every week. It's really hard to rank a guy that plays junior golf on the West Coast versus a guy that plays junior golf on the East Coast. They may only play together a couple times a year. It can be very difficult to rank who is the best player when it's like that.

In terms of the world ranking points, I think the more often we can get the best players in the world playing together would be better, and that would only be better for the rankings as well.

Q. What would be your definition of a slump, and when do you think is the last time you were in one?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I'll just let you guys define my slumps. I'll let you guys figure that out. That's not up to me. (Laughter).

Q. We're not that smart.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Neither am I.

Q. You talk about the show goes on, which it does. What would be the longest you've ever celebrated something? What was the most crushing loss or the time it took to get over one?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think it's kind of funny, I think I said something after the Byron this year about like it feels like you work your whole life to celebrate winning a tournament for like

a few minutes. It only lasts a few minutes, that kind of euphoric feeling.

To win the Byron Nelson Championship at home, I literally worked my entire life to become good at golf to have an opportunity to win that tournament. You win it, you celebrate, get to hug my family, my sister's there, it's such an amazing moment. Then it's like, okay, what are we going to eat for dinner? Life goes on.

Is it great to be able to win tournaments and to accomplish the things I have in the game of golf? Yeah, it brings tears to my eyes just to think about because I've literally worked my entire life to be good at this sport. To have that kind of sense of accomplishment, I think, is a pretty cool feeling. To get to live out your dreams is very special, but at the end of the day, I'm not out here to inspire the next generation of golfers. I'm not out here to inspire someone to be the best player in the world because what's the point? This is not a fulfilling life. It's fulfilling from the sense of accomplishment, but it's not fulfilling from a sense of the deepest places of your heart.

There's a lot of people that make it to what they thought was going to fulfill them in life, and you get there, you get to No. 1 in the world, and they're like what's the point? I really do believe that because what is the point? Why do I want to win this tournament so bad?

That's something that I wrestle with on a daily basis. It's like showing up at the Masters every year; it's like why do I want to win this golf tournament so badly? Why do I want to win The Open Championship so badly? I don't know because, if I win, it's going to be awesome for two minutes. Then we're going to get to the next week, hey, you won two majors this year; how important is it for you to win the FedExCup playoffs? And we're back here again.

So we really do; we work so hard for such little moments. I'm kind of sicko; I love putting in the work. I love getting to practice. I love getting to live out my dreams. But at the end of the day, sometimes I just don't understand the point.

(Laughter).

I don't know if I'm making any sense or not. Am I not? It's just one of those deals. I love the challenge. I love being able to play this game for a living. It's one of the greatest joys of my life, but does it fill the deepest wants and desires of my heart? Absolutely not.

Q. What do you find fulfilling?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I love playing golf. I love being able to compete. I love living out my dreams. I love being a father. I love being able to take care of my son. I love being able to



provide for my family out here playing golf.

Every day when I wake up early to go put in the work, my wife thanks me for going out and working so hard. When I get home, I try and thank her every day for taking care of our son. That's why I talk about family being my priority because it really is. I'm blessed to be able to come out here and play golf, but if my golf ever started affecting my home life or it ever affected the relationship I have with my wife or my son, that's going to be the last day that I play out here for a living.

This is not the be all, end all. This is not the most important thing in my life. That's why I wrestle with, why is this so important to me? Because I'd much rather be a great father than I would be a great golfer. At the end of the day, that's what's more important to me.

Q. That's why I asked the question the way I did. What is losing like for you? Is at that okay?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: It sucks. I hate it. I really do.

Q. That's part of the competition.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: That is, and I think that's why we try to work so hard to not lose, but golf's a game where you just lose a lot more often than you win. That's just a simple part of it. In basketball or football, when there's only two guys out there, you can win a lot more than you lose.

I think I was looking at stats -- it was one of the best tennis players. It might have been Federer or Djokovic or somebody. They only won like 48 percent of their points or something like that.

Playing professional sports is a really weird thing to do. It really is. Just because we put in so much effort, we work so hard for something that's so fleeting. It really is. The feeling of winning just doesn't last that long.

When I sit back at the end of the year and try to reflect on things, like having that sense of accomplishment from winning the Masters tournament, from winning the PGA Championship, I have a deep sense of gratitude and appreciation for it, but it's just hard to explain how it doesn't -- it just doesn't satisfy is how I would describe it. It's an unsatisfying venture.

I guess what I'm trying to say is this is not the place to look for your satisfaction. This is something where you can have a great appreciation for and a great -- like a great amount of thankfulness for being able to do this. Like I said, it's literally one of the most fun things I can do in my entire life. I love being able to come out here and compete, but at the end of the day, it's not what satisfies me, if that makes sense.

STUART MOFFATT: We'll bring things to a close. That was fascinating. Thanks very much for your time.

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