

LIV Golf Virginia

Wednesday, 4 June, 2025

Gainesville, Virginia, USA

Robert Trent Jones Golf Club

HyFlyers GC

Phil Mickelson

Andy Ogletree

Brendan Steele

Cameron Tringale

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Please welcome HyFlyers GC to the media center. We've got captain Phil Mickelson and his teammates Andy Ogletree, Brendan Steele, Cameron Tringale, and the team has a special guest here, Joe Hannah, the founder of Bunkers in Baghdad. Joe, it's great to have you here.

Why don't you tell us about Bunkers in Baghdad, your partnership with the HyFlyers, and this impressive milestone that you guys just achieved.

JOE HANNAH: Thank you. Bunkers in Baghdad, we collect and ship golf equipment to the military overseas and wounded warriors around the world. We have collected and shipped 16 million golf balls, and we're very proud to make that announcement today with the HyFlyers, who have been great partners of ours since last season.

We were founded in 2008. We have sent golf equipment to 84 countries around the world and all 50 states.

Q. Phil, obviously Bunkers in Baghdad is close to your heart. Tell us about the partnership you have and the impact it's made and what it means to you.

PHIL MICKELSON: So Joe, you have such a strong impact on so many people and have used the game of golf to help better their lives. Also, you've donated, and everybody in your office, at your law firm, have donated your time and efforts to do this. The administrative costs of your organization are roughly 1 percent. That means that everything that's getting donated, these million and a half clubs, these 16 million golf balls, any funds that go to bunkers of Baghdad, it's all going out to the troops, the people that serve our military and to help the game of golf better their lives.

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I think that is one of the most special and unique things I've heard and that's why we're so proud to be helpful in any way in your efforts in Bunkers in Baghdad and help use golf to better the lives of so many men and women who have served.

JOE HANNAH: We take great pride in being 100 percent volunteer run, and every dollar that comes back, nobody draws a salary from the charity, just like you said, be Phil, and that way we're able to help as many veterans and active duty military members as possible.

PHIL MICKELSON: I just have not heard that. It's what really separates you and your efforts and how genuine they are and why we're so proud to be a part of it and try to help your efforts to spread the game of golf throughout the world and make the lives of, again, those who have served for our country better.

Q. Camo, your dad served in the Air Force; Brendan, your dad served in the Marines.

CAMERON TRINGALE: Well, for me personally and our team, so much of what we're able to do and what we love to do, play this game, is in part due to the fact that we have such an amazing military and people who serve our country and create the freedoms that we have.

My dad serving was a great model for me just of self-sacrifice and giving of yourself to something bigger than yourself. So when he served, it basically was just a great example for me, and I will do anything I can to help those who are serving today and who have served in the past.

BRENDAN STEELE: Yeah, for me, and I think I speak for all of us, it's an easy thing for us to get on board with. We're big military supporters in general, and then obviously like the family connection is a big part of that.

But everything that Joe has done is really, like, shocking to me because he's got a full-time job. He's got three young kids and then is able to do all of this on top of that, which is just so impressive.

He's an easy person to fall in love with and to put your efforts behind. It means a lot to us. We feel very honored

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to be a part of it.

Q. Andy, do you have some thoughts on the relationship?

ANDY OGLETREE: Yeah, my first time meeting Joe was in Houston last year, and he brought out lots of veterans and kids in the community. We colored golf balls and wrote letters. To actually get the experience of seeing with these kids and seeing how passionate they are to write the letters to active duty military that are deployed, imagining being overseas and opening a letter from a kid and it's about golf and introducing the game to maybe someone who hasn't seen it before I think is such a special thing.

For me personally to kind of see the behind the scenes of it was very touching. I think it's doing what we want to do, which is use golf for good and grow the game worldwide, and that's what Bunkers in Baghdad is all about.

Q. Phil, of the 1.6 million golf clubs that were donated, how many did you test?

PHIL MICKELSON: I haven't tested any. My specs probably aren't the best for a lot of people, but it doesn't matter. Just having something to swing and hit. Those numbers, when you start putting a dollar amount on 1.6 million sets and 16 million golf balls, it's really remarkable to have done this with 100 percent volunteer basis.

I just can't get over that. We're so proud to help further the efforts and create awareness for what golf can do to help people's lives and put them in a better mental space and have time go by in a much more productive way. We're very appreciative of all you do.

Q. I wanted to ask a question off Bunkers in Baghdad. I also come from a military family and we know with a lot of military members and veterans, a lot of activities like equestrian, fishing, different activities have really helped them mentally and physically. What is it about golf that really helps men and women across the world that are in service?

JOE HANNAH: So in terms of golf and us sending equipment overseas to our active duty military members, I think there's two prongs to that. I think first and foremost, the camaraderie, the opportunity to just spend time, hit balls with your unit, get your mind off of what you're doing.

And then we've also seen a lot of nation building. Units that are deployed overseas in other countries, Ireland or the UK or Canada or whatever it may be and spending time not only with the other deployed military units that you're with, but also the locals and just showing the locals

in the respective countries that they're in, this is a golf ball, this is a golf club, which they've of course never seen before. This is how you swing it. This is how we spend time together just to get our mind off what we're doing.

I think that's a very important aspect for the active duty military members.

But in terms of the veterans here at home, I think that obviously the physical aspects of it are very important, just being out there, just spending time with friends, being out there in the environment. But also the mental piece of it, too, the PTSD, getting your mind off the game.

And then finally, we've worked with physical therapists all throughout the country at VA hospitals, so the physical aspect of it, rebuilding muscles, muscle memory, so on, so forth.

So I think there is multiple prongs to that both for the active duty military members deployed overseas, but our veterans here at home.

Q. Phil, you talk a lot about Bunkers in Baghdad on your YouTube series with Grant Horvat. How has that relationship and series helped this effort that you're making?

PHIL MICKELSON: I think Joe could probably better answer that, but I hit the ball in the bunkers a lot, and so it's been financially successful for Bunkers in Baghdad just because of my ineptness, but I think Joe could probably answer that a little bit better.

JOE HANNAH: So when the videos air, it's like a stock ticker. We will get request after request after request after request. When the John Daly episode aired, within the first 24 hours we had about 340 requests. So that's active duty military members and veterans.

Then within the first seven days of that, I think we were close to 600 or 700 requests.

We've been kind of filling those all in and getting balls and clubs, and it may not necessarily be full sets to those respective veterans specifically here at home, but they may have a broken putter where they need a new putter or they need a unique club like a left-handed hybrid, and we're able to fill that through the donations that we receive.

But the requests pour in through the awareness, through the HyFlyers channel and Phil.

Q. Phil, you've played in 19 matches here in the first four Presidents Cups. I suspect you have more

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experience at this course than anybody else in the field. What can you tell us about RTJ and your memories here?

PHIL MICKELSON: So Robert Trent Jones said that this was his masterpiece. When he says it's something great, you know it's going to be a special course.

Over his golf courses that he's designed throughout the world in dozens and dozens of countries, you don't really know what to expect of his designs because he integrates different styles for the land and where he's at. This land is spectacular, and he's created really what he calls his masterpiece. So you know it's going to be great.

What I love is the challenge of the greens. The greens are very difficult. They're very contoured, fast, perfectly maintained, and tee to green, it's a real challenge. And then when you get on the green it's just as challenging. It never eases up. There's no easy part to this golf course. But it's really fun to play.

I really enjoyed it in match play because you can make big numbers here. In stroke play that's going to be a challenge, to try to minimize the big mistakes, because around the greens it's pretty penalizing if you put it in the wrong spot.

It's nothing short of a great golf course, incredibly maintained, and it's going to be a very difficult challenge for us. But it's also fun. If you play well, it also gives opportunities to score.

Q. You must like his courses; you shot 62 at Spyglass, won at Baltusrol. Is there a connection there with some of his courses?

PHIL MICKELSON: I've had good success on his courses. I think they just fit my eye. I like the way the courses kind of flow with the land and integrate naturally into the environment. I think he's done a great job of that.

Of course when he started, we didn't have the great bulldozing opportunities, so he had to kind of set the course into the land much like Donald Ross and Tillinghast and many of the other great architects.

As technology developed slowly throughout his career he was able to do more and more things, and yet he still kept things natural and didn't overdo it.

Q. Camo, you've got six top 20s in the first seven starts this year. That's one more than all of last season for you. You must be feeling good about your form going into the second half of the season.

CAMERON TRINGALE: Yeah, I'm feeling excited about the rest of the year. I think this last month we had off was a good mid-season break, if you will, to work on my game and tighten up a few areas that I'll need to get in to the top 10 a bit more, which is my goal to try and help this team win and support the other guys.

Excited for the last half of the year, and looking forward to getting going here.

Q. Andy, you come off your best finish in Korea this season. Brendan, you had a good finish in Mexico City. You guys are now in the Open zone going into the second half of the season. How would you assess your chances of staying there and moving up the last six tournaments of the regular season?

ANDY OGLETREE: Yeah, to be honest with you, I don't really know what the standings are. I'm not very focused on that. I think good golf will take care of itself.

I feel like my best golf is ahead of me for sure. Coming off wrist surgery last off-season, I just wasn't really trusting it the first few tournaments of the year. Still feeling a bit sore and wasn't really committing to the shot through impact.

I feel like this past, I guess, two months, I've really seen a lot of progress, and having this three, four weeks off after Korea to really work on my game, I feel like I'm in a good place. So I'm excited for the second half of the year, and I think the best golf is ahead of me.

BRENDAN STEELE: Yeah, for me, I haven't been happy with my results this year. I haven't felt like my game has been that bad, but I haven't been able to put all three rounds together in the same week.

It was a nice time to have a break at home, make some changes, work on some things. I'm feeling good about what I'm doing. Just try to be aggressive, try to play smart, try to do all the right things, and it should work out just fine.

Q. For Cameron, Brendan, Andy, can any of you assess the legacy of the guy to your right and his impact on the game, not just six majors and all that, but helping establish LIV and get it going, and then Phil, if you could follow that with what's your competitive plan over the next five years or so?

BRENDAN STEELE: I mean, I don't think I'm qualified to assess the legacy of Phil Mickelson. I mean, I've never seen somebody take on things with so much energy. From the first time that I met him through to this very day, it's really incredible. It's infectious. He's always helped me a



ton on and off the golf course.

I just never see the guy slow down. He is just an incredible player. The longevity that he's had, how strong he is still, how far he hits it, how hard he works. Everything that he does still is really incredible. Just a model for me to follow after.

CAMERON TRINGALE: Well said. I think we all have tremendous respect for Phil. With what he's done in the game, and I can say personally just from the last couple years, off the golf course, Phil is one of the best people I know. He's selfless. When you interact with him, it's meaningful. I think it's authentic.

I think the way people feel, the way I feel when I leave an engagement with Phil is always better. I think that's something a lot of people don't know unless they've had -- been lucky enough to have an encounter with Phil.

His boldness with which he attacked this new venture with LIV and how he approaches his own game and his own life is quite inspiring.

ANDY OGLETREE: Yeah, I mean, from a legacy standpoint, I don't feel qualified to answer that from my perspective. Getting to know Phil personally has been an amazing experience, and there's not a time that goes by where he's not reaching out and asking how everything is going. He's very involved in our -- as involved as we want him to be with any question that we might ask.

I feel very comfortable asking Phil anything from golf to life to anything, and he's been very generous with his time and helping me with my swing and with my short game and with anything that I might want to ask him. For that, I'm just truly grateful. To be able to pick the brain of one of the greatest of all time is a really cool thing to be able to do.

I try to learn little bits and pieces along the way and try to build my own game to replicate what he's doing.

PHIL MICKELSON: Those are pretty nice words, and I'm appreciative. I really love and enjoy spending time with you guys and hanging out. That means a lot.

As far as my playing schedule, I don't know the answer to that. I think that my desire and energy and excitement to play, a lot of it has to do with the fact that I'm on this team and get to spend time with these guys. It makes me excited and looking forward to getting back out and playing so that we can hang.

Hey, we were talking in the locker room this morning, I hadn't seen them in a couple weeks, how much I was

looking forward to being with them and hanging with them. I just enjoy being around these guys. This is a big part of my desire and energy to play and to play well and to be out here on LIV.

So I don't have a great answer for you. I'm also going to be 55 in a couple weeks, so I want to be realistic there, too.

I want this team to succeed. I don't want to hold it back. If I'm not an asset, if I'm not helping, if I'm holding it back, then it's time for me to move on and get somebody else in here who is going to really help the team win and succeed.

These guys deserve to experience that, and I want them to. As a partner in this team, I want that, as well.

That needs to be the top priority is what can I do to help this team win, and if as a player I'm holding it back, then it's time for me to move on.

This year I've played better. I feel like I've held it back. I feel like I've held it back the last couple years. I had a great off-season. I don't feel I'm holding it back now. If I can continue to play well, help the team succeed, then I want to play. But if not, I'm also realistic and I want the team to succeed more than I want my own personal interest of playing.

Q. Phil, you were very vocal before you came to LIV about the PGA TOUR and how it was run. My question to you is now that you've been here for about three years, what do you feel like you've accomplished with LIV, and what do you feel like you need to accomplish to get it where you want it to be?

PHIL MICKELSON: I think that LIV has made some incredible strides of getting to where we want this to be. It will get there. I don't know the exact timeline.

We want all the best players in the world to be able to compete against each other more often and on a global scale, and the model that I was a part of for decades just didn't allow for that.

We never played against each other. We didn't have elevated events. We never played all of us against each other outside of the majors. It was not able to move internationally. When they did have tournaments and WGCs internationally, a lot of players didn't play. That's disappointing from a sponsor standpoint, from a fan standpoint. When you're paying for these events and television and you don't know what you're buying, that's frustrating.

When the fans don't get to see all the best players play, that's difficult. The model that is on LIV is what is needed



to be successful. We saw it even on last week's Signature Event. Players will do what's good for them and not necessarily play unless they are contractually obligated, just like in the NFL and baseball and every other professional sport.

That model as it's brought to LIV is allowing us to move throughout the world and make professional golf a global sport and allow countries that have never seen the best players in the world see the best players in the world compete.

It's driving a lot of interest in those countries. I understand in the U.S. we've always had the PGA TOUR and many of the best players playing here, and so we don't know what it's like to want that for decades and not be able to have a model to do that.

I think that we're well on our way and not that far away from making that happen, and you're seeing it with these good young players that are coming out. If you look at the good young players from different parts of the world, not necessarily the United States, you've got José Ballester and Louis Masaveu and Tom McKibbin and these young guys from other parts of the world are really interested in wanting to come to LIV and they get what it's about.

I think over time that's just going to continue to grow just like it has exponentially in the last three years, and I think we're not that far away from having it be what we all want it to be, which is all the best players in the world playing against each other.

Q. How have you seen Bryson evolve not just as a player but as a person, his personality since he's joined LIV?

PHIL MICKELSON: I think what's been great about Bryson is I've always seen this side of him, this playful fun side, intelligent side, interesting side of him, and since he has really dove into the YouTube space, now everybody gets to see it because he's able to showcase that and not have who he is be filtered by a middle person. He controls what content he puts out there and what he wants to shoot and so forth. So his personality comes out.

It's been remarkable to see the evolution of it and the way the public has responded to him because he's always been like that. It just hasn't been able to be noticed, I guess, properly.

Q. Phil, you raised some eyebrows in March when you said Joaco was the world's best player and you've since given some love to Scottie, too. But are people appreciating what it means to win three of five events?

We've seen some athletes from across all sports kind of mentioning how they're hearing more from gamblers, whether it's teasing or harassment. Have you heard anything humorous or serious in the course of playing from people that might have some money riding on your next swing or next hole?

PHIL MICKELSON: I've certainly heard a lot of gambling shit. I don't know about you guys. (Laughter.)

What was the first part of your question?

Q. Do people appreciate Joaco out here?

PHIL MICKELSON: I think because LIV is new, they don't quite realize the field and the strength of field and the guys you're playing against are these best same players repeatedly. Joaco is winning and he is playing every single week Jon Rahm and Bryson DeChambeau and Brooks Koepka and Dustin Johnson and these guys. He's playing against that same level of competition every single week, and it's tough to really grasp that and how great that is when it's new. It's just new.

It will start to come about because we see every single week on the PGA TOUR, you have different levels of competition, and here you know exactly what the level is going to be and who's out here, and he's beating so many great players that it showcases his level of play. But because this is new, I don't think it's fully understood yet.

Q. Have you heard anything humorous or serious from people on the course while playing?

BRENDAN STEELE: Sometimes guys will yell at you, like I've got five bucks with my buddy you get it closer than this guy or whatever. I think social media has become a thing where people are getting comments, whether it's positive or negative. I'm not really on there, so I can't speak exactly to that. But I know that's happened in baseball recently and across other sports.

So it's definitely a big part of sports in general at this point. The fans being able to connect with golfers like a little bit more closely in person, probably more comments that way, and then through social media they can definitely connect with players across all sports.

Q. I'm curious about the team concept even just doing the press conference as a team. How has it affected either a competitive round or the off the field stuff, whether it's preparation for a tournament, holding yourselves accountable to the other guys? What are some of the things that have happened as you prepare for a tournament, sharing information, that are



different from a team concept than what it used to be just as an individual?

BRENDAN STEELE: One of the things that I always say is people will say, oh, you go to LIV and there's no cuts and what's the pressure and whatever, and it's like, well, we've got one of the best players ever as my captain and he wanted me on this team and I don't want to let him down.

So there's a little different pressure there than if I was just playing for myself. When you're playing for yourself and things aren't going good, it's easier to kind of pack it in and move on to the next week. You definitely can't do that out here, and you definitely can't do it now that there's four scores counting.

It changes my mindset as far as, like, how I want to work and making sure that I'm ready to go because I don't want to let these other guys down.

CAMERON TRINGALE: I would say there's just way more collaboration in preparation. For those of us who live near each other, we're practicing together at home. We're trying to -- we all have coaches. We all have our own recipe for success. But I think we are -- everyone here is willing to offer help to anyone who needs it or needs encouragement.

But that's something I've appreciated about being out here on a team is that in-it-together mindset, and our team definitely embraces that. That's just different.

I can't really express how different it makes the weeks go. It just feels -- it's more complete. It's more meaningful to do something with other people than by yourself, in my opinion.

Q. Phil, I'm curious about your thoughts on Oakmont potentially being your first U.S. Open and the possible end of your life-long quest to win our national Open.

PHIL MICKELSON: I haven't thought about it too much. There's a high likelihood that it will be, but I haven't really thought about it too much.

What I have thought about is how similar this week's course is set up to what we'll see next week. We have greens that are rolling 14 to 15 on the stimp meter just like we will next week.

We have contours, undulations just like we will next week. I think it's a great way to prepare for next week without minimizing the effects of this week because this is the first tournaments of our second half of LIV, and we all need and want and are working hard to getting off to a good start and

making the second half of LIV great.

It's also a great way to prepare for next week.

Short game, touch, chipping around the greens, rough, speed, lag drills and speed and touch on the greens, all of that's critical here same thing as next week. It couldn't be a better spot to get ready.

Q. Would you try to qualify in the future?

PHIL MICKELSON: I don't know. I don't know. I haven't thought that far.

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