

PGA Championship

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Louisville, Kentucky, USA

Valhalla Golf Club

Scottie Scheffler

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Welcome back to the 106th PGA Championship where the reigning Masters champion Scottie Scheffler joins us. Welcome to Valhalla in what is your fifth PGA Championship. Congratulations. How have the first few days of fatherhood been?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: First few days have been nice. It was good to get some time at home. It's pretty wild. A lot of fun. It's a pretty exciting time for Meredith and me.

As far as this week goes, yeah, excited to be here, excited to play, be here and compete. This is a major championship week, and this is what I practice and prepare for is to play my best at these events, and hopefully that trend will continue.

Q. Anything about the whole process surprise you at all?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Of what?

Q. Childbirth.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah. A lot. (Laughing).

I think it's just wild watching Meredith go through that. It's just nuts. I don't really know how to describe it, watching the little dude come out of Meredith, and we waited, and it was a surprise for us whether it was going to be a boy or girl, so being able to tell my wife that it was a boy, yeah, it was a wild ride.

Extremely proud of Meredith after watching her go through that. It's nuts. I'm glad it was her going through it and not me because I don't know if I could have done it. It was pretty nuts.

Extremely proud of her, and the look on her face right after birth, she was just glowing, so proud of herself and so excited to have our little boy.

Q. My wife wanted to insist that I ask about your wife. How is Meredith doing with the last week and

specifically celebrating her first Mother's Day?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Her first Mother's Day was fun. Her first Mother's Day was Sunday and then her birthday Monday, so it was a fun five, six days for us. She's doing well, recovering nicely. We're very fortunate to be in this position with a healthy mom and healthy baby. Hopefully that will continue.

Q. Is this your first time in Louisville?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think it is, yeah. I think it's my first time here.

Q. What are your overall thoughts on Valhalla and the community in general?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Well, to be honest, I haven't seen much of the community. I doubt that I'll see much of it this week. Typically the majors are just me going to the house and here. That's pretty much the whole two things that I'll see.

The support around this event seems to be tremendous. There's a lot of people there for the practice rounds and they're fighting through the rain and elements today to be here and watch us. The practice rounds have been fun.

As far as the golf course goes, it's a good track. It seems to be in good shape. We'll see how much rain we get over the next day or two and as the tournament goes on, but the course seems to be in good shape.

Q. I know this is the largest corporate build, it's close to Ryder Cup level. As a golfer, having all the different tents and things like that, does that ever serve as a distraction, or is it something where you just learn -- you walk around and get comfortable with the course and go from there?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I didn't really notice any extra tents or anything like that out there. Not really sure what to say. It's nice to have the support of our tournament here, and I'm excited to be here and compete. But as far as the grandstands and stuff go -- if there was none I'd



probably notice it, but since there's a lot, maybe it all just kinds of blends in together.

Q. You were already at the point where people are starting to count up how many majors you might win, how many weeks you might be at No. 1. Staying in the moment is one thing when you're in a tournament, but how do you stay in the moment between tournaments? How do you avoid looking forward and looking out into the future years and decades?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I mean, I think it's pretty easy. I don't really try to look that far ahead. If I listen to the narratives around myself, if it was two months ago it would probably look significantly different than it does now. I'm sure that wasn't a conversation y'all were having two months ago and all of a sudden now it's like, Oh, he's going to win this many tournaments or do that and do this. I don't really pay attention to it, I don't really care about it. I'm trying to do the best I can out there each and every week, and as far as anything else, I'm not really too concerned with it.

I may win a lot of major championships, I may be stuck at two the rest of my career. It doesn't really concern me in the moment. I'm just trying to prepare as best as possible for this week.

At home it was a nice time to reflect a little bit on my career so far and where my life has gone. I married my high school sweetheart and I always wanted to play professional golf and now I'm here. I was sitting there with a newborn in my arms and the green jacket in the closet. It was a pretty special time I think at home.

But at the same time, I think the competitiveness in me doesn't let me reflect too much and I was trying to do my best to get ready to play this week.

Q. Do you just not look at media, not watch TV, keep an eye on what's being said about you?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, pretty much. I did watch golf actually last weekend for the first time in a while. I got to watch the tournament on Sunday, watched a little bit of the golf on Saturday, as well, just because we were sitting around and it was nice to have something in the background. I got to see a little bit of the golf and saw some really nice golf being played. Part of me wanted to be out there competing with these guys. It's nice to be back out this week.

Q. With this being an Olympic year, have you given much thought to that yet, and are you planning to play in Paris this summer?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I definitely plan on playing. I think becoming an Olympian would be a dream come true, for sure. Be a nice little thing to be able to trash talk to my buddies about when they say golfers aren't athletes. I can claim I'm an Olympian. I think it's definitely a tournament that has been on my schedule, and I'll definitely be playing there if I'm able.

Q. I was talking to Ted a minute ago. You're six days into this fatherhood business. He's got a 17-year-old graduating high school this Saturday. How are you going to handle that one?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Well, me, Teddy is going home Friday night, coming back Saturday evening after the graduation -- or probably Saturday late night, I'm sure they'll do a little celebration afterward. That's something we talked about from the beginning of our relationship was family always comes first, and it's the same thing for me as it is for my caddie. It was a pretty easy decision. He told me at the beginning of this year that that was the date that it was, so I got a backup caddie lined up. One of my buddies is going to carry the bag on Saturday, and then Ted will be back for Sunday's round.

Q. Is it one of your buddies who was staying with you at Augusta this year?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: No, no, it's one of my older friends who travels week to week out here. He's the TOUR chaplain. His name is Brad and he's caddying for me on Saturday. I trust him to rake a bunker more than my buddies.

Q. You had a big break at the end of last year, but in terms of three weeks off in the course of a season, that's kind of rare for you. What is your frame of mind coming off reflections, special time you hadn't golfed, competed in three weeks.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I was able to practice and play plenty at home. Obviously the last week was a bit different with our son coming. But yeah, I would say three weeks is probably a bit of a longer break than I would usually take. I'm sure on a normal year I probably would have been playing at the Nelson.

But yeah, definitely rested going into this week for sure. I don't really feel like any rust has accumulated. I was able to practice and play a lot at home. I'm able to do stuff at home to simulate tournament golf, especially on the greens, competing and gambling with my buddies, I don't really want to lose to them, either, so I was able to simulate a little bit of competition at home.



Q. Over the past couple weeks, what's been the best piece of advice you've gotten on becoming a dad, and what's the strangest piece of advice?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I feel like I haven't really gotten too much unsolicited advice, which I'm a bit thankful for. Every kid, I'm sure, is a lot different, so I think you manage them each differently. Right now I'm literally just standing there changing diapers and handing him back to Meredith so he can feed, and just letting him sleep on me.

It's exciting. I couldn't imagine it being the way that it is, and it's a lot of fun. I miss him like crazy. It was not easy to leave the house Monday morning.

But like I said, I told my son as I was leaving, I was like, I don't want to leave you right now, but I need to. I'm called to do my job to the best of my ability, and I felt like showing up Wednesday night wouldn't really be doing myself a service this week when it comes to playing and competing in the tournament, so I had to show up, especially with the weather forecast, showing up, being prepared and ready to play and being back home as quick as I can.

Q. Are there some commonalities in this amazing run you've put together, things maybe you notice that other people don't necessarily, whether it's unique in putting or any part of your game or the mental approach that stand out to you? It's been an exceptionally hot run.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I've been playing pretty good. I've had some weeks where my swing didn't feel 100 percent and I was able to make up for it with the putter. Then I had some weeks where maybe I wasn't holing a ton of putts and I was able to make up for it with my ball-striking. I feel like I'm in a good head space.

Does anything stand out to me? I'm not really sure. I think I've just been playing some really good golf. This game is funny. Sometimes you get good breaks and sometimes you get bad breaks. I think it's just a really difficult sport, and sometimes it can seem really easy, and then sometimes it can seem pretty tough.

The last couple months it seems like it has felt fairly easy at times. I think, as a professional, I think that's always what you're striving for, and it's been nice to see some of the benefits of the work that I've put in and see some results on the course, as well.

Q. You're going to expect some changes obviously in how you've done things. Can you talk about what you envisage coming in the future, whether it's changing

practice time, reduced time at certain times. The call and the pull of home is going to be greater obviously from now on.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I think just the continued efficiency. Just continuing to get more efficient in the way I do things.

Actually, I was at home working out on Sunday and it was like the fastest workout I ever did at home, just because I was ready to go back in the living room and hang out with Mer and our son. I think a lot of that will come naturally, just being as focused as I can and trying to stay present. When I'm out here at the golf course doing my job, I'm able to focus on that. Then when I get home, I'm able to leave the golf course there and focus on being with my wife and son.

Q. You said you're playing and gambling with your mates back home. How often do you lose to those guys with strokes involved?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Not too much I would say. Depends on the game. I like to challenge myself as much as possible.

A decent amount, but I try not to lose too much.

Q. Is there any backstory on the name for your son?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: No. Not really. It's just a name that we liked. Yeah, just a name we liked.

Q. Do you feel there might be a good thing here in terms of a good distraction that you've had here lately, instead of having to focus and get asked questions about your golf and keeping this run going, that you were kind of away from it, you had a life issue to deal with which was great and do you see that helping you in any way?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I'm not really sure. I think throughout my career, I think I've learned a little bit of how to compartmentalize things, and I think as my career has gone on, I've been able to do a better job of that.

I try to do my best to keep my personal life out of kind of the public eye. I think that's something that my wife and I -- we like having almost two separate lives. I have my life out here in public where I'm out here competing and playing in front of fans, then we have our life at home where we really just want to go home and hang out with our friends and go out to dinner and just be kind of regular old normal people and live our lives because that's really who we are I feel like.

It's kind of a tough balance because it's such an exciting time that I want to be able to share it with everybody, but there's also the balance of wanting to keep our private life private and at home. I think that's something that I'll learn, as well, is kind of striking a balance between being able to share the joy of being a parent with everybody while also keeping our kids' lives as private as possible.

Q. You said during the break and the birth of your son that you reflected a lot. When it comes to your career, what did you think about?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I mean, as far as my career goes, I think there was just a little bit of just kind of thankful times mostly. Like I said, I'm sitting there with Meredith, and we started dating in high school, and I think a lot of the time we still feel like children. So to be sitting at home awaiting the birth of our child and then bringing our child home was definitely a very interesting feeling because I think sometimes we both see just the kid in each other, and being responsible for another life form is a pretty interesting thing for us to be responsible for.

I think that's mostly what it was, just being thankful for where our lives have gone and where this game of golf has taken us. It was definitely nice. I can't really describe the feeling of, you know, dreaming of just coming and playing on the PGA TOUR, to be sitting at home with the girl I dated in high school with our child and then the Green Jacket sitting in the closet is a pretty insane feeling, and I just wanted to be as thankful as possible.

But I think the human heart is always striving for more, and the competitiveness in me, it doesn't really allow me to reflect really that much.

Q. You built a nice record in the PGA Championship already. You hadn't seen Valhalla, but as you come here, what are you expecting of a PGA test?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I think with the weather forecast this week, it may not be -- the scores may not be as close to par as some other major championships. We'll see how the golf course plays. Like I said, I only played nine holes yesterday and today, so as the tournament goes on we'll see how the course plays. But with soft greens and soft fairways, I'd imagine the scores would be fairly low here. I don't know exactly what the winning score will be like, but I think it'll be -- scores would be a little bit lower, I think, than the last major.

But with any major championship, there's a lot more pressure. The golf courses are always a bit tougher. This is a place where I feel like when you're hitting it really well,

the golf course can open up for you, and there's definitely a lot of holes where you've got to put the ball in play, just with the thick rough. A lot of good elevation change around this golf course. After playing 18 holes, it seems like a really good fair test of golf. Par-3s seem pretty difficult. There's a couple par-5s you can get after, and then there's some par-4s that are the same way, but then there's also a couple par-4s that are pretty challenging.

I think around this golf course you've got a good mix of holes, and as players we look for the best test of golf, not necessarily what the winning score is going to be. Just because it's even par doesn't mean it was a great test of golf. I think what we're looking for is be rewarded for good shots and punished for bad ones, and from what I've seen around this golf course, it seems like an appropriate test.

Q. Max Homa was in here earlier mentioning he feels like the types of courses and the way the PGA Championship is played over the years has almost formed an identity, almost maybe like an old U.S. Open-style setup, lots of drivers, lots of long irons. Have you noticed a trend in the way this championship is set up?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: To me it's always seemed pretty challenging. I think the major championships have leaned into trying to be the toughest tests. I think at a lot of major championship golf courses it eliminates a lot of the shorter hitters out here, with how long the golf courses are and how firm they try and get them for majors, it's extremely challenging for a shorter hitter to be able to compete.

Is that necessarily the best test? I'm not really sure. But I think it's kind of finding the balance between still challenging the longer hitters, while also giving all the guys opportunities for scoring. It's a tough balance really, and it all depends on weather conditions, and there's a lot of different factors that go into that.

I think this week with the greens probably being a little bit softer, we'll see how the course plays, but I think the PGA especially has leaned into wanting to be a little bit more difficult test. You look at Oak Hill last year, that was pretty challenging, and the courses before that I think were pretty challenging, as well.

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