

Senior PGA Championship

Congressional Country Club

Bethesda, Maryland, USA

Tuesday, May 20, 2025

Steve Stricker

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Steve, welcome to the 2025 Senior PGA Championship. What are your thoughts on Congressional and your game heading into there week?

STEVE STRICKER: Congressional looks totally different than when I was here the last time, and I don't know what year it was that I was here the last. But it's totally different. But beautiful.

Before lots of trees, and that's beautiful in its own right. But this takes on a different beauty of its own. It's very pretty. It's in great shape. Very difficult. The greens are very difficult. The rough is up. It's going to be a challenging golf course this week, and hopefully the weather cooperates a little bit.

But yeah, I enjoyed going around here, but there's a lot to get to learn in a short period of time. I think everybody is in the same boat, especially with the weather coming in tomorrow.

Yeah, it's a pretty place. It's different, but yet I think it's fair. There's a lot of collection areas that if you can understand them and get to know them in a short period of time that you should be able to utilize some of those slopes to work your ball into the pins. But yeah, it's going to be a good test.

Q. We asked early this on Scheffler, kind of like we're in the middle of a Scheffler era to some extent. You were during, obviously, the Tiger era. What was it like to get ready for a big event or event in general when you knew that Tiger was in the field?

STEVE STRICKER: Well, you knew you had to usually beat that guy. Tiger back in the day and now it's Scottie Scheffler currently. You know -- or Rory, too. There's a handful of guys that if they're on their game, you're going to really have to have something special to win that week. It seems to be Scottie or Rory or pretty much those two guys that are fighting for the top.

Yeah, it's what makes you want to go practice, want to get

better, and I'm sure those guys that are out there now watch Scottie, watch Rory. They need to get to work, right, to get better, and that was no different in my era with Tiger, with Ernie, Vijay. You watch those guys, and I've played with a bunch of those guys over the years and watched them play, and you're like, geez, I don't have that kind of game sometimes. It just drives you to continue to get better and try to improve so you can try to compete and win in those big tournaments.

Q. When you walked in, it looks like you're not 100 percent. What kind of treatment are you getting, and how are you physically?

STEVE STRICKER: It's been a challenge lately, a little bit. Back is not great. Really I was sidelined the last four months because of a neck problem that I lost a whole bunch of strength down my arm, was in -- had a bunch of nerve pain for about five, six weeks, got some shots, alleviated that, and then it's been about getting that strength back because I lost a bunch of strength there.

It's been a little bit of a challenge, but I'm here and excited to play. I'll be fine come Thursday. Get some rest tomorrow and -- but yeah, it's not great.

Q. When you are out there and you're playing a lot, what exactly is form to you? If someone says, how is your form, Steve, what is form? Harrington was just in here and said it's all about my score.

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah. I think form for me is how I'm hitting it, how I'm feeling about my swing at the time, how the ball is going, really. I think if I'm comfortable seeing my ball going a certain direction and it continues to go in the same direction that I want it to go in, then I feel like I'm in good form. Whether I'm hitting it great or not, at least the ball is doing what I want it to do, and I can feel good about that. And lately last week I had it going right and I had it going left a little bit, and I feel like I'm not in good form. But if I had this ball going, I like to hit it right to left, so if I can get that ball going right to left all the time, then whether it's perfectly in the fairway or hit a perfect shot, it doesn't really have to be, but if I can see that trajectory starting out to the



right and turning in there, then I'm like, okay, I can deal with that and you can adjust. But lately I've got that ball going a little to the right, a little to the left, and that's, I feel like, not in great form.

But I can see where Harrington would say scoring is the ultimate, and it is. You grind it out and get a good score. But I like to see and feel good about what my swing is doing to feel like I'm in good form.

Q. With your Ryder Cup experience, what are your thoughts about Congressional being a future venue for the Ryder Cup?

STEVE STRICKER: Oh, I think it'll be great. I think it'll be great. There's a few holes that it's a little severe. Some of the greens are a little severe. But I played with a couple members and the president of the club today, and they've got plans to fix some of the issues that they feel like are issues. But I think it will be a good venue for something like that.

Yeah, there's a lot of birdies and bogeys out there, so I think it will be a great venue.

Q. You were a home Ryder Cup captain --

STEVE STRICKER: Yes.

Q. And Keegan is in the middle of making some decisions now that you made, which is are we going four-ball or foursomes first. That's the major decision he's got coming up. How did you approach that kind of decision in regards to when you decided to go one way or the other?

STEVE STRICKER: Well, history tells us which way to go. I forgot what that history tells us. (Laughter.)

But I think we went with foursomes first; is that right?

Q. I'll take a look.

STEVE STRICKER: I think history tells us that we do well in foursomes -- or four-ball?

Q. We'll take a look. But you looked at history --

STEVE STRICKER: We based it on history and what we've done well in over the years in the Ryder Cups, and that's what we went with.

Q. The preparation from going to -- obviously you were in a very serene place compared to where they're going. That preparation of having to deal with not only

your team but knowing you're going to be dealing with some crazy fans, how would you approach it if you did approach it maybe differently than you would going to play in Wisconsin?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, I mean, fortunately they're all going to be pro-USA people I would imagine up there in New York. So they're going to be able to feed off that. Our team is going to be able to feed off of that. It's going to be loud. It's going to be over the top probably in some instances. I'm sure Keegan has got ways to prepare them for that, and I think just realizing that it's going to be out of control is the first step.

Then I think just to maintain that even keel, that's going to be the hard part as the U.S. Team goes, I think, is just maintaining that even keel because you're going to feel all that energy from all those people. That's going to be a help, but sometimes it can get in the way, too.

I think just maintaining that evenness and being prepared for it, thinking about it, that it's going to happen, maybe get disruptive at times towards the other team, which I hope it doesn't, but I've been a part of some of those Opens there and played with Phil there before, it's loud, and it can get out of hand. As we saw with Sergio there at -- what was that, a U.S. Open there, when they were all over him? Yeah.

I think they've just got to be prepared mentally that anything could happen and just acknowledging that I think is a good start.

Q. I wanted to follow up on the pro-USA crowd. With COVID you had 99 percent probably. Was that an extra factor that you think helped?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, probably, yeah. You mean the COVID part?

Q. Yeah.

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, you're right. It was loud there, too, but it seemed like Whistling Straits they were away from you a little bit more at times. I guess it's a big golf course at the Black course.

I think it's just the mentality -- I don't know how to say this in a nice way, the mentality of east, northeast people is different than the mentality of Midwest people. I think that comes through at times.

I think everybody has got to be a little bit careful going up there, and hopefully it doesn't get out of hand. Was that as nice as I could put it?



