

The Memorial Tournament Presented By Workday

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Dublin, Ohio, USA

Muirfield Village

Scottie Scheffler

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Scottie Scheffler to the interview room here at The Memorial Tournament Presented By Workday. You've won twice this year already with the CJ Cup Byron Nelson in your home state and then the PGA Championship for your third major.

Do you feel rested coming in here and ready?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Rested enough, yeah. My third week in a row, but I got some good rest to start -- last week, after the PGA, I got some good rest Monday and Tuesday and had a good start at Colonial. Took my day off, came here, played nine holes yesterday, played nine holes this morning, so feeling ready for the week.

THE MODERATOR: We'll jump right into questions.

Q. You have been second in bounceback percentage each of the last three seasons and at one point during the final round during the PGA Championship you had a 60 percent bounceback when the field had, like, a 16 percent bounceback. My question is, like, how do you get good at bouncing back?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Just bogey the holes before the easy holes, I guess. (Laughing.) No, I think over the course of a 72-hole tournament, you're going to make plenty of mistakes and over the course of my career, I feel like -- or I guess my whole golf career, so going all the way back to junior golf. Going back to junior golf, I think I didn't handle things as good as I could have, and I feel like I've always battled to handle things the best way I can. I'm going to make plenty of mistakes over a 72-hole tournament, but it's more important for me not to let the mistakes bug me and to continue to bounce back and keep fighting out there.

I mean, I feel like my attitude has gotten better over the years, and I feel like that's why that statistic would be, I guess, one of my stronger ones. Yeah, that's definitely something that I take pride in, is being able to bounce back from mistakes. Sometimes it can also help sharpen my



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focus a little bit. Maybe sometimes throughout a 72-hole tournament, you kind of have lapses in focus. It's a long time to be out there competing and playing, especially over the course of a whole season too. So to have the ability to bounce back and not let those mistakes get the better of me and almost sharpen my focus, I think is really helpful.

Q. Do you have a resetting process or something? Like, you make bogey, you're a little annoyed. How do you reset and then go back out there? Do you have anything like that?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: It's a good question. I think it depends on the situation because sometimes, like -- for instance, this week, let's say when you look at last year's tournament, in the final round, I made plenty of mistakes in the final round. I started with a couple-shot lead and the golf course was playing so difficult, so there's basically no way you're going to get around it without making a bogey the way it was playing on Sunday.

I remember making a mistake on -- I didn't birdie 15, made great par on 16. I got a two-shot lead and all of a sudden we get to 17, I kind have a sloppy -- sorry, not a -- how do I describe it? I had a fairly simple up-and-down that I played a little sloppy and didn't get the ball up and down, so all of a sudden my two-shot lead is now a one-shot lead. The way I refocused on 18 was just to tell myself, listen, like, my job on this hole is to go out and make a par.

And so that's not going to help my bounceback stat or whatever, but when I step up there, the only thing I'm trying to do is now hit one good shot to get it in the fairway because now I got to get this ball in the fairway. Then when I got the ball in the fairway, the discussion was, at the time, because it was so windy and firm, basically which side of the green do we want to chip from, but it was basically like, what are we going to do here to where we can make a par.

And that was what we were focused on, and I wasn't thinking about the last hole. I wasn't thinking about what Collin was going to do. I was trying to make a par. Sometimes that can be a lot easier said than done, but I feel like over the last couple years, I've done a really good



job of keeping the task at hand -- keeping my focus on the task at hand and not thinking about the other stuff that could happen.

Q. Jack made a comment yesterday about never showing up at a tournament thinking he's winning this week because he's Jack Nicklaus. He looked at Thursday as the start of climbing a mountain, like a process of getting to the final day, and it made me wonder if you can relate to that or appreciate what he's saying.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah. Well, I mean, first of all, when you show up to an event, everybody's at even par. People ask, I feel like a lot, what's it like defending this week? I'm like, well, what does that do for me? Nothing. I have some experience the on the golf course that can be helpful, but at the end of the day, you start even par, and I want to be in contention on Sunday, and you definitely don't show up too high or too low.

So if you show up with too low of expectations, not feeling like your game's in a good spot, you're probably not going to hit a lot of good shots. And if you show up feeling way too good about yourself, I think it can have an affect on your focus. Like, if you just show up and be, like, oh, I'm best. I'm just going to show up and win this week, I think almost sometimes you can get a bit lazy at times out on the course. And when you're looking at a four-day golf tournament over 72 holes, especially on a golf course as difficult as this one, you have to be -- you have to have a heightened level of focus because out here, especially around this place, there's not a shot that you can just kind of hit. You have to be very focused on what you're doing.

Q. Do you have an objective when you tee off on Thursday -- Harrington, years ago, used to talk about, Get me to the back nine on Sunday, let's see where I am, and then act accordingly -- or are you just --

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I'm always focused --

Q. You do not say one shot at a time, but I would understand it if you did.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah. I mean, it's a silly way of putting it, I would say, because, yes, I am focused only on one shot at a time, but you're always positioning yourself on a hole. I would say it's basically playing one hole at a time, and it's like when I step up on the first tee tomorrow, I'm going to remind myself that I'm prepared, I'm ready to play in the tournament, now it's all about going out and competing.

So I'm not going to be trying to fix my swing. I'm not going

to be worried if I hook it off the first tee, how am I going to not hook it off the second. No, I'm going to step on the first tee, try and hit my shot, step up to the approach shot, try and hit my shot, and then deal with whatever the results are. And if I miss the green, I'm going to try to get up-and-down. It's always kind of on to the next thing in golf, and I try to hit each shot kind of objectively and kind of go from there.

Q. Obviously, you know about the change to the TOUR Championship this year, and you were quoted in the release, but my question is are you comfortable with where this is going? Are you happy with 72-hole stroke play or would you have liked to have seen something different?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: What would be different? I think when you're looking at a golf tournament, I think the best way to identify the best player over the course of a tournament is 72-hole stroke play on a really good golf course. I think when you look at a good test of golf and you got to compete over four days, I think that's the best way to crown the best winner for that week.

And looking at the TOUR Championship, I didn't love the previous format of starting strokes, and I really like the direction where we're going. I think the TOUR Championship's going to be difficult to qualify for. Making the TOUR Championship is truly going to be the results from a great body of work over the course of a season, and then you have an opportunity to win the TOUR Championship and the FedExCup.

Q. They seem to be suggesting, although we're not going to get the details for a while, that they might reallocate the bonus money. And this kind of goes back to something I think that you've talked about before, the old way where you have this great year and then if you just kind of have a bad week or maybe are injured, your chances of falling down that FedExCup list are pretty great, and yet you wouldn't be rewarded. Do you have any sense of how that might play out, because in this sense, now it's still 30 guys going for that big prize?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I think the way the finances are going to shake out, which I really don't like talking about because I think it's silly, but I think the way the finances are going to be is more leaning towards the reward for a great regular season and some payouts that way, versus just your performance at the TOUR Championship. Because as players that's not why we compete. I don't compete for the financial benefit at the end, I care much more about winning the TOUR Championship than I do winning the money for the TOUR

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Championship. Look, I want to win the FedExCup because it's the race over the course of the whole season, you have to play great golf to finish in the top 30 for the entire season, and you got to show up at the right time and play great golf.

Like you think about the same thing when you think about our best tournaments. You think about the PLAYERS, you think about the major championships, you have to play well at the right time, and that's just part of being in competitive sports. You look at the Patriots, they won 18 games one year and they lost the 19th and it looks like a failure for a season. Now, they had a great year, and they didn't win the Super Bowl. At the end of the day you have to perform when it matters the most. I think now with the format we have, we have a great format of a 72-hole golf tournament. If I want to win the FedExCup, I have to play well at the last week of the season, and it's just simple as that.

Q. Are you good with too -- Jay told us just a little while ago, obviously they're going to, you know, kind of doing this on the fly, and you wanted to have a change this year, but yet it's a bridge year, there might be other changes going into next year, they're going to look at other things.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I think going into next year I think the points is something that is probably going to have to be adjusted. And like I said, we want the most fair test over the course of the season to qualify for the TOUR Championship. And the way it is right now with having some tournaments at 2,000 points, I don't think is the most fair test of the body of work for the entire season. There's something to having some emphasis on those last few tournaments, because they are the playoff events and they are a last couple tournaments, there should be some sort of emphasis there. I think right now with it being four times the amount of points that you get for winning, for instance, the Byron Nelson Championship, I don't think that that's maybe the fairest way to do it. So I think there's a sweet spot and a balance there with placing some emphasis on those last couple tournaments while also rewarding a body of work for the entire season.

Q. Along those lines you mentioned 30, do you think 30 is the right number for the size of the field?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think 30's a good number. I think you have to strike a balance between -- I mean like if you look at it this way if you're going to have a true season-long race you're just going to add up FedExCup points for the entire season and you're just going to award a winner and that would be the truest test of a best season. But we have different awards for that. We have the Player of the Year award for that, there's different stuff for having

the best season, just straight up. And I think if we're going to have something interesting for the fans to watch at the end of the year I think there has to be some sort of balance between rewarding guys for having a great season. And that, whether it be 30 guys or whatever number we settle on, there's going to be a balance between rewarding guys for having a great regular season, and then giving guys an opportunity to have a great post-season, even have an opportunity to win the FedExCup. But you're not going to have an opportunity to win the FedExCup unless you have a really good regular season. And so that, is keeping that field for the TOUR Championship a little bit smaller, whether that be 30 guys, I think that's, I mean I think that's a pretty good number. Because you also want to have an interesting tournament. If you had eight guys playing 72-hole stroke play, odds are that's not going to have a very exciting finish very often, especially if it's going to be on a difficult golf course where there's a lot of separation between the scores.

Q. Either in the immediate aftermath of your victory last year or even leading up to today is there a really cool moment that you got to have with Jack and Barbara that we didn't see on camera anywhere?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Well, one thing that always sticks out to me with Mr. Nicklaus is -- well, first of all, he does such a good job at his tournament of being around, and the last few years especially, asking players about his golf course I think is a really cool thing that he does. He wants this golf course to be the best test of golf, and so the last couple years he's just been sitting in player dining basically asking guys what they think of the course. And he's not sitting in there for everybody to be like, Hey, we love it, it's great, everything's the best. He's like, No I want you to tell me how we can continue to improve this tournament. I think for a man that has the experience he has in the game of golf, for all the stuff he has accomplished, for him to be sitting in dining asking the current guys how he can improve his tournament I think is really cool.

On a more personal level, I talked about it a bit last year, but I was close to winning this tournament in maybe 2021 or 2020, one of those years, and I felt like if I birdied 18 I think I would have gotten into a playoff. I ended up getting a little over aggressive on the second shot, hitting it out on the green, making bogey, and basically knocking myself out of the tournament. And walking off Mr. Nicklaus is standing there, and he shakes my hand and he says, Listen Scottie, you didn't make the putt today, but one day you're going to make the putt on this green to win this tournament. And I said, Well thanks, Mr. Nicklaus, I really appreciate the support, thanks for a great week year, yada, yada, yada. And a couple years later I was sitting there, and he was right, I made the putt to win the tournament.

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And it was just a really cool kind of full circle moment. And that was a few years ago, that wasn't something that he needed to say to me, but for some reason he felt the need to, and it was something that I didn't forget. And for a guy that doesn't have a very good memory, you know, that's a pretty cool thing for him to do.

Q. What was your suggestion to fix the course to him?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: My suggestion, we talk a lot about hole 16. Just with the way the wind is. He's kind of pushed that tee more over to the right. 16's always kind of a big one, just because prevailing wind is down off the left and the pin is back left on Sunday. I think he wanted more of an interesting hole where you had guys kind of chasing the pin a little bit and maybe going in the water, whereas now with the wind being down off the left and super firm it's almost hard to hold the greens at times, and so he's taken out that bunker in the front right of the green and done some stuff to give you some run-up areas, and that's a hole that he's kind of I think fiddled with over time.

Q. Did you happen to see Ryan Day out here? Are you a big UT football fan?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I did get asked a few questions about Ryan Day, but I didn't see him out here. Yeah, I don't know (laughing). I don't really have much. They had a great year last year, I guess. Congrats to them. I am a big football fan, but, no, I didn't see Ryan Day. I was out pretty early.

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