

TOUR Championship

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Atlanta, Georgia, USA

East Lake Golf Club

Shane Lowry

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome Shane Lowry to the media center here at the 2024 TOUR Championship. You've been saying for a long time it's been a goal to get here and to make it to East Lake.

After winning the Zurich Classic of New Orleans that was something that became more of a reality. Now that you're here, some opening comments on being here at the season finale.

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, it's nice to be here. It's almost embarrassing that I haven't been here. I've been a pro a long time and whatever. But yeah, I haven't been here. But it is nice to be here this week, and I feel like my game is okay. Golf course is going to play quite difficult.

Happy to be here at East Lake. It's always a goal at the start of the year, and thankfully this year I got to fulfill it.

Q. Just some comments on the golf course; what are your impressions of the layout here?

SHANE LOWRY: Well, everybody keeps saying how different it is, but it's obviously just a new golf course for me, so I don't really know anything different, which is great.

It's great to hear the lads moaning about it inside the locker room, and I'm happy with what I see. It's going to play quite difficult. If you miss fairways you're going to struggle to make pars, and it's going to be hard to get the ball close to the pins.

It'll be interesting to see how it plays. But new golf courses always play really firm and fast, and that's what this is doing. It's in great shape. The chipping areas and the greens and everything about the place is in great shape. It should make for a great tournament.

Q. How far back are you? I know you haven't teed off, but where do you start? This has got to be something new for you, too, isn't it?

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, I give shots to my friends every



day at home, but my friends are not Scottie Scheffler and Rory McIlroy and Xander Schauffele. I think, yeah, it is new, but a good start the first day and you're back in the tournament.

Yeah, I see it -- in my head I'm seeing it as like a five-round event that I've got 3-under the first round and I'm seven back of the leader and I need to kind of pick away at that over the four days and see where it leaves me on Sunday.

Q. What's your fatigue level from having gone Paris, Wyndham, all the way through?

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, I'm pretty tired, but I think I've managed myself pretty well over the last five weeks. The last couple of days I've played nine holes but I've took it quite easy. Just tried to get to know the golf course. I've done a small bit of practice.

But I'm feeling okay. Look, if your adrenaline and if you can't get up for a tournament like this and you can't keep it going for four days on a week like this you're in the wrong game, so I'll be fine.

Q. Along those same lines, the decision to go from the Olympics to Wyndham for the Comcast, and you explained what you were trying to do, did that work out the way you wanted it to, or would you rethink that decision?

SHANE LOWRY: Well, I missed the cut at the Wyndham, so it wasn't great. I was very annoyed with that, actually. I hadn't missed a cut since the start of the year, in Palm Springs, so that was disappointing.

I wanted to finish in that top 10 in the Comcast for obvious reasons. I wanted to give this FedExCup as good a run as I can. I felt like -- going into Wyndham, I felt like this was probably going to be one of my best opportunities to give this FedExCup a run.

Look, the last three weeks haven't really went how I would have liked. I felt like I played -- after the first round last week I felt like I played really good golf over the last three days, and to end up with a half decent result.

Would I rethink it? No, I'd probably do the same thing. I like the Wyndham. I like the golf course. The weather was



unfortunate that week.

To be honest, when I look back on missing that cut and not having to do the 36 round before going to Memphis, it wasn't the worst thing in the world.

Q. I understand you were at Tee Up ATL on Monday. How important is it for PGA TOUR pros to give back to the community, and especially at this TOUR Championship?

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, I think one of the amazing things PGA TOUR does around America is the way it gives back to local communities, and obviously what they've done here over the years at East Lake and the East Lake Foundation and all that is pretty cool.

We're very fortunate as golfers to live the life we have, and if we can be a part of anything small that's giving back to local communities around America and around the world, it's pretty cool to be a part of that.

I think the PGA TOUR does a great job with that.

Q. For a lot of guys this is the finish line of the season but not for you. You had a busy stretch and you're about to go play in Europe. How much more golf do you have in front of you --

SHANE LOWRY: I have too much.

Q. Talking about the fatigue, how tough will it be to get up for these last --

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, it's going to be hard. I've just done three weeks away from my family, my kids. I'm about to do another good run going back to Europe. That's probably the most difficult part for me. It's nothing to do with the fatigue levels and the getting up for golf, but when you're FaceTiming your kids and they're asking you when you're going to be home and it's not going to be for another three weekends, that always gets hard.

But it is what it is; that's what we have to do. Going back to play the Irish Open and Wentworth is going to be two big tournaments for me. Irish Open means a lot to me, and Wentworth, I've done quite well there in the past and I really love the tournament.

Going back and playing in those and then Madrid the week after, I have a big stint away, but after that I'll have some time off. I'll have plenty of time off this winter to get ready for 2025.

But yeah, I have still a lot of golf to play.

Q. Going off that, how excited are you to get back to Royal County Down?

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, obviously going and playing the Irish Open, it's always one of the weeks at the start of the year where I look and I want to perform that week. Going to Royal County Down, I haven't played there since we were there in 2015 or so, around then. So yeah, going back there is going to be cool.

It's obviously one of the great golf courses in the world, one of the great venues. I just hope we get some good weather. If we get some good weather it'll be an amazing week, and, yeah, hopefully I can do well.

I'm going back next weekend. I get to play some links golf, so that'll take a little bit of getting used to again, but yeah, looking forward to it.

Q. Obviously everybody has talked about the restoration. Scottie Scheffler yesterday talked about the firmness of the greens. Xander Schauffele said it's almost too new. How does your approach change when you're playing brand new firm greens such as this when you're trying to stop a ball on the greens? Does anything change at all?

SHANE LOWRY: You just need to hit the fairway. It's quite nice and quite refreshing that you need to be on the fairway to make birdies.

The modern game is not really played like that anymore. It's played more by just hit driver as hard as you can and go up there and find it and try and get it up on the green somewhere; whereas I think even with a wedge in your hand around here you're going to struggle to hit greens.

I find it quite refreshing that you need to go out there and really be on top of your game, especially off the tee. Even going into the greens from the fairways, you still need to strike the ball very well and hit the right shot shape.

It's going to take a lot of good golf to win this week. Look, it's obviously a bit of a shock to the guys' system that have been here in the past. I've heard that the changes are huge, that it's way different than it was. But like I said, it's just a new golf course for me, and I've never been here.

I kind of like what I see. I've played 18 holes here the last two days. I like tough golf courses, so I'm pretty happy about it.

Q. Following on that, are you encouraged at all by the fact that any advantages that guys have experienced

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

here don't have that advantage anymore because it's a new course to them, and how might that serve a first-timer?

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, I think I'm on a level playing field with the guys that have played here -- like Rory has played here something like 12 or 14 times. He's obviously won here three times.

When you're coming back and it's the same venue, they do have one up on you if it's the same golf course, but it's a completely different golf course. So I feel like I'm on a level playing field with those guys.

Q. I just wondered what you make of the staggered format this week, and do you think that's sort of the best approach for a season-ending finale?

SHANE LOWRY: I suppose I've never really thought about it. It is what it is. That's the format we play. I never really -- I'm not in the business of trying to tell the PGA TOUR what to do.

I think they've got people to do that, make the decisions there. Yes, look, there's no doubt about it, Scottie Scheffler and Xander Schauffele have had the best years of anyone and they're by far ahead of everybody else. But they only start a couple of shots ahead of people this week. But that's the Playoffs. That's American sports.

I think if you look at every American sport, you play the season -- you play for the regular season and then you go into the Playoffs and everyone starts at a level playing field again. I think that's just -- that's the industry we're in.

We're trying to make it as best as we can for the people watching, and as easy as it can be. I think it's pretty good, and I think it's worked well over the last few years.

I certainly don't deserve to come here to East Lake and start on the same score as Scottie Scheffler. But it's up to me to try and make that up this week.

Q. Will you adjust your schedule any differently next year in a Ryder Cup year? Will you do the team cup and Dubai in that early stretch in the Middle East or just stick to what you've done?

SHANE LOWRY: I did that the last time. I don't know, to be honest. I think the new points system that Luke and Edoardo and the Tour have come up with I think might have favored guys like us -- not favored, but we don't need to go chasing it as much as we used to in Europe anymore.

Back before you used to have to go play the big

tournaments just to try and chase points because you're trying to make the team on both sides; whereas we're obviously getting points for all the events over here now, which is amazing.

I think it's a great thing, and I think -- look, Luke just wants the 12 best players on the team. To be honest, I just want the 12 best players on the team. I just hope I'm one of them.

Look, after this week when we get back to Europe, my main focus over the next 12 months is going to be making that team and trying to win that tournament. Look, if Luke called me and said he really wanted me to go play, or Justin Rose, I don't know, I'd probably have to think about it.

But it's a long way to go at the start of the year and coming back to play these big events here. It's a hard thing to do on the body and the mind. Just to start the year off with that is quite difficult at times.

Q. When is the last time you turned up at a public course and paid a greens fee?

SHANE LOWRY: We're very lucky in Ireland. We get looked after very well on every golf course we go to. As a pro golfer, we get taken care of very well. No, I can't remember. It's been a long time.

Q. If you win this week, would you consider buying the European Club?

SHANE LOWRY: No.

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