

The Presidents Cup

Tuesday, September 22, 2026

Medinah, Illinois, United States

Medinah Country Club

Sam Burns

Press Conference



Q. Do you already know who you're going to play with?

SAM BURNS: I do, yeah.

Q. Is his name Scottie Scheffler?

SAM BURNS: His name starts with an S.

Q. It feels like, just going off that, the team kind of has a plan. Often are you finding out weeks in advance, or are you finding out week of? How has that gone?

SAM BURNS: Yeah, we came up here two weeks ago, and the captains had a pretty good idea of pairings and formats and who guys were going to play with and what format and how that was going to go. It was nice to have a little bit of a lead time on some of that. If guys needed to get comfortable or have some conversations about golf balls or the style of play maybe, they were able to do that.

Q. Do they, in your experience, maybe it's been different via different captains, but we want you with this person because of these stats, or do they get that in depth? Or is it just like, Sam, we want you with Scottie?

SAM BURNS: Yeah, at times. I think every captain has a little bit of a different style. I think first and foremost, they want guys that are comfortable playing with each other. Maybe they've played a lot of golf together or have similar kind of games or something. Maybe some of the pairings you'll see their games complement each other well based off statistics, and then others maybe -- obviously Pat and Xander have played a lot in these formats and had a lot of success.

I think you'll see some of that as well.

Q. There was some talk in Brandt's presser about the weight of playing with the World No. 1 in this format. When guys played with Tiger they were always nervous to let him down. Obviously you've played

with him a lot, but have you felt any of that?

SAM BURNS: Not really. I think at the end of the day we're both going out there trying to compete our hardest. At times you're both going to hit poor shots, so I think at the end of the day, you're both going out there trying to win. If I let him down at times, that happens. That's golf.

It doesn't really bother me or affect how I'm going to play. I'm going to go out there and compete my hardest and give it everything I have.

Q. Where does your relationship with Scottie actually begin? How far back do you guys go?

SAM BURNS: We played junior golf together. Me growing up in Louisiana, him in Texas right there, I played some of the same events. If I had to guess, probably 13-ish would be my guess. 17 years ago.

Q. To what degree do you guys think about yourself as a pair at these events?

SAM BURNS: Yeah, I think we played together in '22, and unfortunately, I feel like we played really well together.

I remember getting off the course and the stats guys were like, well, if you guys would have played any other match this day, you would have won, but unfortunately we didn't. So I think we've played well together. It's just a matter of earning some points for the U.S. Team.

I think it's a comfortable pairing for us. We obviously spend a lot of time together, play a lot of golf together. Yeah, it'll be fun.

Q. How did you take in the football game on Saturday night?

SAM BURNS: I'm still not over it. I will say this: Trinidad, he's a heck of a football player. I knew he was really good before the game and I was even more impressed after.

Q. Chicago has about 22 rated Michelin star restaurants. I wonder if you've had a chance to sample



any fine cuisine?

SAM BURNS: No, we haven't. It's just been basically the golf course and the hotel and back and forth, so we haven't ventured out.

Q. So whatever restaurant you have in the hotel, that's pretty much it?

SAM BURNS: Yeah, that's it. For sure.

Q. How did you find the golf course?

SAM BURNS: It's good, yeah. It's in great condition.

Q. Any sense of how it's going to play?

SAM BURNS: Well, I think the green complexes are pretty difficult, a lot of slope and pretty speedy, so that makes it pretty challenging.

Q. Why do you think the Americans have done so well in this event and not so well recently in the Ryder Cup?

SAM BURNS: I don't really have a perfect answer. I mean, I think a lot of these matches come down to one or two shots, one or two holes here and there. Maybe they've gone more our way in the Presidents Cup and not so much in the Ryder Cup, but I think -- if you look at last year's Ryder Cup, I think we just got off to a tough start and kind of were trying to dig ourselves out of a hole the rest of the way. We almost did it there at the end and put up a really good fight.

Yeah, I don't know. I think a lot of times I feel like these events, if you can get off to a good start and get the momentum on your side, it definitely helps.

Q. Has the contrast between the two come up in conversations among players at all?

SAM BURNS: I haven't really had any, no.

Q. How is the Chicago grub, the food?

SAM BURNS: I was just saying, we haven't really got to venture out much. Been at the golf course or the hotel pretty much the whole time. But yeah, at some point I'll go up to -- I'd love to indulge for sure.

Q. (Question on Christian beliefs and whether it bonds the team together.)

SAM BURNS: Sure. At the end of the day, for me

personally, it gives me a lot of freedom to go out and compete and know that no matter what happens, my identity is not in the result of the match, the result of the Presidents Cup. It's in my faith and being a believer in Jesus. That gives me a lot of freedom to go out and compete and accept whatever happens.

Q. Your captain said some of you participate in Bible study. Is that something you've had a chance to do?

SAM BURNS: Yeah, typically on Tuesday nights during PGA Tour events there's a study. There hasn't been one this week. Obviously we have a lot of things we have to do and long days at the golf course, so nothing formal this week.

Q. President Trump may make an appearance this week. What does that mean to you?

SAM BURNS: Yeah, I think for me personally, anyone who's the president of this country, I respect that position, obviously. I've actually got to spend some time with President Trump and we've played golf together a few times.

I think you just have a ton of respect for that position, and being an American, I think it's very important that we do support our president, regardless of your political views. I think if you look at our country now, it seems more divided than ever, and hopefully we can get back to the point where all Americans come together and we're all trying to kind of reach the same goal.

Q. You've represented the U.S. for a long time, were a Junior Ryder Cupper. What's something you think Americans don't know about team competition?

SAM BURNS: Well, I think for starters, being able to play for your country and represent 11 other guys and all the captains and all the spouses that are here, I don't take that lightly. I think it's a thing when you're playing and you're in your career, these weeks kind of fly by, and I think one day you really look back and have a ton of appreciation for what it means to represent your country and be on these teams.

I think all of us guys that are on this squad, there's nothing more we want to do than to go out and win and represent our country well, and that's the plan this week.

Q. Do you ever get comfortable, fully comfortable, in the alternate shot format?

SAM BURNS: Yeah, I mean, I think it's definitely different. It's something that we don't play a ton. It's definitely a little



bit of a faster pace. We played out there today in kind of a modified alternate shot, and it's maybe a little bit just uncomfortable at times. You're not used to walking to the other person's ball that just hit, so it takes a little bit of getting used to.

I think you just kind of have to wrap your head around it and get in the mindset of that format.

Q. Is there any tricks or anything you've learned about passing the time when you might not hit a full iron shot for a while, trying to keep yourself ready?

SAM BURNS: I think the most difficult thing is typically in a normal round of golf, you're hitting a putt every hole or a chip every hole. Sometimes in alternate shot, the way it falls, you may not hit a putt for three or four holes, you may not hit an approach shot for three or four holes. It's really making sure you're going through your normal process and you're ready when you need to be.

Q. Do you have the agency or the power with your alternate shot partner to pick which holes you take driving or is that being told to you guys?

SAM BURNS: No, they kind of gave us a suggestion and then we went out and played today, and we're going to stick to the suggestion.

Q. One thing I'm curious of with the new guys is that process of getting in the group, like a Chris who's clearly made himself one of the top players. A few years back what was your process of getting in that group or feeling comfortable?

SAM BURNS: Yeah, for sure. A lot of times it's kind of the older guys. Your guys have been on the team a good bit, bring you in, put their arm around you and made you feel welcome. With these guys, it's all happened organically. These guys have fit right in.

From my point of view, there's been none of them seeming uncomfortable or looking uncomfortable. I think they're going to play really well this week. It's a great group of guys.

Q. By the time you were at Quail, you were a multi-time Tour winner. Were you feeling like a new guy or were you just one of the good players?

SAM BURNS: A little bit. I think your first time to play one of these events, it's definitely a little uncomfortable, I think. You really realize the weight of what you're doing and who you're representing and playing for your country.

Yeah, some of the older guys helped me feel more comfortable. Yeah, it was a great experience.

Q. Jackson, what's your read on how Jackson has been?

SAM BURNS: Jackson has been amazing. He's obviously a world-class player. I got to play with him for the first time up here a couple weeks ago and I was blown away with his game. I knew he was really good, obviously, but he was even better than what I expected, which is awesome.

He seems very mature for his age. His game is obviously great. He's fit right into the team room. Seems like he's having a good time. It'll be fun to watch him this week.

Q. Brandt said he's understandably more on the reserved side. As the veterans on the team, are you letting him be there or are you trying to pull more out of him? What's the mood?

SAM BURNS: Yeah, I think typical kind of first-time guys, you like to jab them a little bit and get them going. He's taking it in stride.

It wouldn't shock me if he goes out and plays extremely well this week. I've been blown away about his game. He's mature beyond his age.

Q. Being a southern guy, meaning you probably played a lot of junior golf and AJGA stuff growing up, what do you recall from Cam at Quail Hollow? I'm not saying he's a loner, but being a northern guy, being a rookie on Tour, what have you seen from him personality-wise since that cup, since that first time in a team setting?

SAM BURNS: I would say Cam is definitely a little more reserved, but we've been playing golf together for a long, long time. You watch him in regular PGA Tour events and he's pretty stoic, doesn't show a lot of emotion, and then you get him in some of these team events and if you look at him last year at Bethpage -- we know how much it means to him to be on these teams. He's a top player in the world for a reason.

Q. Is it easier to win these when you keep winning them, and is it harder to win when you're always losing them?

SAM BURNS: I don't think so. I think you go into this week, this team hasn't done anything. So it's a brand new group. It's going to be a tough International Team. They've got a lot of great players. We're going to have to go out and play really well.



Q. With you and Scottie being so close, were you surprised not to be paired with him at Bethpage, and do you feel like you have some unfinished business together?

SAM BURNS: Well, I think ultimately you have conversations with the captains and you kind of lean on their decision making. Whatever Keegan decided that week, we were all for it.

Do I think we have unfinished business? I don't know if I would call it that. It's been frustrating the times we have played together, and we feel like we've played really well and ultimately not won.

I think it's been more frustrating than anything.

Yeah, this week we're going to go out and compete as hard as we can and try to get as many points for the U.S. Team as possible.

Q. How would you describe the team atmosphere in one word?

SAM BURNS: Together.

Q. Who's your favorite swing on the team?

SAM BURNS: Favorite swing on the team? Chris Gotterup.

Q. Why?

SAM BURNS: I just think it's old school, very natural, and it works really well.

Q. Earlier Brandt had mentioned that he wants Scottie this week to just be Scottie. Who is Scottie to you?

SAM BURNS: I mean, I think from his point, maybe at times, there's a lot of pressure put on Scottie from the outside world, but I think ultimately, Scottie is a very fierce competitor, and he wants to win more than anyone.

I think maybe some of these events, his record doesn't really show how he's played, and I know that no matter what, he's going to go out there and compete his hardest, and he's trying to do everything he can to get as many points for this team as possible.

Anybody on this team would be very excited to play with the No. 1 player in the world, and I'm definitely looking forward to it.

Q. (Thoughts on the golf course.)

SAM BURNS: Yeah, it's great. There's a lot of exciting holes. I think depending on how they set the golf course up, you could have a drivable hole here or there, and you get a good variation of some longer par-4s and some shorter par-4s. I think it'll be a great test.

Q. (On the PGA Tour schedule for 2028.)

SAM BURNS: Yeah, I think so. I think anytime we have a little bit more match play in the schedule, it's obviously more fun, it's exciting. It's something the fans really enjoy watching. Yeah, I think it can't hurt.

Q. What is it about match play that brings the best out of you?

SAM BURNS: At the end of the day it's 1v1. You've just got to beat the person across from you, which can be difficult, obviously, but it's a little bit of a different feel. You're not playing the whole field. Yeah, it just changes at times.

Q. Do you have a different mindset to match play?

SAM BURNS: Not really. Nothing really that stands out.

Q. (On apologizing after hitting a bad shot.)

SAM BURNS: Yeah, I think there's no real need to apologize. We're both trying to win and both trying to have the same goal. Yeah, it's really just going out there and competing together and enjoying the moment.

Q. (On international players who may be tough to beat this week.)

SAM BURNS: Yeah, if you look at Si Woo, he's been playing really well this year. He seems to do really well in these events. I think he's going to be a really tough matchup and a tough guy to beat this week.

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