

Sony Open in Hawaii

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Waialae Country Club

Adam Scott

Press Conference



ADAM SCOTT:

THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome Adam Scott into the interview room, making it his tenth career start at the Sony Open in Hawaii; runner-up finish in 2009. Adam, if we can get so the comments on being back.

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, I love playing here. You know, it's an event that I've played often off the back of Kapalua when I qualified for that event.

Also, I've come here when I haven't been in Kapalua. I like the golf course. It's one of the golf courses on tour that's really underrated. When you look into the stats and what guys do to win here, it's a really quality golf course. It flies under the radar a lot, and I enjoy that.

And I think guys who play Kapalua also enjoy coming here with an easier walk around the golf course. It feels like a little calmer week than tackling that mountain over there.

THE MODERATOR: Speaking of Kapalua, just talk about your play last week.

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, well, it was not a result at all to talk about, but tee to green I was overall happy for the first hit of the year. I don't think I could have expected more from that. I had a pretty light preparation off the back of playing in Australia.

I didn't play a lot of golf leading into Kapalua. I struggled on the greens, which is a boring story, but that's what happens to those who don't shoot 20-under there. You miss a few putts and they're hard greens to turn the momentum around. Grain is difficult; slope is severe.

If you just are not seeing them falling in, it's hard to force them in at that golf course. It's one of those things, they either go in or they don't. I'm moving on quickly.

Generally putting has been my strength the last few seasons. Still felt like I hit plenty of good putts and look forward to this week and trying to get a result?

Q. A follow-up on that, have you played the course since Crenshaw redid it?

ADAM SCOTT: Kapalua?

Q. Yeah.

ADAM SCOTT: Only last week.

Q. Because I can't remember.

ADAM SCOTT: Two years ago, I don't know if it had all been done two years ago. I feel like they chipped away at it for a few years. I don't know when the full redo was considered.

Q. Just talking about the greens, because some of the people said that some of the greens are getting better, et cetera, so...

ADAM SCOTT: The whole course was the best I've ever seen it last week. It was a little unfortunate we had a lot of the rain into Wednesday that softened it up. That does affect the play a little bit. I'm pointing out the obvious, but pitching with the grain on the grass when it's soft becomes incredibly difficult.

The fairways are almost too good for the golf course now because there is so much undulation. The fairways are rolling like carpet and the ball really struggles to stop in the fairway.

So it was in the best condition it's ever been in.

Q. Playing nine holes this afternoon?

ADAM SCOTT: Yes.

Q. With?

ADAM SCOTT: Michael.

Q. Thoughts on that? Oldest man in the field.



ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, that's why. I'm getting those young vibes. Most weeks it seems like I'm the oldest man on the tour or in the field these days.

I think it's a great story. He qualified at 60 years old for his first Sony Open and asked Tom a hit with me today. He's doing that, so I'm excited to do that. I think it's a great story about the game of golf. It's like Fred Couples who is obviously a superstar, but shoots 60 -- how would he be, 63? It's a great game when stuff like this happens.

I think I certainly embrace celebrating Mike's achievement of getting in and getting to play PGA Tour event at 60.

Q. He went through radiation in November.

ADAM SCOTT: I didn't know that. That's awesome.

Q. What are you going to be doing when you're 60?

ADAM SCOTT: I would be surprised if I qualify for the same tournaments at 60. But golf -- you know, that's the other thing, too. I realized I don't think I would ever stop playing in a total capacity. I think I've got to -- I love it too much. It's the only thing I'm good at, so I realized I'll keep doing that because probably the most enjoyable thing I can do.

So, yeah, I'll be playing golf in some way or another for sure.

Q. Speaking of 60, as you know, you crossed 60 million in career earnings last week. How much of it is left?

ADAM SCOTT: Let's see, I've been married for eight years. (Laughter.)

I have three kids. (Laughter.)

You know...

Q. What kind of milestone is that?

ADAM SCOTT: I don't know anymore what it is. I think it speaks to probably more longevity. If I try to find positives in stuff about myself these days, longevity, I've been out here a long time. Generally played at a high level, so it adds up. I don't know, seventh on the list or something.

Q. Depends on which list you go to, of course.

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, I saw. Six on some; fifth on some, so...

Q. Something like that.

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah. You know, I think I'm going to plummet quickly in a few years' time if I play a bit less and these young guys continue to play for these kind of numbers.

You know, they're kind of somewhat meaningless. I think on all the lists No. 1 is a cool spot to be. The rest is whatever.

Q. When you first came out, aspirationally what were your goals, and would you have thought 60 million was in the realm of possibility?

ADAM SCOTT: Certainly wasn't -- we were running on Money Lists when I first came out and everything was based around that. I don't really think I had a career money goal at all. I think it was more about I would win majors goal, and honestly, I don't know if my goals were any more complicated than that.

I've told this a million times, but after a few years on tour, I felt like -- it was probably win majors and get to world No. 1 was my goals as a kid or dreams as a kid. After a few years on tour, like maybe many others if we're all being honest, felt like they were going to be unattainable because Tiger was so dominate at No. 1 and he was winning about two majors a year.

If I'm honest, my golf in the majors wasn't even close to looking threatening, so it was an interesting first ten years of my career I think, because I'm not sure that for whatever reason I kind of -- I didn't give up, but it seemed a little bit unattainable.

Q. Is it more attainable now?

ADAM SCOTT: I think so, yes. I think my motivation now is as strong as ever. I think there may be some more hurdles in my way, like more good young players now than when I was 30, for example. That's not a knock on anyone that was out there then. I just think guys are getting better quicker, competition is a bit deeper, but I'm fit and healthy and I feel like for the first time in a few years things are on my terms.

This year I'm playing the schedule I want to play. I feel like I don't have to chase anything and I can prioritize everything I need to do to win big events and put myself in a position where I want to be kind of fulfilling those dreams as a kid.

Q. As it relates to your schedule, are you playing places you normally wouldn't because of the way it's



set this year?

ADAM SCOTT: The designated events?

Q. Uh-huh.

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, I haven't played Hilton Head in 21 years, so I'm playing there. I played once, once at Hilton Head. I'm playing there. What else might be on that list?

Q. Quail Hollow? Are you a regular there?

ADAM SCOTT: I've been on and off at Quail Hollow.

Q. Travelers?

ADAM SCOTT: I've played a few times at Travelers.

Q. Phoenix?

ADAM SCOTT: Phoenix I'm not playing this year. That's my week off.

Q. Do you like the idea that you can take a week off out of the elevated events?

ADAM SCOTT: I think at the moment there's got to be some compromise going on until some structure for the future is set more permanently.

I mean, I don't have an opinion really at the moment about anything. I think it seems like I've seen it described as a bit of a bridge year to set up the future competition structure for the TOUR.

Q. Jay brought up the idea, strong consideration, no matter what the field size is, '24 and beyond for some of those elite events to make sure there is a cut. You agree with that?

ADAM SCOTT: Not necessarily. I can be -- I've argued both sides, to be honest. Depends what the whole goal is for the future of the TOUR'S competition structure and whether a cut is necessary or not.

Q. What do you think the rules should be?

ADAM SCOTT: Okay, now you're stumping me. I just pose these questions back that I don't have to answer. I want them to give me the answers so I can say that's a good idea or not a good idea.

Q. Get many answers from them?

ADAM SCOTT: No. I think there is a lot of different

opinions, and that's a hard thing in a membership organization. There are hundreds of opinions getting thrown around. You're not going to please everyone. I think that's one of the big things, is we're not going to be able to please everyone or be all things to all people out here.

We have to decide what we do want to be, and Tiger said something that I thought was good. He likes the pure competition on the PGA Tour. He values that. I tend to sit on this side of things, although...

Q. What does he mean by that?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, well -- I think he means a cut and more traditional golf. That's fine. But then you've got to kind of structure a lot of things around that and go down that path. I think compromise in trying to please everyone is not going to be the best answer for the future. I think you have to stick with something, and if you don't like it, you can not be a part of it.

Q. Go play tennis.

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, go play tennis.

Q. Tiger won 18 of those WBCs. Were they the hardest to win because of the field or the easiest because you only had 40 guys, practically speaking?

ADAM SCOTT: 40 or 60 or 70 or whatever it became. Yeah, I generally think they were very good tournaments. Certainly starting out they were high quality fields. It's hard to argue with the quality of field.

Q. Goes back to the whole small field situation.

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, well, I think that's being addressed. I think there has been enough stirred up. I understand the mathematics of all that. It's not that difficult.

But maybe the weighting of the point distribution like is being looked at, and maybe that can solve that. Hopefully that's a good solution. World rankings is very, very hard thing to get right.

Q. You don't like it?

ADAM SCOTT: I don't -- what I don't like is when things get changed and it's not right, you know what I mean?

Q. Do you think this changes isn't right?

ADAM SCOTT: The one now?

Q. Yes.

ADAM SCOTT: Yes. I don't think it's correct. Well, I don't think winning last week is getting awarded potentially enough. I shouldn't say that because I don't actually now who was all in the field, but the weight at the top of the points I don't think is enough.

Like I on shouldn't get many. I beat about four people last week, so I shouldn't get a lot of points. But Jon Rahm beat a field of champion players on the PGA TOUR and apparently the best 30 players on the tour for the year, so I think that's worthy of some points.

Q. He finished -- stayed at No. 5.

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah.

Q. Shame he didn't know that on Sunday night. That would've been fun.

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, it's hard. At the top of the world rankings, too, there are a lot of points going on, so moving can be hard. Doesn't just mean he just goes to No. 1. I'm not saying he should. But he should get the points that he deserves, and I think somewhere in the world rankings, like there always has been, although they tried to mathematically solve to this time, there has to be some kind of weighting, and that's going to be -- I don't think that could be actually mathematically solved.

It's going to be a subjective thing of the top 10 players should get this much more because they've beat the rest of the field playing at a level like this.

So there isn't a great solution, but I don't like it when things are put in place and then it's immediately debunked. Not great for us.

Q. Talk about weighting and top players in a tournament. The 18% of the purse for the winner has been around for a long, long time.

ADAM SCOTT: Uh-huh.

Q. Winning out here is so difficult, don't you think it's something that should be addressed?

ADAM SCOTT: It's a fine question to put forward. I mean, potentially you could have weighted the win and not put purses up, you know what I mean? You could give them 40%. Leave the purse the same size, but give the winner 40% of the total purse and cut everybody else and look for -- reward excellence in a week.

I mean, I'm perfectly fine to have those kind of conversations and look at things a different way, but you might also get to the point where the top 10 players feel that's not -- finishing eighth is not worth \$36 or whatever that leaves, you know what I mean?

But it's a perfectly fine way to look at it. I think what all of this is showing is like the traditional structures that we've had in pro golf, it's probably time for a change, and there has to be different ways to look at it.

I think with the world rankings they tried to do the right thing and go very objective, just purely based off strength of field, but we're seeing top players don't see the strength of field weighted the same as the numbers do.

Q. I'm not sure when you first found out about this, I am sure the board learned about it before you did, but is it frustrating to feel like you don't have much to say or input into these things?

ADAM SCOTT: Players you mean?

Q. Yes.

ADAM SCOTT: That's a tough one. Again, which players should have the input, because there are lots of us as members. I think we could probably have an input as to what the end goal is, but how to get there, I don't think we have the overall skillset to do that.

What do we want? I think we can put that concept forward, but then that has to be done by somebody else. Just because we're good golfers doesn't mean we know how to run the world rankings or a business or anything like that.

We're good at golf. That's kind of what I think. You know, as tour players we have the ability to hire the people who we think are competent to do these things for the TOUR. World rankings and things go beyond that, because it's a different organization, although we hold a seat on the board.

But as far as the tour, we have the ability to put the people in who should be able to do the job. I think it's getting to the point in our game where it's getting maybe easy to see that there needs to be some accountability for all of this stuff all of a sudden across the game of golf.

I think over my career there has probably been less of that because there hasn't been a consequence for error is the feeling as a player looking at the ecosystem of the game.

Q. What's it like at a champion's dinner?

ADAM SCOTT: Oh, yeah, it is the highlight dinner of the year for me. It's the best evening of the year.

Q. Do you talk about world ranking points there?

ADAM SCOTT: No. (Laughter.)

Q. What do you talk about? Who do you sit next to?

ADAM SCOTT: Generally I sit next to Trevor most years. We have been mates since we were junior golfers, and after my year of hosting the top of the table, I quickly bee-lined that next dinner down to Trevor's corner to post up next to him.

He sits on my left most years and Marl O'Meara sits on my right. Also, it's not assigned seating, but a lot of people sit in the same chairs. I like that, to be perfectly honest. I like the fact that you kind of feel like that's your spot. I enjoy the whole thing. I enjoy hearing what everyone has to say that evening.

Like Fred Couples does a great job needling some of the older players into telling stories. He's a very good facilitator, Freddy, of those kind of things. It's good fun. I get to share it now. Now I've been out here so long a lot of these guys I consider friends, and I get to share the evening with a few friends. Even leading up to this.

I often see Zach Johnson like in the workout trailer or something a month away and we both are already excited about Tuesday night.

Q. Have you been to a dinner with (indiscernible.)

ADAM SCOTT: No. I met him on the range at Augusta a long time ago, but never been at dinner.

Q. He's going to be 100. Was there one dinner that was more memorable than any other since you've been attending?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, for good and bad reasons.

Q. Okay. Why?

ADAM SCOTT: Hideki's was a great dinner. He rehearsed his speech and spoke English, and I think the room really appreciated that a lot. Even though it was three minutes or something, probably felt like an hour for him. (Laughter.)

But I think the room really appreciated that and showed how much it meant to him to be a part of that club. So that was memorable and it was recent as well. It was memorable for me.

Q. What was Arnold's last dinner like, '16?

ADAM SCOTT: Well, it was like any other dinner with Arnold and a lot of guys there. Of course we didn't know it was his last. The next one was --

Q. 17.

ADAM SCOTT: -- a little somber I would say. We all thought of him that night. Bernhard Langer getting sat down by Billy Payne at one dinner was a memorable one for me. Having a suggestion about something. (Laughter.) Kind of was a mood killer one night. Good stuff.

Q. Love to hear more details on that one.

ADAM SCOTT: I can't remember the details now, but that was the gist of it. You can sit down.

Q. If you had the choice between the dinner or playing in the tournament, is there a...

ADAM SCOTT: Alex.

Q. I'm just asking.

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah. I want to play in the tournament.

Q. The realization is you'll be in the dinner way past when you're playing here.

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, exactly. I look forward to getting a letter from the chairman, whoever that is, saying, Adam you're too old, stop playing in the tournament.

Q. They stopped sending those, didn't they?

ADAM SCOTT: I don't know, but I'm going to see if I can get one.

Q. You don't want to do that.

ADAM SCOTT: And I'll look forward to going to dinner forever.

Q. One other thing, switching gears again, obviously Cam Smith isn't here on this tour. The Olympics are next year. We have a problem -- the way we determined, at least the U.S. side, how people get on, none of those guys will get a chance to get in. On the Australian side, would you feel -- knowing how Cam plays and where he fits with in the Australian hierarchy of golfers right now, assume he would be guy you think should be on that team. Would you feel

comfortable that he was on the team if he wasn't playing on the PGA TOUR?

ADAM SCOTT: If he wasn't playing the PGA TOUR? I'm trying to think of what our qualification is. Is it world rankings in Australia?

Q. For everybody.

ADAM SCOTT: So he may or may not get on depending on what happens this year.

Q. And even in that question, would that be unfortunate if he was the best player or one of the best?

ADAM SCOTT: It would be -- I think it would be unfortunate; however, again, like everyone said, they've made their decisions and some of those decisions -- well, that decision may come with some sacrifice in the short or long-term.

In the short-term it was sacrificing the ability to have world ranking points. If they didn't know that, then they're realizing that's the case at the moment. So I think it would be unfortunate, yes, for Australia and their team.

But, you know, it's not -- Cam also made these decisions as did Leish and Matt Jones and any other Aussie who has gone on there. There may be some sacrifice. Seems like they're okay with living with that mostly, at least the Aussies seem that way.

THE MODERATOR: Adam, thanks for coming in.

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