

# The American Express

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La Quinta, California, USA

PGA WEST Pete Dye Stadium Course

## Scottie Scheffler

### Press Conference

**THE MODERATOR:** We would like to welcome world No. 1 Scottie Scheffler to the interview room. Scottie, welcome to the American Express. Starting out, making your season debut, just want to get some comments on what your offseason has been like and what it's like to tee it up for another season.

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** Yeah, it's off-season was good. I got some good time at home. Definitely nice to be back out playing again. I got some good rest at home and definitely excited to start the season.

**THE MODERATOR:** We're going to go ahead and take questions.

**Q. Famously, you missed last year. Who cooked the dinner at Christmas this year? Also, I mean, obviously you haven't been here for a couple years. What is it that keeps bringing you back here?**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** I think it's a nice way for me to start the year here in the 48 states. I usually like starting the year in Kapalua, that means you had a good previous year. And then it's always fun to be able to go to Hawaii to start the year.

But I love playing this event to start. You get to come here, kind of see where your game's at. You get a good gauge of where you're at just based upon you're not really playing in so many conditions, and you got to be sharp around this place in order to make enough birdies to compete. It's a good way to gauge where I'm at to start the year and, yeah, it's a fun event.

**Q. Guys come in here off of hot seasons and we say, How do you keep that going? You've kept it going for four years now. Did you do anything that was really much different in the off-season this year, or have you changed things in the off-season over those four years?**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** I wouldn't say it's changed too much. I had a few extra weeks off this year, and

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fortunately it wasn't due to injury, just the start of the year started a little bit later for me. Overall, no, things I would say were pretty similar for me in the off-season.

**Q. You have a pretty good record here. You missed the cut one time. When you come to this tournament at the very start of the year is this a tournament you think, I'm going to win, or is this a tournament, I'm going to get my game into shape and see what happens?**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** I definitely don't show up to tournaments trying to get my game into shape. I like to be prepared, and that's something that I pride myself on. So I like to say that's a good gauge, just because it's different being in competition I think than practicing at home. You can do your best to simulate it, but I don't think there's anything like coming out here and playing and posting a 72-hole score.

Tournament golf's always just a bit different. You can prepare as hard as you can, but sometimes you do have to shake off a little bit of competitive rust just from an extended break.

**Q. I know you said how much you love coming here. Why? What's your favorite part about this event?**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** I mean, the weather's always really good, tough to beat. I saw it's going to snow in Dallas this week, so definitely glad to be here wearing shorts and a shirt. That's always nice. But, yeah, I think the tournament's really well run. I think they do a good job of taking care of us. It's a nice week for my family and me to enjoy some good weather, and play some competitive golf, and kind of get a gauge of where I'm at to start the year.

**Q. Two quick ones: One, when you come here, obviously there's a lot of people around here kind of worried about what the future is for tournaments like this one in 2026, 2027. Have you listened to some of that stuff? Do you think about tournaments you would like to keep around? I'm not going to put you on the spot and say, Please keep this tournament. But, I mean, obviously change is in the air, right?**

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SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I hear there's some change in the air. I have no idea what that looks like. If you want those answers you got the wrong guy (laughing).

**Q. But you like here.**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I do. I love most of the tournaments I play here on TOUR. The TOUR does a really good job of setting up great events. I think the communities that we play in have been tremendous over the years. And I haven't really, couldn't really name a tournament that I went and played that I didn't really like. They do such a good job of taking care of us. The golf courses are always in great shape. The people are always great and excited to have us playing there in their cities. Yeah, I think there is some changes coming, I couldn't tell you what they are, but we'll see. I'm as curious as you guys. (Smiling).

**Q. You're very grounded, very present. Curious, as you start the new season, are you very goal oriented? Do you have a checklist as far as events that you want to win? Obviously you want to win every tournament, but what's your approach mentally as you start the new year?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I wouldn't say that I'm super goal oriented. I always do my best to try to stay in the present, and I've been preparing to get ready for this event to start the season. And I feel like my game's in a good spot, and I'm definitely excited to get out there and start another season.

**Q. Did you stay out of the kitchen during the holidays?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I did my best (laughing).

**Q. I talked to a lot of players who elevated themselves to being No. 1 in the world, and they say getting to No. 1 in the world wasn't as hard as staying No. 1 in the world. What motivates you as the top player, the dominant player on TOUR in the world right now, compared to when you were trying to be No. 1 in the world?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Oh, gosh, I don't really know how to answer that, to be honest with you. I think when you stand there on the first tee of a tournament everyone starts at even par, and there's no head starts in golf. There used to be at East Lake, but not anymore (smiling).

But no, I love practicing, I love playing, I love competing out here. When I'm getting ready to come back out and play, when I look at the off-season when I'm practicing, I'm

thinking about coming out here and competing and preparing for that. I don't think about really much other than that. I'm just trying to get ready to come out here and play and compete and do my best.

**Q. You played so well for a long stretch of time. Is there anything you would like to do a little better this season than in years past?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I think there's always ways to improve. I think you can always get sharper, pretty much in all areas of the game. Last year I saw some improvements in some areas that I really enjoyed, and I'm hoping to expand on those, and I think you can always get a little bit better.

**Q. What is fun for you out here on the PGA TOUR, given the attention you receive now as you play all over the world?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I mean, it's fun playing in front of fans. It's fun being able to be out here and compete. It really is a blessing. I like a lot of stuff about golf. It's really hard to put into words. It's something that I think about all the time. I have to force myself to think about other things so I'm not thinking about golf.

**Q. Is the chase to perfection, full perfection a fun thing for you?**

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I think I have the understanding that I'm never going to get there. This is a game that can't be perfected. But I think that's what always keeps you coming back. Because you can always get a little bit better, you can always get a little bit sharper. And there's nothing better than hitting the ball exactly the way you want to. That's one of the best feelings ever. I think as golfers we're all kind of chasing that.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks Scottie for the time.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Thank you.

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