

The American Express

Sunday, January 25, 2026

La Quinta, California, USA

PGA WEST Pete Dye Stadium Course

Scottie Scheffler

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome the winner of the 2026 The American Express, World No. 1, Scottie Scheffler to the interview room. Scottie, you captured your 20th win here, and in your season debut. What does it mean to cross that threshold for your 20th win?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, to be honest, I had not really thought about that very much. I mean, that's a pretty cool feat to get to. This week in particular was a nice week. Got off to a good start over there at La Quinta, and then I came over here and kept the momentum going on these two courses.

Today was a day in which I played pretty nice and did some good things out there. I hit a lot of wedges really close to the hole, gave myself some easy birdies. And then when I was out of position did a good job of getting the ball up-and-down.

THE MODERATOR: It was a fun final pairing with a fellow friend, Si Woo Kim, and 18-year-old Blades Brown. What do you remember coming down the difficult stretch here?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, it's always fun getting to play with Si Woo, we play a lot of golf together. He's such a talented player. And then Blades obviously has a lot of talent as well. It was fun to see his game today. He definitely has a bright future out here for sure.

THE MODERATOR: Open it up for questions, please.

Q. When you hear the comparisons now, only the third player before the age of 30 to win 20 and have four majors, with Tiger and Jack, and 36th all time on the win list. What's your reaction to being put in those terms?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I mean, any time you can get mentioned with those guys it means you're doing some stuff right. At the end of the day it's not something that will occupy many of my thoughts day-to-day. When I was thinking about getting ready for this week I was just trying to prepare and do the best that I could. Hopefully we'll get

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out of the here tonight and get ready to gear up again, get some rest, and then get ready to kind of do it all over again in a couple weeks. I don't spend too much time thinking about the milestones or anything like that.

Q. At the beginning of the day you're one shot back, but you're the world No. 1, and you're the guy with the most wins in that group. Do you think you've got an advantage because of who you are and what you've done in the last four years?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Not necessarily. I think you got to go out there, and there's a reason we play the tournament. There's a reason why we have to finish off the tournament. You don't get awarded the trophy on the 16th hole. You got to finish the tournament. I was going against two guys today in the final group that are really, really talented players. Si Woo has so much talent. He's so good at golf. Then Blades, this is my first time seeing him, but anybody at 18 years old that can make it into the final pairing of a PGA TOUR event's doing something right. And then there was plenty of other guys behind us chasing us. And it's a course where you got to go out there and make birdies. So there was a lot of challenges today, but I'm proud of the way we played and put up a nice round.

Q. You would have taken the trophy at 16 green instead of going to 17 tee today?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: (Laughing). Yeah, I would have taken it on the 1st if they would give it to me there (laughing).

Q. Your wedge play looked really good today. Wonder if you could just talk about some of those short par-4s where you didn't give yourself much stress on the birdie putt.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I guess starting on 4 I hit a nice 8-iron in there.

Really good pitch on the 5th hole.

7 was a pin that you could kind of get after, a little bit of a bowl pin back there. Hit a really nice wedge in.

8, same thing. Hit a good wedge and made about a

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10-footer.

10, another good wedge.

11, really good pitch.

12, another good wedge.

14, good wedge.

So, yeah, it's something that I practice a lot, it's nice to be able to see that pay off and I was getting myself in position today and was able to take advantage of some of those opportunities.

Q. You had fun today, right?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah.

Q. And you competed. I'm just curious, do you have to win to have fun? Because you talk about that a lot.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I mean, do I have to win to have fun? I would hope not. But winning is a lot more fun than losing.

Q. What's the most fun part about competing, is it winning or is it something else?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Well, I think it's really cool to step up there on the first tee -- and I was just a kid dreaming of playing golf on the PGA TOUR, so to be able to come out here and play in final groups, play in front of crowds, play on the tour that I dreamed of playing on is a really cool feeling. Being in the arena, being in contention is a lot of fun, just because it's something that we practice and work so hard for, so when you get in those moments you're prepared and you're able to enjoy the competition. This is something that is fun for me, but it can be really hard when things don't go your way. It's a lot more fun winning than losing.

Q. You spend all this off-season kind of preparing yourself to come out here and play well, and then you do what you did today. There's like, I don't know, nine shots inside six feet or whatever today. Is that even better than what you could have expected coming out here?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I mean, there's always a certain amount of rust when it comes to playing competitive golf. I think you come out here, you can simulate as best you can at home, but you can only get into the heat of the moment when you're posting a score and you're in contention when you're at a tournament. So it's nice to see some of the

stuff that I've been practicing and working on has paid off. I work really hard at keeping my wedges sharp, so it was nice today to get some good numbers and be able to hit some wedges in there really close.

It's a lot easier holing a 2-footer than it is a 10-footer. So those little differences sometimes in the sharpness of where I'm at with my wedges can make a big difference. Today was a day in which I was able to make a good amount of birdies, and a lot of those birdies weren't really long putts. So definitely I think it helps, especially when you're playing in the final group.

Q. You smile when Meredith and Bennett are out there. But you were pretty low key in any kind of celebration. I realize it was a big margin for the most part. When do you, and how do you feel like you've won -- like how does it feel to you, you have 20 now, do they feel different or how would you, how do you process them?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, that's a good question. I think sometimes it's hard to process when you're in the moment. In order to get to the position of being in the final group, in order to get to the position where you have a large lead, you have to do such a good job of mentally staying in a good place on the golf course. So most of the day I'm trying to remain calm, focus on the things that I can execute, and then it's a matter of going out and hitting the shots.

So in order for me to do that I have to stay focused, I have to stay relaxed. When the tournament's over, you know, I think you spend so much of the day trying to really stay ready, stay on top of where things are at, so when the tournament ends it's kind of like, okay, it's almost like more of a relief now that the day's over and I'm able to win the tournament.

This golf course can put a lot of stress on you. Especially playing with the lead. It's challenging finishing off a tournament. You got an island green on 17, water on 18, there's trouble all around the golf course. So I would say it's a challenging place to play with the lead. So when the tournament's over I'm a bit tired from really focusing so hard the entire round.

Q. (No Microphone.)

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I don't know, that's a good question. Depends on the week.

Q. Another fun factor question. I changed the word to make it a satisfaction level. From your experience, do you find any difference in the satisfaction level of a

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tight one with, like Bob at BMW or Ben Griffin at Napa, or ones where you kind of got it in hand, 4-, 5-shot win?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: There's definitely a different feeling at the end. If you look back at BMW, being able to hole that chip on 17, in a tight match the whole day, you have to execute when it matters the most. So also that was a big comeback for me that day. I started the day maybe four shots behind him. It's a bit of a different feeling. Today I just did a good job of really staying patient, staying in my own little world, and doing the things I needed to do, especially when I got out of position.

I mean, I hit some really, really nice pitch shots today to where I didn't have to go up there and hole a 6-footer, I was able to walk up and tap in a 1-footer and then we're on to the next holing.

13's a good example. I had a little bit of a lead, and you get to this hole where there's water in play. Maybe I had a three-shot lead at the time and it's one of the hardest holes at the golf course. And I hit my shot to the right, and it's like, okay, missed it in the correct spot. Instead of chipping it up there and having to hole an eight-footer, I chipped it up there to six inches, and it saves me some energy, saves me some stress off of the round, and I'm able to move on to the next hole.

Q. Last year with the injury you kind of had to play your way into form. This year you obviously have the full off-season to do what you need to do. Can you compare and contrast how it felt returning last year to your first tournament compared to this year when you had all that time to do what you wanted to do?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, it's a bit easier this way. I'm going to try to continue this into the future. This is a little easier off-season than last. It's just, I mean, it's one of those things. You look at last year, it is different just because I had made what I felt was so much progress in the off-season, and then to have that basically taken away by four to six weeks of inactivity from golf, that has an effect. To fine tune the skills that we have out here takes a lot of work. Like the chipping. There's a big difference between hitting a chip to a foot versus five feet. If I hit it to foot I'm probably never going to miss that foot putt. But if you hit it to five feet your percentages of making that putt go down. When you just kind of see that over the course of four days, that has an effect on where my game is at. So being able to have the whole off-season to prepare to come out here -- I did take a nice break at the end of the year, but to have that time to prepare and get my body and mind right in order to compete I think really paid off early in the season.

Q. Along with the new history that you authored today with your 20th win, we of course got our proud history in the Coachella Valley, 67 consecutive years of TOUR golf. Provided some uncertainty of what the schedule could look like for next year, what would you as the new AmEx champion and we're very proud to call you that here, what would you say about keeping this tournament when it is and where it is?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I mean, that stuff is all above my pay grade. I come out here and compete where the tournaments are. And the PGA TOUR runs the best tournaments in the world. I think I can we have the best TOUR in the world, and the best competition. And tournaments like these are really fun to play. We get spoiled out here this week. The golf courses are in fantastic condition, the crowds are really nice, and it's a fun week to come out here and play golf.

Q. You talk a lot about staying patient when you got off to a great start. And I hear that from a lot of players who stay patient. Can you give an idea of what it looks like when you're not, just so we'll know?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: If things are flying around that's typically not a good sign, whether it be clubs or other objects. That's typically a bad sign. No, I think that especially when you look at a golf course like this that's extremely important, because you can't really force it around this place.

I hit a nice shot to No. 4. But then I played the next hole, the 5th hole, I played that par-5 how I would describe quite smart. I hit a nice drive into the fairway, which was almost a mistake, I was almost aiming down the right rough line. Then we miss it in the correct spot left of the green. I'm able to take advantage of my short game, get the ball up-and-down, and make an easy birdie.

If I was trying to force things, maybe I felt like I had to make eagle on that hole, maybe I chase after that pin on the right site and hit it in the water or put it in a tough spot over the green. A lot of staying patient is just continuing to execute and play the right shots.

Q. One hole at a time. That's just a great cliche, but...

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Yeah, I mean, like if you look at my front nine today, it was not by any means perfect ball striking. I had a few misses to the left. But when you look at the holes where I missed left it was always the correct miss. So missing on the right side, getting the ball to the right areas, and being able to take advantage of some of the things that I do well, whether it's my short game or

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putting or whatever it is. But, yeah, it was a good round.

Q. Can you think of a time where you lost patience from a standpoint that you learned, don't do that again?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Off the top of my head, no. But, I mean, my whole career I think you're always constantly learning, you're always constantly figuring out how you can get a little bit better. And a lot of times it's, how can you approach shots the right way. Sometimes when you're either under the gun or you feel like you need to press, that's when you tend to make poor decisions.

THE MODERATOR: Scottie, congratulations on win number 20.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Thank you.

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