

THE PLAYERS Championship

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, USA

TPC Sawgrass

Adam Scott

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome the 2004 PLAYERS Championship winner Adam Scott to the interview room. You're making your 23rd start here at THE PLAYERS Championship, the most of any player in the field. What's it like to be back for the 23rd year?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, this is an event I look forward to every year. It's one of my favorite golf courses on TOUR. It's one of the best events that we play in every year. The event that I tell all my friends outside of the majors obviously I think they should all come and experience it. I think it's a great atmosphere to play in. It's a great atmosphere for people to watch. So it's a real buzz to be here.

THE MODERATOR: We will get started with some questions.

Q. This is actually a question regarding Scottie and how he handles being No. 1. You were No. 1 a few years ago. Some guys embrace that, some guys it's like a hot potato. What have you viewed about the way he's handled it? He's obviously been there for a long time.

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, I think with a lot of things, I think there's a lot happening inside with Scottie that's hard to see, but now he's been in this position and playing this well for a long time, it must be happening. There's something really driving him inside, because he doesn't give much away on the outside.

I think he takes it all in his stride, is incredibly humble given his success the last couple of years, and probably that helps him with however he's pushing himself inside. I think he's got an incredible balance to his game and his life and handling everything that he's done.

Q. When you won here back in 2004, and I think you've had three other top 10s and a whole lot of other things over those 23 years, what is it about this golf course where even champions have very unpredictable records? Don't say putting.

ADAM SCOTT: Don't say putting, did you say? (Laughing.)

No, look, it's the kind of course where you need a lot of things to go right to be in the mix. The penalty is extreme. I mean, I think that's a trait of Pete Dye golf courses. There's water everywhere, it's hard to recover from the water, and a couple of visits to the water during the week makes it hard playing catch-up, because then you have to force it and you have to risk.

And it's there, but if you're not on it, it's hard to always post a good number here, hard to get it in the clubhouse the last three holes, and really I think Scottie was the first guy to successfully defend last year, so it's been challenging for every champion.

Q. Do you mind people calling him Scottie when they basically called that to you for 20 years?

ADAM SCOTT: No, that's all good. Yeah. No, it's no problem. It's pretty funny, we share the same physio, and in the physio room there's a lot of times where someone calls Scottie and we don't know who they're talking to.

Q. Jay earlier said the TOUR is committed to the discussions with PIF probably about 25 times, and Rory had said last week, I believe, it takes two to tango when he was asked about the discussions. Is it your feeling that the Saudis are as committed to the TOUR and getting a deal done, and if so, can I ask what the biggest hangup is?

ADAM SCOTT: I think so. I mean, I can't speak for them. You really should ask them.

But yeah, I think the biggest hangup is in how we see the highest level of competitive golf going forward. The product of LIV and the product of the PGA TOUR work in very different ways. So I think the challenge is figuring out how that can come together and be really reunification, which is kind of what everyone is shooting for.

Q. Including that side?

ADAM SCOTT: I believe so, but, you know, that's my take



on it.

Q. You won this tournament back when it was in March, then it was in May for a stretch and now it's back in March. Can you talk about how the golf course plays differently and under which conditions you prefer or you think it presents best?

ADAM SCOTT: I probably have a bit of a bias to March because I won there. But I do think it plays well with this grass. The overseed, I know it's maybe not as firm and fiery as some people would like to see -- actually the year I won it was dry and pretty fiery. I felt like in May we kind of half let it play firm and fiery, but then we had rough stopping the ball still and we didn't let the ball kind of run out into the waste area or into the pine straw, so we were kind of stuck in between protecting the golf course and the scoring in May. So I do like it better. It's a little easier I think to set up very competitively in this date.

Q. Are there any changes you would make to the way it's set up this week or do you think this is the ideal setup?

ADAM SCOTT: To be honest, I haven't been on the golf course yet, so I don't know, other than I've heard the rough's pretty thick. But I think we should be shooting for a tough setup. Hopefully now the weather looks good the rest of the week and it dries out and we see a little bit of run in the fairways, but more so some bounce on the green I think would be fantastic.

Q. When Jay was in here, he was pretty positive at least sounded like regards to what the discussions were going on between the PIF and the TOUR. Irrespective of what the hierarchy says, what have you seen or talked to with the players and have they changed in attitude over time since you've been on the board?

ADAM SCOTT: Generally the players on TOUR?

Q. Yes.

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, I think so. I mean, it's been a long time this has been going on. Everyone's just used to it. I think probably -- I didn't see all of Jay's comments, but I feel like there's more of a feeling like no matter what happens with these conversations and negotiations going forward, the TOUR has to move forward as well. It can't just kind of stay in limbo. We need to do the best we can, and I think you're seeing that.

Some of the results that Jay probably mentioned show that. I think from the board's side of things and

communicating through the TOUR from the PAC and everything, it's positive and makes the membership feel more confident in what's happening at the PGA TOUR, regardless of the outcome with the PIF.

Q. Do you think the urgency is the same as it was when the framework agreement was signed to get a deal done, or do you think the things you've just said, all the things that have happened on the TOUR, the positive things the TOUR has done, do you think that's maybe focused it where there's not such an urgency anymore?

ADAM SCOTT: I think there's an urgency for a result, no matter what. I think that would be in everyone's best interest, to be honest, whether you're the PIF or a player anywhere or the PGA TOUR. I think it just doesn't need to linger. I think there are positive things happening in the game and at the PGA TOUR and that can continue to happen. I just think we hopefully will get to an outcome soon. That would be what I would like. I guess that signals urgency.

Q. You've been playing at a high level now for almost two decades, but you're also competing against guys 20 years younger than yourself, I know there's obviously your profession there's a competitive fire, but do you have more appreciation for being out here now as you kind of get into your mid 40s?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, I think a little bit. I think I really -- I'm enjoying it a lot. I think there could have been a time seven years ago when if I wasn't playing my best, I was -- the frustration was there.

I think I enjoy it a lot more. I don't think my days are numbered just yet. There's no signs pointing to that. I still think I have the form to be out here and believe, on my week, I can compete and hold my own. But I'm enjoying being out here very much. And I say that knowing that it's not going to last forever.

Q. You kind of touched on this, but I want to follow-up. Considering that the framework agreement was announced in June of 2023 and we still have no unification or reunification, is there a certain fatigue from yourself, fellow board members, PAC members, members here and the fact that there is still no certainty as to what the landscape is going to look like?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, look, I think that's probably fair from my point of view, just saying that I think a result would be great, you know, and that might be fatigue. I don't know. I mean, I haven't been involved in business negotiations and

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

deals ever in my life, really, that last two years, two and a half years. It's a long time. So I don't know if that's normal or not, but this obviously is quite a difficult thing to solve, but I think also everyone should be reassured that, you know, the TOUR's treating this with caution out of the best interests of the professional game and the game in general. It would be irresponsible to be reckless, because we're trying to protect not just the PGA TOUR and its competition, but all the other positive influence that has on the game around the world.

Q. In a related follow-up, where do you see team golf as it's being portrayed out there right now on the global stage?

ADAM SCOTT: It's hard to say where I really see it. I mean, we only play it at the Presidents Cup or the Ryder Cup. We have introduced TGL; it's very different than playing green-grass golf. You know, it's some made-for-television entertainment product. It's a very different thing.

While I've enjoyed playing TGL, I don't know. I think we don't really know what the appetite is for this. I think TGL and LIV can serve as good markers for if there's really an appetite for team golf going forward. But we obviously know the Ryder Cup and the Presidents Cup, to a little lesser extent, are popular. But are they popular because they're only every two years? You know, is that where the appetite is?

Yeah, eventually we've got to decide all these things. And from where I am with TGL, I think that it's been fun to be involved this year. It will be fascinating to see if people are eager to see season two after eight months without TGL or nine months or whatever it is.

Q. You've seen a lot of Rory here and in Europe. What do you make of him now in March 2025?

ADAM SCOTT: Make of him?

Q. Both as a player and as a person.

ADAM SCOTT: He's just a phenomenal player. He's playing at such a high level all the time, I mean, and he's been doing it a long time now at the highest level. I played with him a couple weeks ago at Torrey Pines, he's a remarkable striker of the golf ball. I mean, his driving is, I got to play with Tiger Woods in the early, in 2000. Watching him drive the golf ball, I mean, it's that level. Maybe it's better.

I just hold his game in the highest respect. The way he won at Pebble Beach the other week, putting well, chipping

well, he's the full package. I think his game has evolved and in every area seems to be getting better still.

And we have seen a lot of Rory. Rory is so honest, I think, with things sometimes (laughing). Sometimes it bites him, but I think that's a nice attribute. We have seen he's kind of matured in the spotlight and generally handled that incredibly well, and he's been great for the game of golf globally. He's probably the global ambassador for the game.

Q. You've done some negotiations now that would include a head of state. Is that something that you enjoy? Do you see politics in your future?

ADAM SCOTT: No, no. (Laughing.) I think definitely not.

Q. Was it a surprise?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, yeah, it is a surprise that it's taken this turn. It was an incredible experience to be at the White House and be in the Oval Office and see the goings-on of what's happening in Washington DC, but it's not something that I really feel like I need to or want to spend more time on. I want to play better golf, to be perfectly honest with you. That would be nice. I probably should spend that time practicing.

Q. There hasn't been that much talked about the LIV player, but one of the champions on that tour is a countryman of yours, and we have not heard that much about what he has done recently. I don't know if you still have a relationship or carry on a relationship with him, but can you, as much as you can, speak to where Cam is right now?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, I mean, all those guys who went, the Aussie boys, are all mates of mine, and I still keep in touch with them all. They seem happy doing what they're doing, but, you know, I think it is one obvious thing, the difference in the platform they have is significant, that we don't hear from them that much or hear what they're up to. You know, that was one of the things, consequences, good or bad, that came with the move over there and away from the PGA TOUR. But seemingly I think they're all happy.

Yeah, I don't believe I've lost any friendships from guys going or staying. Everyone had decisions to make.

Q. You alluded to it earlier, but the goals of LIV might not jibe with the goals of the PGA TOUR, and is that really the ultimate stumbling block here? And also sort of related, but Jay a couple weeks ago when we talked to him at Torrey Pines used that term "one tour;" he sees it as being one tour, best players

coming together, whatever. Is that possible in this? Is that part of the complicated thing that you're going through?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, I think it is part of the stumbling block. I mean, the TOUR, like I said, the TOUR's being very careful and respectful of everyone and wanting to give everyone, the golf fans and the media and the players, the product that they want. But we're starting from two different sides of this, so I think it's hard to find the balance that's acceptable for everybody. And it also may not be ultimately possible.

Q. Merger conversations aside, what was the coolest or most surprising thing about being in the White House?

ADAM SCOTT: I think it was quickly, it was obvious to me very quickly when they were setting up for the Israeli delegation right after our meeting and putting like the Israeli flag and the U.S. flag and getting that room ready that our conversation was pretty low in the importance of what was happening that day (laughing). And really, the President had far more important things to focus on, and I encouraged him to go and do that well for everyone's sake after our meeting (smiling).

Q. Have you met Karl Vilips at all?

ADAM SCOTT: I have not, no. I look forward to it.

Q. For someone to win in their third PGA TOUR start as a member, his whole story, I don't know much of it, but coming from Australia when he was 11 with his dad and building his brand as a YouTube golfer, what kind of impresses you about someone like that and the path they take to chase their dream and then get that win and get here kind of less than a year into their pro career?

ADAM SCOTT: Yeah, it's the ultimate. It's incredible. Understanding where he came from and coming through the college system, I think the college system is just unbelievable these days. It was a bit of a -- it was not really a focus, I guess, on juniors and amateurs in Australia when I was there, but now I would encourage everyone to come over here and get a taste for it and get comfortable with being in the United States away from home, and he's done an incredible job, even down to doing the YouTube and putting himself out there.

It's a different generation than me, for sure, but I know he's working, he's got a great team around him, and it's paying off, and now he's set himself up for the beginning of what can be an incredible career on the PGA TOUR.

I'm very excited for him and I think it's neat he has this kind of Stanford-Tiger Woods connection with the Sun Day Red. Very cool for him, and I heard he got a text from Tiger after he won as well, so I look forward to meeting Karl and congratulating him.

THE MODERATOR: All right, Adam. Thank you so much for your time, and best of luck this week.

ADAM SCOTT: Okay, thanks.

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