

The Presidents Cup

Sunday, September 29, 2024

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Royal Montreal Golf Club

United States Team

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome captain Jim Furyk and the victorious United States Presidents Cup team here at Royal Montreal.

Jim, we'll start with you. Just a few opening comments on what the week has been like here and getting to spend time with these guys and your assistants. If you could just summarize the final day here at Royal Montreal.

JIM FURYK: The whole week's been so much fun. I've always enjoyed team events. I had the opportunity to play in a number of them. The camaraderie, the teamwork, the bus rides, the team room. Obviously the competition is amazing, but I just love hanging with the guys and being part of the group and having a common bond and trying to come together to do something special.

I guess first and foremost our support staff and the PGA TOUR, led by Mack Horton, amazing. We had nine folks from the TOUR who were just giving us all their time for months and months and months leading up to this. They did a great job. I know every one of us would want to really thank our wives and significant others for all the support.

It's a nervous week, man. So to have them by your side really means a lot. Our caddies who were flat amazing this week, so much fun.

Really for me, my four assistants really stepped up. Stewart had a little experience as an assistant captain last year. The other three guys, this was the first time in that position, and they were absolutely amazing. The help, the information on the golf course when they had advice, the communication with the players was incredible. I was blessed, and honestly these 12, so proud to be their captain. They were a captain's dream.

These guys get along so well, but as you know, they can flat play. They kicked a lot of ass out there. When it got tough, anytime the Internationals put some pressure on us, they played their asses off for us. I'm just so proud to be a part of it.

Q. Keegan, just wanted to know what this week has been like for you as a whole finally getting back on one of these teams and then being the person that was able to secure the final point or the clinching point.

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, I told the boys last night, it's been a decade. It's taken me a decade to get back into that room with these guys. I really took for granted how special these weeks were. I watched a lot of these things on TV and was really sad to not be here.

We talked about taking care of business today, and we all went out there and did it. I was just lucky enough to be in that spot in the day, but really a meaningful moment in my life. The last time I played in one of these I was the clinching point for the Europeans in the Ryder Cup. Fast forward 10 years later, and I got to do that today. Really something I'll remember the rest of my life.

Q. For Xander, I'm just wondering how much you relished being in that leadoff spot this morning.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It was an honor. I was having dinner last night, and Cap came up to me and asked if I'd be cool going out first. You look down this row of guys, and it could be any one of us that's going to lead the charge. I took it as a special opportunity to do something great. I wanted to get some red up on the board early for the boys to look at and was able to do that today.

Q. Keegan, obviously in your position as Ryder Cup captain, you probably have an eye on certain things. You have one player who finished sixth overall in strokes gained, made a big putt on 18 on Thursday, and then today took out statistically the best player on the International Team in singles. Question is what did Keegan Bradley show you as a potential Ryder Cup player? (Applause.)

KEEGAN BRADLEY: I learned a lot from Jim and Tabitha this week. It was the best job I've ever seen done as captain and the captain's wife. (Applause.)

I learned a lot from them. I would love to join these guys and play next year. I don't know how that would ever be



possible, but seeing what Jim did, seeing how nervous I was today to play. But I'm going to push that down the road. Like I said, if I make the team on points, I'll consider playing, but outside of that, I won't do that because this is really important to me next year.

I don't care about my personal gains of playing in the tournament, I only care about winning the Ryder Cup. I think the best way to do that is to let these boys play and let them do what they do. We'll see. I don't see it happening, but we'll see.

Q. Someone probably asked you this already, but does being captain of a Ryder Cup let you open your bag?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Open my bag? Oh, oh, not yet. Hopefully -- yeah, we've got a year to go here, and these boys know how important the Ryder Cup is in a year. I think it's arguably one of the most important Ryder Cups the United States has ever had. We're going to go in there ready to play, and we're going to go in there to win the Ryder Cup.

I'm going to take a lot of lessons I learned from Jim, Tabitha, all the vice captains and apply that to next year's team.

Q. I noticed that Tom Kim after his match today found you on the 18th green and he said some words. Could you share what he shared with you, what he talked about.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: It was in private. If he wants to reveal what he said, that's up to him. He just had a few words with Cap and I. It was honestly in private. If you'd like to ask him about what was said, that's on him to say because he's the one that came up to us, but I don't feel like it's on me or anyone up here to disclose what he said.

Q. Scottie, when you won your match last night, you were pretty fired up. You were about as fired up a couple times this week as we ever really see you. I was just curious why that is.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I think these weeks are a lot of fun. It's pretty rare we get to play with these guys on my team. Usually every week of the year we're playing by ourselves. It's a lot of fun. This is one of the great joys of my career is coming out here in these team events and playing.

I had some great partners this week. Russell and I played great together. Collin and I won a nice match there Saturday morning.

It was just one of those matches where I felt like I was letting my partner down early in the match, and he picked me up there on 6, gave me a nice little pep talk, and we were able to play some great golf. I was just proud to earn a point for the team, and it felt like an important one at the time just to get a point late on Saturday.

I think Russ and I were just both really excited. I think we're both guys that usually keep a pretty even keel attitude on the golf course most weeks, and I think Russell is one of the most underrated players on our TOUR. So it was fun to go out and earn a point with him. (Applause.)

See?

Q. What did you learn about Russ this week, and what's he like? How would you describe him?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Russ is a tough guy. He's a tough competitor. It's not easy playing as a rookie on these teams, and he stepped up in a big way. I'm really proud to have him as my partner and really proud to have him as part of this team.

He's one of the guys where we were looking at the picks towards the time the playoffs were starting, he was a guy we all wanted on the team. He was one of our locks to be picked. He proved why this week. He's a really talented player. I'm excited for him to be a future part of these teams as well.

Q. Xander, Patrick, or Collin, Jim gave a lot of credit to you guys as kind of player leaders for setting the stage on Friday night, keeping everyone calm after the sweep. Can you give some insight into what was said, the message that was delivered after being swept on Friday that helped you play well on Saturday?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Pat's looking at me already. Pat's -- I think Collin and I, we probably err on the side of leading by example. Collin's very stoic, very calm. So is Pat. I like to needle everybody in the room. I didn't grow up playing team sports, so it's important, I think, for a team to be cohesive and to get along and to laugh, at least in my eyes.

You saw what P.C. did pretty much about this time right now, maybe a little less light outside. So P.C. leads by example, and he was able to sort of spark a very important thing for us coming into today, which was make that putt on the last hole.

Cap, he talked to each and every one of us every night, and he always believes in us. So it gave us a lot of

confidence going into today.

Q. Jim, you talked about the buy-in from your players. How much more flexibility did that give you in setting pairings than maybe in years past, that there was buy-in to play with who they needed to?

JIM FURYK: I think we just tried to vet it early. Again, these teams come together, I keep saying it, so fast. By the time the team was chosen, we had 21 days to get ready. So trying to get pairings together and get ready to come in here is difficult.

I think we tried to get ahead of that. When the picks were made, kind of the pairings were already kind of in place. I vetted that with a lot of the players, with our assistants, with our statistical team. I tried to get that in place a little earlier than I did, say, back in 2018.

That way, if things didn't work or didn't gel, not from a personality standpoint or just maybe seeing the golf course, we had some options. These guys, like I said, they were so easy to work with, the best 12 guys that I could have ever imagined. I could have paired them up a million different ways. I think that was the hardest part, to be honest with you, that they got along so well, the personalities gelled so well. So many good players on this team, 12 of them, that there was probably a million different ways we could have mixed and matched them. That was probably the most difficult thing.

I haven't always had that in the past, to be honest with you. So that was probably my biggest concern was are we doing the right thing? Are we playing the right guys? Because I could have done it a number of different ways.

Q. Sahith and Russell, I wanted to ask you guys as first-timers to give some insight into kind of the camaraderie of this team and the vibe of it, and also was it more lighthearted at times than you guys would have expected walking into a team room at a big team event?

SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, I think as rookies, I think that was touched on earlier in the week is just we're always competing against each other and this was our first time competing with each other. It's a totally different feeling. You always want to beat the guys that that -- beat these guys that we play with, and this was one of the weeks where you're trying to hold them up and beat the other guys with your teammates.

I will say that the team did such a good job of welcoming me. I think Russ could say the same thing. But just hyping us up, making us feel like we've been doing this forever. I

think it's safe to say we've made some brothers for life. Regardless of the golf really, it's just off the course I felt so welcomed and such a part of a team.

In golf it gets lonely. It gets lonely. I understand why these team events are held on such a pedestal. There's nothing else like it.

It exceeded my expectations. I had really high hopes. All you kind of hear about, biggest events in golf, the Presidents Cup and the Ryder Cup. I know Ryder Cup is a different beast as well, but these team events are just -- now that I've played one, I can say they're just the best.

I'll let Russ take it from here, but it's a week I'm never going to forget. I wouldn't say -- I expected the lightheartedness. I know some of these guys are jokesters, even though they don't really show it on the outside, if that wasn't obvious up here. (Laughter.)

I loved it, man. It was such a great group of guys, great group of personalities. Yeah, it was just the best.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: There's our Mongolian. (Laughter.)

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Careful. You're going to make him nervous.

SAHITH THEEGALA: That was Freddie Couples.

Q. Russell, anything else from your point of view from all the fun that you guys have had?

RUSSELL HENLEY: I don't have too much to add, pretty much the same to what Sahith said. I had Kis in my ear all week, and it was nice to have Kis just hanging with me on the course. He's had a lot of funny jokes.

The team room aspect was amazing. I feel already like I'm a lot closer to these guys even though I've been playing golf against them for a while. It's just cool because these guys are a big reason of why I've gotten better at this game. I've tried to figure out, okay, what does Pat do well with his putting stroke? What does Collin do well with his driver? What does Scottie do well with his irons? Whatever these guys do well, I try to see what they're doing and try to get better.

So it's cool to team up with them. I've been extremely excited, and like Sahith said, it exceeded my expectations. So a dream come true for me.

Q. Russell, I wanted to follow up a little bit on that. You've been on TOUR for 12 years as a really good



player. I'm just curious how often did you watch the Cups and pictured yourself in the uniform wondering how you could contribute?

RUSSELL HENLEY: Yeah, I never knew if I'd make a team. I definitely have worked really hard the last five or six years towards pretty much every part of my game, trying to put a big step forward to everything I'm doing in the hopes that I could make a team.

That whole time, I never knew if it would happen, but to finally get the call is pretty cool. I wish I would have made a bunch before this year, but for some reason it just seems even more special that I made one this late because I haven't really taken it for granted at all. It's been awesome.

Q. Since you were on that '98 team in Melbourne that got shellacked and you guys beat them even worse, next time go to South Africa for the tie, and '05 comes down to the last putt, what have you seen since then, starting in Montreal in '07, that has made it so one-sided than it was during that four-year stretch? I know there's been some close matches, Korea and Melbourne and what have you. But what has been the change since then to what it's been lately?

JIM FURYK: I don't know if I could put my finger on it. I go back to just this week, Thursday, that 5-0, that was five tight matches. We just happened to win all of them. Friday was not that same tale of the tape. We had three pretty lopsided losses, a couple tight ones.

But really the matches come down to just some special moments. For one reason or another, these guys usually play loose in the Presidents Cup, they let it fly, and we've been able to win some crucial points, make some crucial putts.

Pat's last night was -- we're walking up the fairway, and we could go in there with a 2-, 3- or 4-point lead, and we end up with a 4-point lead. Those little moments make massive differences in the score.

Each and every one of these guys made a big difference in that score somewhere along the way and drug matches to 18 and just kept fighting and clawing.

The back nine really was a big deal this week. I talked about it a little in the team room, trying not to put pressure on those last holes, but really wanted these guys to own it, to enjoy it, and kind of thrive in that pressure.

I've been asked -- every one of you in this room asked me for the last year how much pressure I felt trying to keep this

streak alive and keep this team going, and I kept denying it, that I didn't feel any pressure, and I didn't want them to feel that pressure. I wanted them to apply the pressure to the other team. I really feel like down the stretch these guys kept the pressure on the other team and came out with points.

Q. That was kind of my question, Jim, because now that you've won, the next captain is going to face that same pressure. What was the hardest part for you?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Jim, you won't say it right now. (Laughter.)

JIM FURYK: Actually, I don't know. I know it's funny, but I'm lost in the joke, to be honest with you. What did you say again because I'm lost now?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Hey, Cap, what did he ask you about a week ago? I can't remember either. It's weird. (Laughter.)

JIM FURYK: Oh, yeah. He's talking about our fun exchange in Napa. For the record, I was never angry with Adam. I did say that without a doubt, but we got a chuckle out of it. Adam and I, we're always good. We've texted a lot since. I was a little surprised you were rooting for the other team. You have to stand now and look at all these guys. It was fun.

Q. I never said I was rooting for the other team.

JIM FURYK: You said you were pulling for the other team to win.

Q. No, I didn't. I said, don't hate me, but I wouldn't hate it if the other team won.

(Chorus of boos.)

JIM FURYK: My favorite part of it was when -- after the first presser when we came in, we did our pairings, and I walked out, I actually gave you a little fist bump, and two of my assistants told you to go F yourself. That was my favorite.

Q. Kis, I'm pretty sure Homa hooped one, and have you paid off your bet?

JIM FURYK: He did. You might get him to do it again here at the presser.

Q. I have a question for Xander. This year the International Team had four Korean players and they won six points each tournament. You played a lot of

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

important matches against them. What do you think they have that makes it tough to play against or to be able to pull through and make such good results?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: They bring the fire to that team. I know we're in Canada, and there was a few Canadians on that team and they were getting rooted on by the crowds, but Si Woo, Tom, Ben, Sungjae -- you know, Sungjae is probably the tamest of them all, but we look at him as an assassin in his own right, he hits it so dang straight. Then Tom and Si Woo together, I mean, those boys -- this course might be, I don't know, 7,000 yards, but those boys cover about 9,000 yards in a round of golf, at least the ones that I played against them.

They hit unbelievable shots. P.C. and I saw it. They were very hard -- P.C. and I had to bring out some of our best stuff to beat them last night. They came out to the last hole.

It's really good for golf. As a competitor, I respect it. It's not how I go about my business, but I respect it because that's how they play. If I was running around and getting fired up, I might make bogey on the next hole, but those boys are running around and birdieing every frickin' hole on us. I have a lot of respect for everyone on that team, but the Koreans definitely bring the heat, no doubt.

Q. Scottie, when Adam Scott was in here earlier, he noted or mentioned how he thought that these events are really good for people's personal careers. He thought that it might be a boost to some of their guys, having been in this environment, 18th hole, the pressure of watching their teammates and all. He specifically referenced you in 2021 at Whistling Straits. I just wondered what you thought about that, if there's some truth to that, if you used that experience and it propelled you into the run you've been on, or is that just coincidence, or how much it might have really helped you?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: No, I think there's definitely an aspect to that. I think looking back at that Ryder Cup, one of the coolest things was just getting the vote of the guys to want me to be a part of that team. That really meant a lot to me. I think of the guys that Captain Jim picked this week, and we were very confident in our captain's picks.

I definitely look back on that moment of my career as something that kind of propelled me. These are the events, I think, where you feel the most pressure because not only do you want to perform for yourself, but you want to perform for your teammates, your partner that day, and your country. So I think this is where the lights are the brightest and these are the events we look forward to the

most, and performing like some of these guys performed this week under the biggest lights I think is great for their career, especially I think of like Russell coming out here and performing the way he did this week is really special. I think there's definitely an aspect to that.

Q. Max, I was wondering how long after you hooped that shot did you first think about Kevin paying on his bet?

MAX HOMA: I mean, like half a second, second and a half. I looked back, and he was scampering down 9 fairway trying to run away from me, I think. He left me a good four minutes before that. I don't blame him.

Yeah, it was obviously on my mind the whole week. I basically had three checkmarks this week. One was to win the Presidents Cup with these boys. Two was to have a great time. And three, to get Kis to take his shirt off. So I went three for three.

Q. Anyone can answer this. What are the party plans for the evening?

TONY FINAU: In the wise words of Travis Kelce, you got to fight for your right (in unison) to party! Only time will tell. (Applause.)

Q. Jim, I was wondering because a lot of these matches were much more tight than the final score would suggest. How much do you think the fact that you guys have a lot more PGA TOUR victories and much more major titles too could have made the difference when these matches were tight, especially this weekend?

JIM FURYK: Again, I give the other team a lot of credit for the fight, but I'd go to battle with these 12 guys any time. Very tough, strong minded, unflappable, don't get frazzled.

I mean, the fans out there brought it pretty good. They gave us some crap, there's no doubt. These guys kind of used it to their advantage. Stayed very strong willed and closed out matches. I knew coming to a foreign land and coming to an away game, the Montreal fans, the Canadian fans are good sports fans, so I knew they would bring it and I knew these guys could handle that.

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