

The Ryder Cup

Sunday, September 26, 2021

Kohler, Wisconsin, USA

Whistling Straits

Captain Steve Stricker

Collin Morikawa

Dustin Johnson

Bryson DeChambeau

Brooks Koepka

Justin Thomas

Patrick Cantlay

Daniel Berger

Harris English

Tony Finau

Xander Schauffele

Scottie Scheffler

Jordan Spieth

Press Conference

JOHN DEVER: Good afternoon, welcome to the 43rd Ryder Cup here at Whistling Straits. We are joined by the victorious United States Ryder Cup Team.

Thank you, gentlemen, for finding us. Captain Stricker, if I may begin with you, your team, this team just reclaimed The Ryder Cup in record fashion at or near peak performance, and they did it here in your home state in Wisconsin. That's really a hell of a moment for American golf and yourself, too, isn't it.

STEVE STRICKER: It was a special week all the way around. I don't know what else to say, and I've said it a number of times all week long and how these guys came together, and how they started two weeks ago when they showed up for the practice round. I could see the camaraderie then. I could see the willingness to prepare and get ready for this event prior to us even arriving. So a lot of these guys have played a lot of golf with each other.



They have up with each other. It's a special group of guys.

Yeah it was fun to be part of it all this week, especially here in Wisconsin.

Q. How important was it for you guys to not just win today but to kind of run up the score like you did? Did you guys feel like it was an opportunity to send a message in?

TONY FINAU: Xander will take this one.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I'll take this one. I feel like I'll be taking a lot of them. Hey, I lost my match this morning, one thing we all share in common is we hate losing. I think I can speak for everyone on that one, and dang, did it feel good to look up and see a lot of red on the board.

So this is probably the fastest I've ever personally gotten over a loss personally, and I can't thank my guys sitting around me enough to pull off this W.

Q. Just in case you didn't know, the Bears did lose today.

TONY FINAU: Why do you have to say that?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Next time, let's not tell all the Green Bay fans that you're a bears fan.

TONY FINAU: We're not talking about Ls, we're only talking about W's today.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: That's messed up.

Q. What is something that bore the most fruit this week, got you the closest to winning, something you did during your captaincy or didn't do during your captaincy that you thought made the most difference?

STEVE STRICKER: Geez, I don't know. I mean, I don't know if I can pick out one thing, you know, that we did or didn't do. It's a culmination of a lot of things. This didn't start just two weeks ago. This started months ago. For me, three years ago two, and a half years ago.



It's been on my mind ever since I was announced to be captain 2 1/2 years ago. I wanted to make a special week for these guys. I've been part of a few teams, and I know how it can go. I've been on a losing team and I've been on a winning side, team, and we just want these guys to enjoy the experience. And as you can tell up here right now, it looks like they have enjoyed the experience.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Let's be honest, Captain Strick did an unbelievable job of putting us all in the best position we could be in to win our matches.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Attaboy, Strick.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: He was amazing, and I can't think him enough.

TONY FINAU: Our guy. Our guy.

JOHN DEVER: Alex has a follow-up here.

Q. Dustin, if you can use one of your two mics?

TONY FINAU: Collin will speak through the champagne.

Q. Can you talk about not only what Strick has done, but you've been on enough teams to know it doesn't always go that way, does it?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Obviously not. This week, yes, we had a lot of young guys, but they are young and they are rookies on The Ryder Cup, but it didn't feel like they were just because they have all played well in such big moments and big tournaments that it didn't feel like they were rookies.

And they didn't play like they were rookies. They stepped up to the plate and they all wanted it. And like Xander and all of us have all said all week, the one thing we all have in common is we all hate to lose. And so that's how we came together, and we all played like it.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: That's 5-0, ladies and gentlemen. 5-0.

TONY FINAU: 5-0 speaking.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: You're joining I think maybe the fourth man in history.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: 5-0.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Fourth man.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: That's all right. I had good partners, though.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: No, no, DJ, that was unbelievable.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Collin and Xander, very good partners. Thank you for making my record.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: No, thank you, DJ. Thank you.

Q. There's been a few bromances going on this week, DJ and Collin --

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, we got a bromance. It's okay.

Q. So you remember Molinari and Fleetwood in 2018. Will you go in bed together with the trophy?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: If you want me to, absolutely. I ain't scared. (Laughter).

TONY FINAU: I'll share some pictures we posted later today, we'll see how it goes.

Q. Eight players under 30, we've been hearing about the new wave, and this is the biggest score in the European era of the Cup, but I want to know if you have a feeling to actually cement that; that you have unfinished business that you need to win over there, because we had a big win four years ago and didn't win in Paris --

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: I'm sorry to burst your bubble, but were we are just going to enjoy now. You're thinking way too far ahead of us -- for me, personally. I had no idea we had media after all of this, so we're going to enjoy this one for now, and collect ourselves shortly after.

Q. But is that not the next step for you? You've been so good this week.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Absolutely.

JORDAN SPIETH: I feel I can speak to this losing twice over there and being part of the average age group, I think so. I think that this is unfinished business. I think this was one of those first wins -- we needed to win this one and I think it was a massive stepping stone for this team and the group that we have here that have really known each other since almost back to grade school to continue to try to work hard to be on these teams to go over there.

It's one thing to win it over here and it is a lot easier to do so and it is harder to win over there. If we play like we did this week, the score will look the same over there in a

couple years, and that's what we're here for.

Q. Bryson, for those people who will never, ever win a Ryder Cup, tell us what it's like, how special has this occasion been?

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: Why did you single me out? We have plenty of rookies. I mean, I can tell you --

JORDAN SPIETH: Because you haven't been in media in a long time.

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: (High-fiving Jordan.)

DUSTIN JOHNSON: I just want to know what it feels like to fly one 400 on No. 5.

TONY FINAU: How did it feel, Scottie, watching your guy sail it at the green on 5?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: I'm sure there's some good memes of his direction and my direction, and it's certainly nice to have on my team than playing against it this week, that's for sure.

JOHN DEVER: Bryson, winning The Ryder Cup, feels like....

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: This is a little more serious, but I felt like as a whole we came together and did something amazing.

This is a start to new generation. I think we are going to be doing some incredible things moving forward. And I'm probably not drinking as much as I should be tonight because two days I've got to play --

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Not yet.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Protein shake.

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: I'll tell you, from winning The Ryder Cup, this is possibly way better than any tournament I've won in my entire life, the group of people, the collective game of golf, it's so much bigger than just a singular tournament. It's about people coming together and doing something special for the game of golf. And I couldn't be more proud of Captain Strick and everybody putting their hearts out and making it the coolest experience I've ever had in my golf career.

TONY FINAU: Well said.

Q. You've been on enough of these teams now. What was unique about this experience, and how did Steve

put this team in the best position to try and win?

JORDAN SPIETH: It felt similar to a Presidents Cup kind of atmosphere. Steve, as much as they had things somewhat set based on whether it was statistics or talking to guys, they left kind of the phones open. They let us be able to talk to them about what we felt and ask questions, and they had answers for us. And I felt like everybody would have been comfortable going up and saying, you know, I actually think I'd rather play with this person or in this format here or there.

So it felt like a player-friendly environment. And as Steve mentioned on stage, there were no big speeches. It was: Hey, you guys took care of business today, go get your rest, take care of business tomorrow. He knew this team was playing phenomenal golf coming into this event and put us in position to stay out of the way -- is that fair, Strick? I don't want to take away from what the captains did. They did a lot of work setting this up ahead of time and then kind of taking the back seat and guys really took over. And we made a lot more putts than they did and there were a lot more roars.

Q. This is for Jordan, but anybody can jump in. Wondering what vice captain Mickelson brought to this squad?

JORDAN SPIETH: I think this is for more Scottie and Bryson would be a better answer. I didn't see Phil a ton. I was with Zach a lot.

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: Scottie?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Phil did a wonderful job for us. He kept things loose. I think he was really well-timed with how excited he got for certain things, so like for instance, Bryson's 420-yard drive.

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: There's some things that cannot be repeated, let's just say that.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: He was pretty jacked up for a few moments. He did a pretty good job keeping us loose. I think yesterday Bryson and I lost No. 12 to go -- was it 1-down, Bryson?

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: Yeah.

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: And Phil was standing on the tee box, and he just kind of smiled and looked at us. He goes, "Man, this is great, isn't it?" In my head, I'm like, Phil, get away from me, this is not great, we just bogeyed No. 12. But it was exactly what we needed at the time, and he did a wonderful job, and he's great to have on the team.

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DUSTIN JOHNSON: I think that was a better question for Captain Strick, the earpiece in his ear.

TONY FINAU: Great commentary.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: On the earpiece when he was following my group, so Strick can answer this one.

STEVE STRICKER: Anything Phil said during this whole competition, I cannot repeat. No, he was really wonderful to have around. His lightness and demeanor with the guys made the whole atmosphere in our team room that much better as well.

Q. Scottie said he was the only true rookie among the six rookies. He went out today and got off to an unbelievable start. Just curious with some of your reactions, looking up at the board and seeing him four-up over the world No. 1?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: It was amazing to see that. I told him before he went out, "Go put it to him." Obviously Jon --

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: That's why he did it.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: No, it has nothing to do with that. Jon is one of their leaders, and he is world No. 1. He's played unbelievable this week. One thing that could really push the U.S. Team was Scottie going out and beating their best player.

TONY FINAU: That was huge momentum.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: It was all momentum, and I want to give him a lot of praise.

JORDAN SPIETH: We all saw it. We knew it was happening. If you looked at one thing on the board, you saw that.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: That was the only thing I was looking at to be honest.

Q. What did it feel to be in the middle of that start?

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: It was great. Really not much else to say. Got off to a good start. The guys were excited last night when the pairings came out. Yeah, it was a good day. I was glad to give the team some momentum I guess.

Q. As dominant as you guys were through all five sessions, was there ever a moment when you looked at the leaderboard and you felt a little concerned?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, for sure. It was yesterday afternoon in the four-balls. I think we went out there, I think 4-up at that time, is that right? Yeah, 5-up. I figured if -- no we were up six at that point I think. I figured if they swept us, which it's happened to us before, right, it's happened to both sides, and if they swept us, they could come within two and it would be a two-point match going into today.

So two points yesterday afternoon I think was a huge deal for us to feel a little bit more comfortable. And I said it down there somewhere, too, that I could see it in these guys' eyes last night when we left here, the course, after just saying a couple words, I could tell they felt like there was unfinished business, and they came out and they were ready today.

They played great, and I could see it in their eye that they wanted it all. They wanted more.

Q. Patrick, have you seen any clips of how emotional you were when you were playing, and are you surprised how outwardly you were emotionally-wise?

PATRICK CANTLAY: Ah, I'm probably not as surprised as the rest of the guys up on this stage. You know, in the moment and with the crowd behind me and feeling like everyone is totally on our side, which is what it felt like all week, it just makes it so much easier. And knowing that I'm playing not just for myself but for the rest of the guys, it just makes everything that much more important.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: Yes, Patty Ice has emotions, everybody. Confirmed. Patty Ice.

Q. There has been a lot of discussion about the preparation going into this. And in the aftermath, has there been any discussion in regards to Captain Stricker's tattoo?

TONY FINAU: You don't say, say it ain't so.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Who's the tattoo artist? Xander can do it. Anybody know a good spot in Sheboygan?

TONY FINAU: Are we getting a confirmation?

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: Oh, that's right, it was going to be this one.

TONY FINAU: DJ might need to ask Paulina first.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I want to see that.

Q. Do you feel any differently about this event now after this week?



BROOKS KOEPKA: Like I said, y'all spun that negatively. I said it's different. That's all I said, and it is different. You can't tell me you're going to get -- what do we have, 13 people up here like this? It is different. It's different than a single -- you know, an individual event. And we come together as a team, it's great, man. I love it.

PATRICK CANTLAY: Nice swing on 17, BK.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE: That was legit.

Q. Wondering if you feel like you are an emotional leader of this team or someone that gives a little spark?

JUSTIN THOMAS: I think we all as a team vote DJ as our emotional leader. Poor guy went out there, tried to get six points, but all he could do was five. He is our leader. We're following grandpa into the abyss.

Q. I just wanted to ask Tony to compare his two Ryder Cup experiences.

TONY FINAU: Oh, this one's a lot better. I like winning. The one in Paris, I think I was quoted before this Ryder Cup started. You know, I think we were all standing on that green, and we had -- I know they changed the culture of what that looks like now when you lose, because the Europeans weren't there watching us celebrate, but in Paris we were right there watching them celebrate. They must have changed that.

But I knew at that point, I wanted to be on this team, and it just makes it that much more sweet I think when you experience something like that; and then now you're able to enjoy something like this even more.

This is amazing. And to be a part of this group of amazing talented players and personalities has been a lot of fun. So I'm happy for Captain Stricks and happy to be a part of this team.

Q. For Dustin --

JORDAN SPIETH: Oh, no.

Q. You being the oldest player on the team, do you still think you have the stamina to out-party all these guys tonight?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Ab-....-solutely.

Q. What does the rest of the team think? Do you think he has the stamina?

PATRICK CANTLAY: Is that even a question?

TONY FINAU: He'll get started now.

Q. I apologize for a serious question after that, but Steve, there's a cliché that leaders need to give a big speech and be like rah-rah. Do you feel validated knowing your players didn't need that, and having a different leadership style, does it feel good to prove that you are a different kind of leader but a very successful one?

STEVE STRICKER: Yeah, I guess. You know, I don't say a lot. I'm not a guy with a lot to say a lot of times. I'm a guy of very few words, really.

But I think about things when I do say them. I guess I do a lot of prep. I do a lot of studying of these guys. I know them very well. I've played a lot of golf with some of these guys over the years. I know their personalities.

I just tried to make it easy for them, is really what I wanted to try and do, and that was kind of my way back in 2017 on the Presidents Cup team, as well, and make it relaxed.

You know, I really had nothing planned for the week, no speeches from anybody, no videos. I mean, we all know it's a huge event as it is. We don't need to have some famous person of highest stature come in and tell us how important it is and we need to get fired up and do this and do that.

You know, everybody knows how important it is, and they want to win. Every team I've been a part of, player or a captain, they want to win, bottom line. And when you ask Brooks, that's an insult to all of us, really, because that's so untrue. We all want to win. We all want to do our best. We don't want to let anybody down.

So I just tried to make it easy for them. Put them in the positions to where they were -- they could go out and feel good about who they are playing with and let them relax. Go back to the hotel, sleep, take a nap, do whatever you want to do.

Let's just make them do whatever -- let's put them in a position, do whatever they want to do, just like a normal week, right. The caddies were with us more. They are with their caddies all the time. Just a lot of little things. Whether it's that or they are just -- they are just extremely talented, first of all. That was my style both events, both teams that I captained.

Q. Can you guys confirm that the vibe of Tiger's

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message was to step on their necks, not just win, but win in that way?

JUSTIN THOMAS: Tiger? Tiger, who? No, what? What are you talking about?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: The text --

JUSTIN THOMAS: What did he say?

Q. I'm asking you.

JUSTIN THOMAS: No, I'm asking you.

Q. What we had heard was that it was, essentially, the theme of it was don't just win but --

JORDAN SPIETH: We were told by a member of the team today that the record was 19 points and that we should go out and try to get 19 points, and that's what we did.

JUSTIN THOMAS: Thank you, Boog.

TONY FINAU: That was Jordan.

JORDAN SPIETH: Hey, it was fun playing with you this week.

TONY FINAU: No, he meant Boog, getting the 19th point. Let's go, Boog.

Q. So obviously what you've done over the time of Ryder Cups is somewhat unconventional. Did you ever get pushback from anybody about that? And secondly, who would you say was the most influential in doing what you did?

STEVE STRICKER: No, I never got any pushback. I've talked to -- I've been a part of some of these teams, right, and I've been put in some uncomfortable positions, because I hate to talk, first of all.

Again, I've played for some great captains, so I've learned a little bit as we've gone along. I just tried to put them in a position or make them feel comfortable all week long. You know, and I had assistant captains that were wonderful that made it light and enjoyable.

The atmosphere in our team room I thought was unbelievable all week long, and the six captain's picks were done for that reason as well, not only because they are great players, but they are great guys and they get along with one another. So it started right from there.

Q. We know there's a succession, but if you were

asked to do this again, would you do it and what do the guys think?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: 100 percent.

JORDAN SPIETH: That's a yes from us. To be fair, in 2017 it was a very similar position as far as the dominance goes. Strick has a pretty good record.

PATRICK CANTLAY: Both years?

TONY FINAU: I think Presidents Cup was a record.

STEVE STRICKER: I don't think it's going to happen. It's mapped out and there's guys in positions to be the next captains.

It was an unbelievable experience, don't get me wrong; I'm glad it's over (laughing).

Q. You talk about all the experience on these teams, and a lot have been loaded with talent. And you got this team to fire 1 through 12. What was that like for to you see?

STEVE STRICKER: Like I said, it was just putting them out there in a position -- we all feel like -- the assistant captains and I talked a bunch with Tiger on there, as well, a bunch times. And they're just so talented. Their average World Ranking is 8.9. That's unheard of. Out of 12 guys.

So it was really just getting out of their way; what I feel like. Let them go. Provide an atmosphere and camaraderie that they enjoyed and wanted to be a part of. And they all want to win, and it showed and they prepared for it.

It was a great bunch of guys, and I really had a great time and they deserve it.

JUSTIN THOMAS: I think before this is all over we should have Brooks and Bryson hug in the middle of the room. To prove how much of a team we are, they are going to hug. (Singing, "Why can't we be friends.")

Before you go, hold the trophy in the middle.

(Brooks and Bryson embrace in front of Ryder Cup trophy.)

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