

# The Ryder Cup

Wednesday, August 27, 2025

Farmingdale, New York, USA

Bethpage Black Course

**Team USA**

**Captain Keegan Bradley**

**Justin Thomas**

**Collin Morikawa**

**Ben Griffin**

**Cameron Young**

**Patrick Cantlay**

**Sam Burns**

Media Conference

**JULIUS MASON:** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the 2025 United States Ryder Cup captain's pick news conference here at the home of the PGA of America in Frisco, Texas. The 45th edition of the Ryder Cup will take place just 30 days from now at Bethpage Black in Farmingdale, New York.

10 days ago, six players qualified and earned their spot on the U.S. Team based on a point system. Today U.S. Ryder Cup captain Keegan Bradley will name six additional players who will join those automatic qualifiers and complete his 12-member team.

Keegan, welcome to PGA Frisco. It was just a little over a year ago when you were named captain in New York City, and since then you have competed at a very, very high level. Six top-10 finishes, a victory at the Travelers Championship, and you are ranked No. 11 in the world.

Can you try to put into words and explain what this journey has been like for you?

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** It's been the most incredible year of my life, honestly. My favorite year as a professional. We went through so much in this past year, but the thing that I cherish the most is the support that I got from the fans and the people at golf tournaments, at gas stations, at restaurants, cheering me on.



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For whatever reason, I never thought of that when I was named captain, and that was the biggest surprise and something that I'll remember the rest of my life.

**JULIUS MASON:** I know you're thrilled about the six qualifiers we see on the bags up there. What specifically do you like about each one of them, beginning with Scottie?

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** There's so much to say about Scottie Scheffler. He had 37,000 points, 10 percent of the points given to our Ryder Cup team. He's a natural-born leader.

But more importantly, I'm more impressed with the person that he is than the player, and he's a pretty incredible player. Great asset to have in our team, and really proud of the way he's stepped up and has been a leader of this team.

**JULIUS MASON:** J.J. Spaun?

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** J.J. Spaun is one of the most likable genuine people that I've ever met, a guy that burst onto the scene this season with five top-3 finishes. Only person with more is Scottie Scheffler. His amazing performance at THE PLAYERS and Memphis and then obviously his win at the U.S. Open making a 64-foot putt on 18 to win, just a really great guy to have in our team room.

**JULIUS MASON:** Xander Schauffele?

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Xander is one of the most humble mentally tough golfers that I've ever come across. He's universally loved across the world of golf but especially in our team room. He's the third ranked player in the world, and he's our glue guy. He does everything we ask him to do. He's a leader. But more importantly he's just a really great guy.

**JULIUS MASON:** Russell Henley?

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Russell is one of my favorite people. On the surface, he's this nice, fun guy, but on the



golf course he's super competitive, gutsy player. Obviously had that amazing comeback win at Bay Hill, and he's the fourth ranked player in the world. I played with him last Sunday, and every time I go out with him, I'm more and more impressed with his game.

**JULIUS MASON:** Harris English?

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Harris English put in a lot of hard work to get back to this spot after an injury. Somebody that is such an asset for our team. He won at the Farmers last year, finished second in two majors. He's so tough mentally, and he plays really well on tough golf courses, which will suit us well at Bethpage.

**JULIUS MASON:** Bryson DeChambeau?

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** A lot to say about Bryson. One of the most incredible things is he qualified for this team off of eight starts, which is unheard of. But what I'm most impressed about Bryson is the effort that he's made to be a part of this team. He's had to travel, go out of his way to meet us in our places, and he's gone above and beyond what we would ever ask of a player, and that's the thing I'm most proud of. You can go on and on about what an incredible player he is and golfer, but what he's done for this team, putting in the extra effort, is amazing to see.

**JULIUS MASON:** Keegan, the time has come right now. Let's go ahead and break this down and learn why you selected the players you did. Tell us, please, who your first captain's pick is.

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Our first captain's pick is Justin Thomas.

[Applause.]

Justin is the heartbeat of our team. He had an amazing win at RBC this year. He's the fifth-ranked player in the world. This guy was born to play Ryder Cups and specifically, I think, at Bethpage Black.

**JULIUS MASON:** Let's see if our two-time PGA champion can hear us.

**JUSTIN THOMAS:** Yes, I can.

**JULIUS MASON:** Congratulations, Justin, on making your fourth U.S. Ryder Cup Team, the most of any player on the 2025 squad. As such, you are the senior veteran on this team. What would you tell the rookies on your team on what to expect or how to prepare for a Ryder Cup when they play on the biggest stage possibly that we've ever seen?

**JUSTIN THOMAS:** Yeah, that is pretty bizarre to hear, first off. But no, I think that's what -- Captain has done a great job of choosing the team and then also who's qualified. Everybody is here for a reason, and I would tell anybody to just be themselves, especially the guys that have rounded out this team. They're either qualified or are being picked for a reason, and to just be ready when we get there and enjoy because it's going to be a pretty crazy, wild week.

**JULIUS MASON:** Justin, you played in six consecutive team competitions before missing out on The Presidents Cup last year. A pretty impressive streak. Help us understand what specifically it is about team competitions that you missed so much or that you love so much.

**JUSTIN THOMAS:** I mean, I would go first to what I love so much about them. What happened last year is what it is; it's a very, very deep competition that the U.S. is trying to compete against and play for to qualify for these team events every year. I just really enjoy them.

I think I've developed some unbelievable friendships in these events. These are guys that we obviously are all very friendly and cordial and see each other all the time, but it's just a totally different vibe when you're there. You're battling for each other, playing for each other, not just for yourself, and it's an opportunity to get to know them, their wives, families, whatever it may be, and it's probably a good thing that these events happen every so often because they do make them that much more special.

**JULIUS MASON:** Thank you very much, Justin, and please don't go too far.

Keegan, who is your second captain's pick?

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Second captain's pick is Collin Morikawa.

[Applause.]

Collin is one of the most genuine, thoughtful people that I've ever met. He's an incredible teammate, incredible ball striker. His golf resume speaks for itself. But more importantly, he'll do whatever it takes to help our team win, and he brings so much to our team. Really proud to have him.

**JULIUS MASON:** Let's see if our two-time major champion, Collin Morikawa, can hear us and what he's hiding behind him.

**COLLIN MORIKAWA:** I can hear you. There's nothing



back there. I haven't finished my office, so it's a blank wall.

**JULIUS MASON:** Welcome to your third United States Ryder Cup team. You are 4-3-1 in eight Ryder Cup matches, including 3-0-1 on home soil. Does this mean that when you tee it up in New York that there is less pressure on you to win or more pressure on you because you're expected to win?

**COLLIN MORIKAWA:** I'm going to change that question a little bit. I'd say there's definitely not less pressure. There's always more pressure, and that's what we encompass every day as a professional athlete and as a team when we show up at Bethpage.

But with that, we always talk about pressure being a privilege, and I think all 12 of us are going to be ready to step on that tee, and that's how we take that into our hands and look at pressure as something that we can overcome and we're going to use that as a positive in our way. Obviously being at home is going to be as helpful as you could ask in any setting.

**JULIUS MASON:** You played in two Ryder Cups, one where the U.S. dominated at Whistling Straits, another where Europe was convincingly victorious in Rome. What are some of the takeaways you've learned that can help you prepare for Bethpage?

**COLLIN MORIKAWA:** I think at the end of the day you have to play great golf. All 12 of us are going to be very close. We know what we're going to have to do. We know how we're going to have to play in partnerships and in matches. But no matter what happens away from the golf course, on the golf course, you have to hit great shots and you have to make putts and you have to use everyone around you in that same fashion.

If I compare the two, one dominant win and one pretty beat-down loss, it comes down to who made the putts and who essentially won the point at the end of the day. It didn't matter if you played great or played poorly, how do you walk away with that point in that match, and that's the focus in those few hours when you're out there.

**JULIUS MASON:** Thank you very much, Collin. Stay with us, please.

Keegan, who is your third captain's pick?

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Our third captain's pick is Ben Griffin.

[Applause.]

Ben is an extremely confident, excited player. He's burst on to the scene this year with 10 top 10s, only second to Scottie in our team, including two wins, one at Colonial and one at Zurich, which plays the same format as the Ryder Cup. I'm really proud of this player for making this team. He had to show all year that he was playing at this level and he was consistent the entire year, and we're really lucky to have him on this team.

**JULIUS MASON:** Ben, congratulations on making your very first Ryder Cup team. You've had a remarkable journey in golf over the last four years, and now you'll be playing for your country at Bethpage next month. Could you have ever envisioned yourself in this position four years ago?

**BEN GRIFFIN:** Yeah, I don't think so. Going from a desk job to making my way back to the PGA TOUR has been an incredible journey, and this year it's been kind of a breakthrough year for me, and I've just been working really hard and believing in myself, and I'm just really excited to be a part of this team and appreciate the belief from not only Keegan but also from the rest of the captains and other players that also believe in me, and I'm ready to work hard and fight for a lot of points at Bethpage.

**JULIUS MASON:** Speaking of your captain, how does it make you feel when Keegan showers you with accolades, and can you take us behind the curtain and tell us what it was like to get a phone call from the captain?

**BEN GRIFFIN:** Yeah, I mean, it's the biggest honor of all time to be on a Ryder Cup team and represent the United States. But that phone call could have easily gone either way for me. Keegan kind of voiced to me early on that there's good phone calls and bad phone calls, and you've got to go out there and leave no doubt.

I am really proud of the way I fought at the end of the year and had some top finishes and left no doubt to him. That phone call, there was a lot of emotions, anxiety going into that phone call, just not knowing what was going to happen. Just really excited to have the belief of all my teammates and captains to be on this team and to go out there and try to earn as many as we can.

**JULIUS MASON:** Keegan, who is your fourth captain's pick?

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Our fourth captain's pick is Cameron Young.

[Applause.]

Cam has been one of the most consistent players on the



TOUR the last four or five years. He broke through with that amazing win at the Wyndham Championship, and he's been fighting so hard. Watching him on Sunday with that big lead play like that was incredible. Cameron is a New Yorker. He won the New York State Open at Bethpage Black as an amateur, set the course record on that day with 64. Cameron pounds the golf ball, and he's putting it as good as he's ever putted in his career. He's had nine top-12 finishes, which shows you how consistent he's been. We're very proud to have a New Yorker on our team and represent his country at Bethpage Black.

**JULIUS MASON:** Cameron, welcome to your first Ryder Cup team. As we heard, you were raised in New York and played golf at Sleepy Hollow in Westchester County where your father David was a PGA of America golf professional for 22 years. Is it possible that you might get a louder ovation than Captain Bradley when you walk out to the first tee at Bethpage?

**CAMERON YOUNG:** I don't know about that, but yeah, we certainly should have some solid support up there. Obviously playing for your country is very special, and for me, the U.S. is home, but New York is really home for me. So going back up there to somewhere that I love, I can't wait to get up there. I don't know about a louder ovation than our captain, but hopefully I've got some support out there.

**JULIUS MASON:** Who's more excited or proud of your spot on this team, you or your dad?

**CAMERON YOUNG:** Oh, man. It would be hard to pick one. I think he puts in just as many hours to my golf as I do. He's with me every step of the way. With his connection both to the area up there and to the PGA of America, this is something that has been on both of our radars for a long time, and to get the opportunity to represent my country and play in a Ryder Cup is something that both of us have dreamed of for so long. It's hard to put into words what it means to both of us, and we're both certainly very excited.

**JULIUS MASON:** Cam, you said that one of your goals this year was to make the Ryder Cup team, and if you did, it would mean more to you than winning a golf tournament. Why was it so important for you to make this team, and do any of your team members know that you were on the winning 2014 U.S. Junior Ryder Cup team in Scotland?

**CAMERON YOUNG:** Yeah, I think one of them might remember in particular. I know Sam was on that team with me. That's a fun memory to share.

Yeah, this year making any one of these teams is such a

mark of achievement that it's a goal when you set out the year. But to me, this Ryder Cup in particular, in New York at Bethpage, is so special to me. I've been picturing the moment that I can possibly get a call to play on the team for a very, very long time.

Yeah, in regards to it being more important than the win, it's such an overarching goal to make these teams, and that win was a step along the way. Winning a golf tournament on the PGA TOUR has always been a goal, but at the end of the day, making this team is incredibly important, and that was one of the later steps along the way to give myself a chance to do that and having the opportunity to be a captain's pick.

**JULIUS MASON:** Keegan, who is your fifth captain's pick?

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Our fifth captain's pick is Patrick Cantlay.

[Applause.]

One of the greatest pleasures these last couple years of being the Ryder Cup captain is getting to know Patrick better. He's got a 15-6-1 record in team events. He's a leader of our team. When he speaks, people listen. Quite simply, Patrick was born for the Ryder Cup.

This is where he thrives. This is where we need him. He's an integral part of our team and a leader and someone we're going to rely on heavily at Bethpage.

**JULIUS MASON:** Patrick, welcome to your third United States Ryder Cup team. You are 15-6-1 in team competitions in your career, including a staggering 5-0-0 in singles. Your high school coach said you were a natural team leader, and your captain has said when you speak, people listen.

When you hear these things, what goes through your mind?

**PATRICK CANTLAY:** Well, first of all, I just have to say what an honor and a privilege it is to be picked for the team. I have to say, these team events over the last five years, a lot of them are some of my best memories that I have playing golf really in my whole life. Just the first team event I played in the Presidents Cup in Australia is where I started to become friends with Xander, and I feel like not only my relationship with Xander but a number of the other players on the U.S. side has really grown as I've been able to share these experiences with them every year on the team events.

These team events just mean everything to me. Some of





my favorite part of the year is going out and trying to put points up on the board for my teammates.

**JULIUS MASON:** Patrick, what is it about Keegan's captaincy that has impressed you and your teammates so much?

**PATRICK CANTLAY:** Yeah, I would say number one is just his passion. It's palpable. I think everyone that's been involved in this process can tell how dedicated he is to doing everything possible to put us in the position to compete and to give us the best chance at winning.

I feel like when someone has that obvious dedication and passion, it's a lot easier to buy in and fight alongside with him for our common goal. I just have a lot of admiration for the way Keegan has gone about it, and I will do anything I possibly can to help him and help us succeed.

**JULIUS MASON:** Keegan, who is your sixth and final captain's pick?

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Our last captain's pick is Sam Burns.

[Applause.]

Sam is an incredibly passionate golfer. He's the best putter on the planet. He has won the Match Play Championship. He has an extreme competitive fire in his belly.

I have a lot of respect for Sam and the way that he came on at the end of the season to make this team. His back was against the wall, and he played well every week to end the season, and I've been in that position, and that's some of the hardest times to play good golf is trying to make these Ryder Cup teams, and Sam did that.

We love to have Sam on our side with that putter at Bethpage. I can't wait to see him out there in front of those fans. He plays with his heart on his sleeve, and people at Bethpage are going to love that.

**JULIUS MASON:** Congratulations, Sam. You too mentioned that making this Ryder Cup team was one of your goals this year. Now that it has happened, what are your emotions, and what was it like for you to get the call from Keegan?

**SAM BURNS:** Yeah, I think being on these teams, it's one of the highest honors you can achieve in this sport, and I think kind of to Pat's point, it's been really very cool to watch Keegan go about this process and the way he's handled it. It's been really special to watch, and I'm so

privileged and honored to be a part of this team.

**JULIUS MASON:** This will be your second Ryder Cup team, Sam, but your first playing a home game. What are you looking forward to the most at Bethpage?

**SAM BURNS:** It's going to be an incredible week. I know we're going to have tons of support out there at Bethpage. These fans are special, and they love getting behind their teams and their country, and so I know us going out there and having that support will kind of spur us on, and hopefully we can rally behind that energy and use it to our advantage.

**Q. Keegan, this question is for you. There were reports over the last couple days that you were going to pick yourself. Obviously those were not true. But that was the big drama coming in. I'm wondering if you could describe how close you were to picking yourself and what the last 48 hours were like.**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** So the decision was made a while ago that I wasn't playing. The last 48 hours we had the team set. We weren't scrambling at all.

This was a really tough decision. I would say there was a point this year where I was playing, a while ago, and all these guys stepped up in a major way and played their way on to this team. That's something that I'm really proud of and something that I really wanted.

But it was an extremely difficult decision but one that I'm really happy with. I'm really happy with these six players, and I'm glad it's over.

[Laughter.]

**Q. Keegan, I wonder if you'd agree with the statement that if the U.S. captain was anyone other than Keegan Bradley, Keegan Bradley would be playing on this team.**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** You know, how are we ever going to know that because I am the captain.

I grew up wanting to play Ryder Cups. I grew up wanting to fight alongside these guys. It broke my heart not to play. It really did. You work forever to make these teams, but ultimately I was chosen to do a job. I was chosen to be the captain of this team. My ultimate goal to start this thing was to be the best captain that I could be.

This is how I felt like I could do this. If we got to this point and I felt like the team was better with me on it, I was going to do that. I was going to do whatever I thought was best



for this team. I know 100 percent for certain that this is the right choice, and these six guys, again, played so incredibly coming down the stretch here and made my decision a lot easier.

**Q. Keegan, did Rory's comments a little while ago about how it would be impossible to be a playing captain, did that make you want to prove him wrong in a way?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** I just am not worried at all about what they do or say. I care about our team. I'm not quite sure how he would know if it's not possible. No one has ever done it really. I said through this process I wish I could call Arnold Palmer and get his advice. The simple fact is the Ryder Cup is a completely different animal than it was in the '60s. Even that would be difficult.

They can make comments on what I can and cannot do. No one would have known. I was confident that if I did need to play, I had incredible vice captains that I could lean on, an incredible team I could lean on. But I've said through this process over and over and over, I was going to do what I thought was best for the team, and this was the decision that I thought was best.

**Q. Right now when you look at golf, it's growing exponentially when you look at ages 18 to 34. Women's golf is growing exponentially. Going to Bethpage, how do you capitalize on this moment?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Well, I think that the Ryder Cup at Bethpage is going to sort of transcend the golf world. I think it's going to become an iconic North American sporting event. Anytime you play for your country in New York, it's extra special, but especially at a place like Bethpage Black. It's a public golf course that the local people play that is affordable.

We have an extreme obligation to defend their course, and I think this is a great opportunity to grow the game. I think that'll happen naturally with how great this event will be.

**Q. This question is about Scottie Scheffler. Having World No. 1 as an anchor for the team, especially given how well he played the last time that the Cup was on American soil, how much does that give you a little bit of comfort as the captain?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Yeah, it's incredible. What's interesting about Scottie is just how dominant and fiercely competitive he is on the golf course, but you get him outside the ropes and he's totally normal, one of the most humble people you'll ever meet.

He's taking an active role of helping the younger guys and being there for them, having them ask questions, and he makes our job as captains a lot easier because we have the best player in the world that's also super humble, down to earth, that's looking to help our guys. That's a big asset to have.

**Q. Keegan, pardon the local question, but having this announcement here and having three Ryder Cup captains who are from here is kind of a big deal. I was wondering what your impressions are of being here, and have you had a chance to see the place, or have you just been strictly business?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Well, I'm really grateful for the captains to come and support me here. It meant a lot. I looked up to all these guys. Their Ryder Cup records are incredible. I really appreciate the history of the game and what they've done for me and what they've done for my career and my family. It genuinely touches me that they came, so thank you.

The facility here is stunning. I've been blown away with everywhere I've gone: The PGA facility, the hotel, the courses. It's really amazing. It blew everything away that I thought it was going to be.

**Q. JT, it would have been easy for Keegan to pick himself and put himself on this team. How galvanizing is it for the captain to be selfless and say, hey, I trust you guys, you guys go win the Ryder Cup?**

**JUSTIN THOMAS:** Appreciate you putting that question on me; that's very nice of you.

[Laughter.]

No, Keegan said it perfectly. It's going to be said so many times between now and the end of the Ryder Cup that Keegan, he did and will continue to do whatever he feels like is best for the team, and that's what he did.

It's been really, really a cool process to be a part of as a player, and everybody does it so differently and every captain is so great in different ways, but just the communication and how transparent Keegan has been, I mean, I don't want to speak for everybody, but I would say this isn't something that we have experienced before. I would say he probably -- there were guys that heard things that they wouldn't be expecting to hear, brutally honest, if you will, but he said it himself; he's been in those shoes of being in the dark and not knowing where you are, and I think that's just how he's kind of approached this entire captaincy is he wants to do whatever is best for the team. He wants to communicate everything as well as he



possibly can.

I know he's gutted, and I think all of us are gutted for him, but at the same time, I would say him leading us to a victory will be cooler than any experience he could have as a player, and that's probably what he feels like is best for us. So we have all the faith in the world, and we don't doubt him for one second for that.

**Q. Sam, you weren't in the top 12 as far as points go, so how worried were you that you would leapfrog some other guys to make the team, and how recently have you found out or did you find out that you're on the team?**

**SAM BURNS:** Yeah, I think for me, at the end of the day, I just tried to focus on what I could control, and that was trying to play the best golf I could at the end of the year.

I think there's a lot of things that happen that you don't have control over, and ultimately I knew that I needed to go out and play good solid golf to end the year. Keegan and I had a lot of conversations throughout the year, and I think he really did a great job of communicating kind of what he wanted to see from me, and I just tried to go out and focus on playing well, and I think at the end of the day, every single year there's tough decisions made and there's tough phone calls and there's guys that you can argue should be on the team, shouldn't be on the team, and ultimately, like Justin said, every player on the team fully has belief in Keegan and him leading this team and making the decisions that he thinks are best for us to go win.

**Q. Ben, this time a year ago, how many of these guys' numbers did you have, and what has this process been like where all of a sudden you're part of this team?**

**BEN GRIFFIN:** Yeah, I mean, fortunately I've known a good chunk of the team since junior golf, so just on the screen here, Cameron Young, Collin Morikawa, Sam Burns, I have their numbers because we grew up competing against each other, whether it's Wyndham Cups, AJGA or AJGA events. I did know a decent amount of these guys, but now I know the bond is going to get even closer, and I'm really excited to get close with a lot of the guys on the team and build friendships and work towards a common goal. It's going to be really exciting.

Going back a year ago, Ryder Cup wasn't necessarily on my radar. My radar was more of I need to get over the hump and win on the PGA TOUR and kind of tackle one thing at a time. Ultimately this summer it's just kind of led to where I felt like I was one of the best golfers in the world and was competing and playing well in majors and in big

moments.

Just really excited to have the belief from everyone and especially from Keegan that I'm a part of this team, and I'm excited to go showcase my talents.

**Q. Keegan, how do you feel about the fact that your decision to play or not to play created such an immense amount of talk and speculation, more than any other Ryder Cup that I can remember?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Yeah, it's really strange. This whole year has been really strange, to be honest. I've been really surprised at the attention that this has gotten. I understand the weight and the history and all that comes with it, but I was really focused on being the captain the whole year. I never really considered playing until after Travelers. Then that was really on the table for a while.

But I really was interested in being the best captain that I could be, and ultimately I felt like I was really comfortable with the guys, like extremely comfortable, and I feel like I can best serve the team this way.

I don't care if I play, don't play, as long as we win on Sunday. There's no outcome that -- that's the only thing I care about.

This is the decision that we made, and it's strange that it's got so much hype, but I don't know, the Ryder Cup is a big deal apparently.

[Laughter.]

**Q. Two years ago, you took a very disheartening phone call from the Ryder Cup captain. This year you had to make that phone call. What was that like? What was necessarily going through your mind as you began to pick up the phone to make those calls that they weren't on the team?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Yeah, I just kept imagining what it was like when I got those calls, when you look at your phone and you see the captain calling you and you don't know what's on the other end. I really said I was going to ruin the dreams of a couple guys here, and it broke my heart. It still does.

I'm in a unique position where I'm calling guys that I might see at the golf course the next day. A lot of the times the captains will make the call and may not see these guys again. I'll be around them for years to come hopefully.

But the way I liked the calls to go was short, sweet, to the point, and that was the game plan that I had. But it was



really tough. It was the toughest day of my captaincy for sure.

**Q. Reading between the lines, were you making those calls earlier in the process, or did you wait until the very end?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** No, we waited until after the TOUR Championship. That's normally when it happens. But we had a good idea of the direction we were going, and all the guys that we really had our eyes on played exceptionally great in the playoffs, and that made a lot of the choices a lot easier.

**Q. Keegan, for yourself personally, can you describe the degree of difficulty emotionally, 2023 getting the call, being told you weren't on the team, and now making the call yourself, for you not to be on this team? Which was more difficult in your mind?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Oh, calling the players and telling them they're not on the team was way more difficult because I just know these guys really well, and I know how much it means to them, and I know there was a couple guys that I had to call that were on the team in Rome that -- I've been on these losing teams, and you just desperately want to get back and get another shot at it.

It was really difficult, but again, I kept reminding myself of how I like the calls to go, and you also as a player have a pretty good idea of is this call going to go well, it's probably not going to go, or it's medium.

Every single guy I called was so great, and it was really great to hear because I've only experienced my calls, and I'm pissed, and these guys were really friendly and really caring, and it meant a lot to me.

**Q. I actually meant the difficulty of getting that call yourself to know you're not on that team for Rome and then you yourself, making the call for yourself not being on this team knowing how badly you want to play, and the next time it comes around you'll be 41 years old; who knows what happens there.**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Yeah, Monday was tough for me. I was just alongside the guys that didn't make the team. I was moping around. I was bummed out. But quickly you realize what a dream it is to be a Ryder Cup captain and what a dream it is to be a Ryder Cup captain for these 12 guys that I know, that I know so well, and a Ryder Cup captain at Bethpage Black, where I showed up to St. John's as an 18-year-old kid with a dream of playing on the PGA TOUR and never dreaming of being a Ryder Cup captain and I get to return to that same course as the

captain of these guys representing our country, and that's most important.

Again, I don't care how it works out, as long as we win on Sunday. I'm incredibly honored to be the Ryder Cup captain.

I think part of it's been a relief and I get to focus on this and cheer these guys on for the next month or so.

**Q. Keegan, the question is about the format. Foursomes and four-ball are both on Friday and Saturday. Just wondering what your thoughts were on keeping it that way, which is exactly what it was like in Rome.**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Yeah, so you look at the data, you look at your team, and you look at getting off to a good start is really important, and most home teams do alternate shot first, a much tougher format. But we got together with the vice captains and our scouts, our analytical team, and you look at all the data, all the stats from the previous home, always, what the home team did, what this team did when they won, and you run a million different scenarios, and ultimately it was actually a pretty easy decision, this is what we came up with.

**Q. Just to follow up on the fact that you didn't pick yourself, is there any scenario that you could think of over the last month that would have changed your mind?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Yeah, yeah. If I felt like I needed to play on this team to help the team win, I would have. It was really inspiring to see how well these guys played coming down the stretch because again, I've been in this situation where you're on the bubble of these teams, and it's like you're playing Q-school every round. Q-school, there's no fun involved when you play these rounds. I've been in that position, and it's horrible, and you wake up every day on a Friday morning and you know this is a really important round I have to show the captain.

These six here basically did that for months, and they've played some of the best golf they've played in their careers, and that shows you a lot, and something I was extremely proud of. One of the great joys I've had this year is when I'd look up at the leaderboard and I'm just seeing American names. I'm not looking for my name; I'm looking for these guys' names. You don't have to look very far from the top for most of these guys. That was a real fun thing for me to do. It seemed like every week that I looked for these guys, they were right there. Really proud of them because I know how tough that is.





**Q. Keegan, you mentioned at one point you were thinking you were on the team after Travelers, that you would pick yourself. When did that flip?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** We were considering playing in the team. It was never 100 percent. I think, again, not to repeat myself, but to see how well all these guys played. Most all of them finished in the top 10 in Atlanta, throughout the playoffs. Again, they're playing with Ryder Cup pressure, were also playing under extreme FedExCup pressure, a lot on the line in these events, and they performed every week. Not some weeks, every week. That was really important to our decision.

**Q. What was the toughest decision for you? Was it on yourself or someone else you had to leave off the team?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** I think I can't point to one specific tough decision. Certainly thinking about what I was going to do, but we were all on the same page. The tough decisions were the guys that we left off the team because I know how hard they worked to be on this team and how much they wanted to be on this team.

You look at these guys and you feel for them because they're fighting so hard. Those are really tough decisions.

**Q. Keegan, I'd like to ask you specifically about Maverick McNealy, how difficult it was to leave him off. I know you got to play with him a few times recently and he's one of the most phenomenal putters on TOUR. How difficult was that decision, and what was that phone call like?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Very, very difficult call to call Mav. Incredible kid, played well all year long. I was very up front with the guys that haven't made the team before. You really have to, in most cases, make the team on points in your first team. It's really difficult to get a pick in your first team event. I made that very clear to him, and he still played great.

I played with him a bunch of times this year. I'm really impressed with his game. I told him it's okay to be angry. I left these calls really angry most times. You can use this as fuel.

I said, please be angry with me and make the next team. Make Brandt's Presidents Cup team. I used that as fuel most of my career, and I advised Mav to do the same thing. He made a great run at making this team, and ultimately that was a really tough decision.

**Q. Question for Cam: What is it about Bethpage Black**

**that suits your game that helped get you on this team, and where does that course rank in your all-time favorites?**

**CAMERON YOUNG:** Yeah, I mean, like I've said, it's a very special place to me. I've played it in competition a fair bit.

But yeah, I've always loved it. It's straightforward. It's right in front of you. It's long. It's difficult. I love that about it. There's nothing funky about it. It's here's a fairway; if you hit it, great, you have a chance. If not, good luck.

It's kind of that major championship style difficult, and I think that that suits my game, and I'm always excited to go back there. It's, like I said, one of my favorite places in the world.

**Q. Keegan, I have to ask you kind of a local question. As a huge fan of the Bruins, the Red Sox, the Patriots and the Celtics, what is it that you bring from your Vermont and New England heritage to your captaincy into the game of golf?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Well, I think everything about me is New England and northeast. It's sort of one of the things I'm most proud of. Not a lot of people on TOUR are from there.

We have, I guess you could say, a bit of an edge to one another. But growing up in New England, I had a very short season, so I felt like I had no time to waste ever. I sort of feel like I bring that to everything that I do. I try to do everything to 100 percent.

Like I've said a million times, the greatest honor of my life has been to be this Ryder Cup captain, and I'm going to put everything I have into this. Our vice captains are going to do that; our players are going to do that; the wives, the coaches, the caddies. Everybody is going to put everything they have into being successful at this Ryder Cup.

I know we're excited to get going, and it's really fun that it's just around the corner now.

**Q. Over this last year, can you bring us through the process of what it's been like to learn about being a Ryder Cup captain, and a month from now, how are you most looking forward to impacting trying to help this team win as a captain?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Yeah, so it was interesting for me being captain. I had zero experience, so I kind of went about this the way I thought -- the way I liked a team to be



run. I did lean on other captains and other coaches and other athletes. But I sort of brought a perspective of this was a sort of an off-in-the-distance choice for me to be captain, and they did this for a reason, so I'm going to do this the way I think is best.

I think one of my favorite things about being the Ryder Cup captain over the last year and a half is getting to know the guys better. I did a horrible job of that most of my career. I've told all these guys this, but I've learned so much from them, the way that they handle themselves, the way that they're friendly to one another, the way that they truly care and pull for one another, something that I looked at everyone as sort of my opponents. These guys, they care about one another. They've taught me a lot about how to live a happier life on TOUR, and I'm really grateful for that.

**Q. I was just curious, we do a lot of arguing in the media about what statistics should be looked at, what numbers should be look at for who should make the team. I know you're looking at everything, but when you talk about the last couple months of guys really standing out, are you looking at strokes gained? Are you looking at top 10s? What really are those that rise to the top that you guys are looking at?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Well, we look mostly at who has the lowest score at the end of the tournaments. We look at the data. We look at the analytics, and we look at how they would fare at Bethpage, how they would fare in each format, but ultimately we want to see the guys that win and the guys that are up in the majors, the guys that are up in the playoff events.

The data and the analytics isn't going to matter on that first tee when there's 40,000 fans screaming at you. We take that into account and we look at it and we apply it when we can. But we want guys that we know can handle the situation, that can handle the moment and are going to go out there and win points.

**Q. You mentioned Maverick McNealy already, but was that the toughest call you had to make? Who would you say would be the toughest call you had to make knowing that they weren't going to be on the team this year?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** I can't -- I wish I could give you a person and an answer, but they were all tough. They were all me sitting on my chair at my house with -- just trying to get the strength to call these guys because I know what it takes to get this close to making the team and not making it.

You never know if you're ever going to get another shot at

it. This might be -- you never know, maybe these guys all play multiple Ryder Cups going forward, maybe they don't, and as a player, I certainly was aware of that when I didn't make the last team.

It's heartbreaking because when you get this close to making a United States Ryder Cup team, one of the hardest teams to make in any sport in the world, it's devastating when you don't make it. It's a heavy obligation to call these guys, but they all handled it like pros. I was really impressed.

**Q. How many calls did you make?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** We made some calls. I'd rather just keep that to us.

**Q. Keegan, I know Michael Jordan is a golf pal of yours. Have you consulted with him at all during your captaincy, and do you expect him in attendance at Bethpage in any kind of role?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** I talked -- Michael has been a really great friend to me for -- I met him at the 2012 Ryder Cup at Medinah. He's there for me all the time, and a lot of people in his life. I rely on not only him but other people to help guide me through heavy decisions, decision making. He's always there for me, and I'm really -- it's an amazing thing to meet your idols, and turns out they're just incredible people and caring, and he's been really amazing.

He loves golf. He loves the Ryder Cup. I'm not going to speak for him whether he's going to be there or not, but I know he'll be cheering for the United States and for these boys right here.

**Q. I just wanted to go back to what you said at the start. You said this changes the story a little bit when you won Hartford. I didn't get a clear sense of a moment where you began to shift away from contemplating playing and realizing you were better off as captain.**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** I think I sort of knew in the back of -- I did know in the back of my mind that I just wanted to be the captain. But again, I was going to do what I thought was best for the team. If I win Hartford and win -- continue at a really high level and I'm clearly one of the best players in the world and I can help this team win, I would have done that.

I really truly felt this whole time that I needed to be the captain, from the very start. My vice captains knew that. A lot of the players knew that.



Then after Hartford, I sort of had to just back off that a little bit and be more open to the idea of playing. Still with the idea that I really just wanted to be the captain.

I really want to leave this process knowing I did everything I could as a captain, and I was worried if I played, I might not be able to do that.

**Q. If there's like a freak injury, if Scottie makes ravioli or something, do you have an alternate, or do you bring your clubs?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Believe it or not, I've been asked that a bunch of times already, but I don't know the answer to that. I'll look into it and get back to you.

**Q. Keegan, I know you said you have been surprised by how big a story you potentially playing has become. I wondered what your reaction was when the President even intervened saying he wanted you to play?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Yeah, that was really surreal. Again, I've been really blown away with the support. Anytime you get the sport of the President of the United States, it's really surreal and stunning. I really appreciate it, Mr. President. I hope you're not disappointed. We look forward to seeing you at the Ryder Cup.

That certainly made things -- when you see stuff like that, you start to wonder how we got to this point in my life. But I was really honored, deeply honored to have him say that.

**Q. Keegan, hopefully you've been able to have some fun throughout this process and being the captain. What has been your favorite part of the captain experience so far? And fast forward to Sunday, September 28, and describe the perfect storybook ending.**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Well, without question, and I've expressed this to the guys, my favorite thing about being captain is it's forced me to open up more. I sort of lived life on TOUR in the shadows for most of my career, and I went to the course, did my job, and I left. I didn't forge many strong relationships, and as I've gotten older, I've really regretted that.

What these guys have taught me is that that's not the way you have to go about your career. Getting to know Patrick, getting to know Sam, all these guys, has been really great, and selfishly, it's been great for me as well. Again, it's taught me a new life on TOUR. I truly believe it's helped me play at a higher level.

**Q. We've dwelt a lot on the tough calls to make, but give me a story of calling one of these guys and somebody who was just crazy happy about this. What was the best moment in terms of the good calls?**

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Truthfully, calling them all was great and a huge relief. I really enjoyed calling the guys who haven't made a Ryder Cup team before, calling Cameron Young who I knew had worked so hard at making this team, from New York, Bethpage. I know he's had some heartbreaking teams that he's missed. I can relate to that. That was a really special call.

And calling Ben Griffin. Ben wasn't on our radar until this year, and he just continuously played at an extremely high level throughout the whole year, and I got a chance to play with him for the first time at Wyndham this year, and I was just blown away with how good this guy was, and I was wondering where the hell he's been for the last few years.

I just was so impressed with these two guys, and getting to make the call to be on your first Ryder Cup team is a huge deal, and I really enjoyed those two calls.

Sam showed a lot of emotion, which I appreciated. Pat didn't give me any emotion, which -- but it was great. I've been looking forward to these calls for months.

**JULIUS MASON:** Keegan, I'd like you to take a deep breath and give us your final thoughts.

**KEEGAN BRADLEY:** Yeah, I just am -- when this first started, I didn't know what to expect. I didn't know if we could handle this with playing a full-time schedule. A lot of people didn't think I could still play and do this. I'm really proud of the year that I had, but I'm more proud of the guys and how they've been.

Again, I'm not afraid to say that I look up to each and every one of these guys, just how they carry themselves, how they conduct themselves, the way they play, the way they treat each other. I've never seen -- their friend wins a tournament, they're genuinely happy for that other player, and I see them rooting for them when no one is watching, watching TV and cheering them on.

It was inspiring to me, and it changed me as a person and as a player forever. I'm not afraid to say, again, that I look up to each and every one of them, and they've taught me so much, and I look forward to returning to Bethpage as the Ryder Cup captain and hopefully winning the Ryder Cup on Sunday.

**JULIUS MASON:** Ladies and gentlemen, your six captain's picks and Keegan Bradley.



[Applause.]

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