

The Ryder Cup

Monday, September 22, 2025

Farmingdale, New York, USA

Bethpage Black Course

Luke Donald

Keegan Bradley

Press Conference



**BETHPAGE
BLACK**

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

I'm Greg Dillard, and on behalf of the PGA of America and Ryder Cup Europe, I'd like to welcome you all to the 45th Ryder Cup at Bethpage Black.

We are pleased to be joined by the two leading men this week, European Captain Luke Donald, and United States Captain Keegan Bradley.

Gentlemen, thank you for spending some time with us this afternoon.

To get things started, Captain Donald, welcome back to Bethpage. As you embark on your second Ryder Cup as European captain, what are your thoughts on the team, the Black Course, and the challenge ahead.

LUKE DONALD: Yeah, thank you. I think the last three and a half years, being able to do this captaincy twice, has been one of the most rewarding things in my life. It's been a privilege, and to obviously get an opportunity to do one home and one away is something not a lot of people have had the opportunity.

I certainly don't take it for granted. As I said, some of the best moments of my career have been in Ryder Cups as a player, as a vice captain, and now as captain.

Very excited about this week. We understand the challenge ahead.

I have a great team, a team that I'm very confident in, a team that has a lot of form, and a team that's been together quite a lot over the last few years.

But very excited to be here at Bethpage Black, obviously in New York. I think it's an incredible location: A state park, a public facility, and very excited for it to get going. It's been a long buildup, and now it's time to let the guys go play.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much, Luke.

Captain Bradley, how does it feel to finally be here at Bethpage with the opening matches just a few days away?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, it feels really amazing, especially sitting next here to Luke Donald. I came here as an 18-year-old kid going to St. John's, played the Red Course as our home tournament, and to come back as the Ryder Cup captain is something beyond my wildest dreams.

It's been a really magical week for us so far, being around the guys and just seeing how well they're bonded and being out at this incredible venue has been unbelievable.

This has been one of the most incredible things I've ever experienced in my life, and to experience it alongside a friend like Luke Donald, and an amazing team in Europe that's coming off a great win has been awesome.

Every day that I get up and get to hang with our guys and come out to this amazing golf course and experience a Ryder Cup again, it's been a long time since I've been in a Ryder Cup, and I can't tell you how amazing it's been to see the American flag, to see the Ryder Cup logo, and to be a part of this great tournament again.

Q. Can we talk about course setup? Keegan, have you done anything to give your team an edge, and Luke, do you see anything done to the course that might be a disadvantage to you guys?

LUKE DONALD: You know, we haven't been out as a team this week so far. We were out here Monday and Tuesday for a practice trip.

I think it's nothing really out of the ordinary of what we expected. You look at previous Ryder Cups held in the U.S., not a ton of rough, the greens are a good speed. I think Bethpage is a tough course, but it's certainly not set up like a U.S. Open.

I think you're going to have to expect to go out there and

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make some birdies. These are world-class players.

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, I think we sort of look at the analytical data and how our players perform at their best and we set the course up accordingly. One of the great things is being a captain is to have a say in how the course is set up.

But again, the courses, I've been out here, I've played this course 50 to 100 times, this is probably the best condition I've ever seen it.

Really proud of the superintendent and the staff out here to get this course to look this amazing.

Q. On a lighter note, one of the things a Ryder Cup is known for is the atmosphere, the songs you hear. Have you guys got a favorite or something you've heard that you thought was particularly amusing or memorable?

LUKE DONALD: I think there's lots of songs and chants that have been around in Ryder Cups for many years. I feel like our team is very good at coming up with new ones depending on who the players are there. There's so many to think about.

But no, I think what makes Ryder Cups fun is the atmosphere, is the energy that it brings. It really is an environment that you want to experience as a player because it's nothing quite like it that you get to play in an individual tournament.

I think these guys embrace that. They thrive in it. They're looking forward to hearing the noise out there.

KEEGAN BRADLEY: I think what I love about the Ryder Cup is I feel like every hole is the last hole of a tournament, so you can kind of let that emotion out. And I think you see a lot of players that play with a lot of emotion play well at Ryder Cups because they don't have to hold it in.

I'm constantly trying to hold it in my whole career. And when you come out in an exciting environment like this, you can let that emotion out and enjoy it, even on the first hole on Friday, which is always fun.

I always really enjoyed the European chants. They're very creative and fun.

Ours are a little bit more USA-oriented. But I really enjoy the atmosphere that happens at Ryder Cups and can't wait to see the one here in New York.

Q. For Keegan and Luke, in terms of captain versus

captain, you guys are not playing each other, obviously. Don't have clubs in your hand. But I'm curious, I know Keegan, you're a big team-sport guy, and I'm sure you've second-guessed your Red Sox manager a number of times. You guys will be second-guessed by the fans for the decisions you make. How much do you feel like captain versus captain is a factor in terms of the decisions you guys make, et cetera, in terms of the end result this week?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Well, I certainly am well aware of what an incredible person Luke is, to start. He's a guy I've spent a lot of time with over the years. A really fun person to be around. I know how he can rally a group of players.

I also am very aware of what an incredible captain he is. As far as I'm concerned, he's one of the greatest European captains ever. It's a tall task for me to match up against Luke Donald.

But I've got a great crew around me, a great group of vice captains: Jim Furyk, Brandt Snedeker, all these guys, and an incredible group of players.

It's really difficult, I'm not trying to match what Luke is doing. We've got our own team. I'm not worried about my team is doing. But I have nothing but extreme respect for Luke Donald and what he's done in his career and for Ryder Cup Europe.

LUKE DONALD: Yeah, I mean, likewise, I have so much respect for Keegan and what he's done in his career. We look at our team, first and foremost. We're not looking at what the U.S. are doing.

I really do hope that the captain has a little bit of an influence. We spend a lot of time, Keegan has been through it now himself. He understands the hours and the preparation that goes into being a captain, looking at all the little details about how you can try and find little edges and get the guys prepared.

Ultimately it's my job to get those guys in the right frame of mind performing at the highest level that they can perform on the golf course.

If things go wrong, then yeah, there will be lots of questions aimed at me, and that's the responsibility you take as a captain. But again, you hope that with the preparation, it will hopefully help your team, give them a better opportunity.

Q. Do each of you feel that in your own ways you can be some slight difference-maker for each of your teams this week with the things you do and how you



do them?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, I hope so. I hope -- my main goal is to put these players in their best position to play well. When you do that, the guys can go out and perform at their highest level.

But ultimately the players are going to decide the Ryder Cup. But I definitely think the captain and the vice captains, their main goal here, their main job is to put the players in the best position to play at their best. Every day we go out, whether it's Friday of the tournament or a practice round like today, we want to make sure the guys are in the right state of mind with the right mindset of what we want to do during the week and get them prepared to be ready to go on Friday morning.

LUKE DONALD: Yeah, again, to reiterate what I said, just like in other sports, coaches, they have an impact on the game, right? They should. The way they put their players out, the pairings, whatever it might be. There's so much preparation that goes into this that you hope as a captain you have some kind of influence on the end result.

Q. Keegan, could I ask a question about your path in golf in general. I'm from the Boston Globe. So I wanted to ask you to reflect on what you think about what shaped you that time in Massachusetts, how that was different maybe from the paths you saw other guys take to the pros, and how maybe that shaped you a bit.

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, not a lot of players from New England on the PGA TOUR. But I think the people of New England and the northeast have a grit mindset to them.

I had such a finite time to practice golf. I grew up in Vermont, and we had really severe winters, and then Boston was actually going south. I could hit some shots later in the year.

But I had this very specific -- I had to capitalize on this time to hit balls, get ready to play, prepare to someday do this.

As I got older and I was able to play year-round, I still had that mentality. I still have that mentality today of I can't waste a second of this day.

I think when you grow up in New England, whether you're trying to be a golfer or work, you want to get your job done, you want to be the best you can at your job.

I carry around the northeast and New Englander with me everywhere I go. That's my identity. I love that I grew up there. I love that I'm a little bit different than the guys out

here, and there's nothing I'm more proud of than representing that part of the world.

Q. Question for Keegan. About the U.S. Team getting paid for the first time this year, can you just explain to us why you've decided to give all of your money to charity? And just to clarify, are all your team going to follow your example? Have you got a unified approach to this?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Well, the PGA of America came to me, they wanted to bring the Ryder Cup into the present day. The charity dollars hadn't changed since 1999 and they asked me to sort of shepherd their way into making it into 2025.

I think for everyone it's a personal decision. A lot of guys aren't comfortable sharing what they're going to do with their money, but we're going to donate.

For us, the PGA of America, this happens after the Ryder Cup, so this is something that we'll worry about after. But ultimately, the PGA of America asked me to help out with this, and this is the best way we came up with to do it.

Q. To clarify, why are you giving your stipend as well as the charity donation?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: I think that's a personal decision. I don't donate to charities to publicize what we're doing. These guys on our team are incredible people, and they do a lot of incredible things with charity dollars and with their foundations. A lot of them aren't comfortable sharing that sort of information, and I feel the same way.

Q. For both of you guys, the uniqueness of you guys living so close to each other and you guys being friends. How much do you see each other, whether it's at 1000 North or Bear's Club, and how does that play into what's a very unique situation?

LUKE DONALD: Yeah, as I said, I've known Keegan 12, 13 years now. We sometimes play practice rounds together on the road, we've had dinners together, we have mutual friends.

Again, Keegan is someone that I've rooted for. If he did well in a tournament, won a tournament, I would text him. And likewise, I think we definitely have a good strong friendship, and I think there's a mutual respect there. We understand both being in the arena. We understand exactly the difficulties of professional golf, and we celebrate our victories together, I think.

It's nice to have a captain, your captain opposite you,

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someone that you know and respect a lot. I think we're also very, very competitive, and that's not going to change this week. I think we'll have a drink on Sunday night no matter what the result, but this week is about trying to get our teams to win, and we want to win.

I think we are very similar in that personality. I think the captaincy for me, just like it has been for Keegan, has been quite enlightening and helpful. I think we're both somewhat introverts, in a way, and it's kind of taught us to go more out of our comfort zones.

I see a lot of similarities between us, but there's definitely a deep respect amongst us.

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Yeah, for me, there's not many people I like more in the golf world than Luke Donald.

I came out on Tour in 2011, and he was No. 1 in the world. He was the first real, quote-unquote, top player to treat me with the respect that I couldn't believe. I get to go out and play with Luke Donald who's the best player in the world. He played with all of my buddies that I went to St. John's with; I loved hanging out and having a drink with Luke Donald.

But we want to go out there and win. We want to put our teams in the best position to go out there and do well.

But ultimately, we've chatted. I wanted to be the first one to tell Luke that I'm the Ryder Cup captain here, out of respect to him, because we've talked a lot about the Ryder Cup throughout our lives.

I really feel lucky to have Luke on the opposite side. Because we send each other texts, we joke around, but we know once the competition comes, we want to win. Like Luke said, come Sunday night, I can't wait to have a drink with Luke Donald and sit down and try to enjoy this even more.

Q. Keegan, just following on from the question there about the payment for your team, what do you say to those who take that as evidence that it means more to Europe?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Well, I'm not concerned about what Europe does or what they think. I'm concerned about what my team is doing.

I was tasked with a job the PGA of America asked me to do, and this was what we decided. We wanted to bring the Ryder Cup into today's age, and we felt like this was the best way to do it. We copied a lot of what the Presidents Cup does.

We did the best we could, and I think a lot of good is going to come from this. I think the players are going to do a lot of good with this money, and I think it's great.

Q. Obviously you rightly recognize that the players are able to do a lot of good with it, but I think the optics of it are questionable, given the finances already involved in golf. Do you have any regret about that aspect?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: I don't really get that, but I think the goal here was that the charity dollars hadn't been raised in 25, 26 years, and that's what we started out doing.

Again, we did a lot of what the Presidents Cup did, and these players are going to do the right thing and do a lot of really good with this money. You can say that, but I think that the players are really good people and are going to do a lot of good things.

Q. Keegan, obviously it's been a while now since you came to terms with the decision you made to not play. Just wondering if as you got here, over the weekend or even today in practice, if there's any tinge of wonder what it might have been like if you were and what those emotions were like?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Definitely. I've thought about it every second. But I've also thought about how impossible it would be.

Like I said earlier, I was picked to do this job as captain, and there's been certain things that I've done during the week or lead-up that if I was playing, I don't think I could have done at the level that I needed to do them at.

I catch myself every now and then looking down the fairway, seeing the guys walk down the fairway and think how badly I'd like to do that, and how badly I'd want to be in the group with Scottie Scheffler and seeing him play and being his teammate.

But I feel like I've been called for a bigger cause here, to help our guys get ready to play and play at the highest level.

But in the back of my mind, I'm always thinking, "I could have been out there."

But ultimately, I can't tell you how much I've enjoyed being the captain and how I've enjoyed not having to worry about getting to sleep and getting my rest or how I haven't had to think about what time I'm going to go practice or meet my coach and then meet the guys. It simplified things a lot for me.



Q. Luke, do you feel this is a better team than you had at Marco Simone?

LUKE DONALD: Well, it's a very similar team, which is unusual, never happened in the history of our Ryder Cup teams in Europe, to have 11 come back. So we have a lot of cohesion.

I think part of a captain's job is to try and form the team. It's to try and get these guys together and kind of bonding and being a team. I certainly haven't had to work that hard with these guys because of what we did two years ago.

Even Rasmus was on the buggy for Nicolai and spent time there.

I think statistically there are some guys who are a lot better players than they were in Rome, and I'm sure the U.S. are very strong too. You just look at the talent the U.S. have, they have the best player in the world. He's doing incredible things. They have a bunch of superstars, as well.

But we understand that it's going to be a big challenge, but I am very excited about my team, where we are, the form we have coming into this, and I'm excited about getting going on Friday.

Q. Keegan, for you, what was the purpose of the gathering you had on the first tee this morning?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Well, I think anytime that guys can be together, I think it's really powerful to be on that first tee without the crowds and just be you guys.

Every second that the guys are together and can have a powerful moment, I think it brings them closer together. That was a really fun time to be out there with those guys and share that moment and hear the National Anthem.

I really think that I had this vision of doing that for about a year, and to be out there and see it and see how emotional the guys got was a really special time for our team.

Q. I understand you've had guest speakers from other sports. Is that true?

LUKE DONALD: Two years ago we had Novak Djokovic come to our team. I'm not going to share who we have or who we might not have come to the team.

Again, my job is to, one, obviously get the guys ready but create an experience for them that they'll never forget. We want to create a week where they have the most fun, on

and off the golf course. So.

We work very hard, myself, my wife, on creating a week where they're going to remember this no matter what. These are great experiences to be a part of the Ryder Cup.

Sometimes you might only get one chance at this. Sometimes you might have eight or nine chances. But every one is very special for them. Again, we try and do a lot of things during the week that has a lot of meaning, has a lot of value, and we love to, again, make this one of the best weeks of their lives.

Q. Luke, your players are wearing salmon pink today which I believe represents a win on U.S. soil in '87, and that's going to be a theme over the next few days. Can you talk about the importance of that message to your players?

LUKE DONALD: Yeah, I think it's always important to rally around something. We always have things that we come up with that are important to us. History and our unity and celebrating what we've done in the past and the legends that have kind of come before us is really important.

Yeah, I wanted to focus that, yes, this is going to be a difficult challenge. We haven't come close to winning three out of the last four away Ryder Cups. It's not been very close at all. That's my job to bridge that gap.

But we have won quite a few times. We've won four times away since 1987 and come close a few other times as well.

But no, I think that's motivating to the guys that it can be done, it has been done, and again, we're here to try and do it again.

Q. Keegan, when you brought the guys out to the first tee, I'm just wondering, whose reaction were you most surprised by?

KEEGAN BRADLEY: Well, I wasn't really surprised; it was a powerful moment. You're looking around and seeing all the guys staring at what we were doing and so into it in such an emotional way. A lot of people have worked really hard to get to this point in their lives.

Like Luke said, you never know when your last Ryder Cup is. You never know if you're going to play one or 10 or whatever. For a lot of guys, whether it was the players, the caddies, the coaches, to be on that first tee in New York City at Bethpage Black at a Ryder Cup is a very powerful moment.

Sometimes in your life and in your career, you have to take



stock in what's happening around you. I think one of my biggest regrets earlier in my career wasn't enjoying things more. And for that moment out this morning, guys were really taking that in and enjoying it, and that was a beautiful thing.

Q. Luke, what is the single greatest piece of advice that you could give Keegan going into this, having done this before?

LUKE DONALD: That's a tough one, to give advice to someone you're trying to beat this week. It really is.

I think he nailed it on the head. You have to enjoy these moments. Being a captain is not easy. There's a lot of buildup. There's a lot that goes into it. It's more than just turning up this week and having your players and coming up with some pairings. There's a lot of intricacies to this. You can get engulfed and a little bit swallowed up sometimes in the little details.

I think all I would say is, both of us, we need to embrace it, enjoy it, because these are opportunities you don't get very often.

I was extremely fortunate to get this two years ago, and to have a chance to do it twice is incredible. It's certainly something I do not ever take for granted.

I would just say, enjoy this week, Keegan.

THE MODERATOR: Captains, thank you for your time today. We appreciate it.

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