

The Ryder Cup

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Farmingdale, New York, USA

Bethpage Black Course

Team USA

Ben Griffin

Media Conference



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THE MODERATOR: Ben Griffin is with us now at the 2025 Ryder Cup.

Ben, welcome to your first Ryder Cup. We'll jump into questions.

Q. This nickname, Benny Booms, who coined it? Do you like it? And do you think it's going to stick?

BEN GRIFFIN: I think Eric Lottary came up with it in his video that he did of me at the St. Jude in Memphis, FedEx St. Jude.

I don't know if it's going to stick or not but it seems like it stuck with you.

Q. I remember we spoke in Houston and that was your 12th straight week. You ended up playing 13 weeks straight trying to qualify for the Masters. Looking back six months ago, how do you encapsulate everything that's happened in your career?

BEN GRIFFIN: It's been busy. I've played a lot of events for sure. I feel like this year, I've played for a lot kind of every single week. I've built my game up a lot over the course of the season. If you look at where I was at at the start of the year, kind of one of those guys who had finished between 50 and 60 on the FedExCup the previous two seasons.

This year was more breakthrough. But going through the season, I was gradually getting closer and closer to kind of getting to the next step on -- of professional golf on the PGA TOUR of getting into the signature events, getting into the majors.

And I felt like I did a really good job of kind of letting my game not wander off and staying focused to the plan. Just continuing to build. So that's why I kind of competed 13 straight weeks was I was only going to play six but I was playing well and I was like, all right, I'm going to play in

México.

Started playing well. Had a couple Top 5s in a row in México and also the Cognizant; that got me into Bay Hill because of the Aon Swing 5. I'm in the Signature Events now, kind of, so now I have to add those to my schedule.

Going into the season I wasn't necessarily in those, so I was thinking about maybe taking a week off somewhere in there. I just continued to qualify.

Unfortunately I fell fractionally short of making the Masters, being 51 in the world, and it came down to Michael Kim's put on the last hole was the difference between him being in that field and me being in that field, which is really crazy for that to happen. I don't think that's ever really happened going into that last Masters cutoff.

So I had a couple weeks there. Then came out of those two weeks and won the Zurich Classic with Andrew. So now I've broken through as a PGA TOUR winner, built a lot of confidence, and then parlayed that into winning the Charles Schwab and top 10 at the PGA and all of these things; gradually got more and more momentum as the season kind of progressed, and continued to believe in myself and gained a ton of confidence every single week I played.

This summer was pretty much just consistent Top 15s. I feel like my last 13 or 14 events, I finished Top 15 almost every week and it's been really solid golf. I haven't been in the mix as much as I was kind of in the spring but then got back in the mix in Napa. Napa was a weird week because I felt like I was bonding with all my teammates most of the week and then I kind of woke up on 17 or 16 and I'm like, oh, I have a chance to win this now. Even though I had the lead all week.

It was an interesting week competing as a PGA TOUR player because a lot of those guys were kind of like me maybe the previous two seasons. They are grinding to try to finish in the Top 60 on the FedEx fall or keep their PGA TOUR card. For me that was a free week.

So I was going out there trying to gain confidence going



into this week, and sure enough got into the mix. It was good to feel some of those nerves and get those feelings down the stretch because there's no doubt I'm going to have some of those same feelings going into this week.

Sorry for the long answer.

Q. How would you, then, describe your comfort level here in the last couple days in terms of nerves, and have you picked up any kind of advice on staying calm come tomorrow?

BEN GRIFFIN: Yeah, I think everyone on this team is here for the right reasons. We are all very accomplished golfers and believe in ourselves a lot and have a ton of confidence. Just because I'm a rookie doesn't mean I'm nervous and don't know what I'm doing out there.

I feel very calm, composed, and honestly really excited. It's been really fun getting to know every guy on this team more. I knew everyone going into even before the selections were even going on with the Ryder Cup, and this team is actually much closer than what a lot is portrayed out there.

We're having a ton of fun in the team rooms. Captain Keegan is doing an awesome job of keeping us all focused on the task at hand but also making sure we embrace all these moments together. It's incredible with the fans early on this week. I know it's going to get even crazier.

But, yeah, I feel very relaxed and calm right now. But I know when I go through the tunnel on the first tee on Friday there's going to be a lot more emotions that go through but I'm ready for it.

Q. You've been grouped with Bryson in practice the last three days. What have you learned about him as a teammate and what have the crowds been like?

BEN GRIFFIN: I outdrove him once, so I'm feeling pretty good.

No, Bryson is amazing. He's been awesome to have on this team. He's a huge asset for us. Played a lot of golf with him this week. Had gotten to know him prior, not only in Napa, but previous to that. He's got an incredible amount of talent. It's been awesome honestly to talk to him about his thoughts on equipment and his process and learn about kind of how he goes through his process.

Because it's a lot different than what all of us do, if you just look at from an equipment side and green reading and everything like that. So it's been cool, because these team events, you finally feel comfortable asking other

competitors how they think about things, what they work on.

When you're playing in regular TOUR events, no one wants to really share much. You kind of stick to your own stuff.

So it's really cool to kind of learn from other guys and how they think their way around golf courses. And yeah, Bryson is just an example of one that's maybe a little bit more unique than the rest of the teammates.

Q. Guys in the past have said that it wasn't until their first Ryder Cup that they really felt like they sort of belonged or there's a sort of shift that happens when you get to that level.

Can you understand why guys say that?

BEN GRIFFIN: Yeah, I think there's maybe not necessarily like an intimidation factor when you first get on TOUR but there's definitely a separation you feel between being a rookie on tour and being a top player.

When you're a top player you're kind of around top players a lot, whether it's tee times on the PGA TOUR, you're grouped together all the time if you're a Major Champion or a PGA TOUR winner. So you're never really around the guys that are at the top.

My first two years on TOUR, I had not won so I had not played a round with Justin Thomas, or Jordan Spieth or Rickie Fowler. There was a ton of top names in golf at the time when I just turned pro that I just never would kind of see because I'm in different tee time waves.

The weekend you don't know what you're going to get, but if you're grouped in a certain tee time wave early and you finish at the same time as guys you're playing with, you're probably playing with those same guys if you have the same score on the weekend on Saturday.

So unless you get paired at the top on Sundays, you're not playing with a lot of those guys, so it's hard to build these friendships early on TOUR.

Now, when you start playing really well and you kind of work your way to a top player, you kind of get closer with the guys that you're closest around. I'm still friends with a lot of guys on the Korn Ferry Tour and a lot of guys that are grinding right now to keep their PGA TOUR cards, but now I'm also getting introduced to more guys that are elite players in this game.

I have a huge mix of friendships right now which is



interesting. You kind of -- I feel like you see that in all sorts of -- in any realm of life. Kind of your closest friends are the ones you're hanging out with the most or are around the most whether it's in work or outside of work, and you know, being a PGA TOUR golfer, it's pretty much work around the clock. Unless you're at home in an off-week, you don't know if other guys are going to be at home in that off-week or they are playing somewhere.

So you're kind of always around the guys that you're paired with, or if you're playing really well the guys you're with on the weekend in TOUR events. Even final rounds in TOUR events you're not talking to your competitor that much, especially if they are a top player, because you're trying to win the golf tournament.

It's hard to break in and become friends with guys that you're not -- that you haven't been around much. So if you look at a guy like me, I never went on tour until April. I played practice rounds with Justin Thomas before but I never had gotten really that close with him until kind of the summer.

And you look at other guys on the team, Scottie, Sam Burns, Collin I've known since junior golf; but everyone is on their own schedules. If I'm on a different tee time grouping at a TOUR event, I'm not going to see them very much. It's interesting how that dynamic works.

Yeah, I feel like I have friends that are grinding on the PGA of America, guys grinding on the Korn Ferry Tour. I've kind of had this pretty quick trajectory in golf where I still have friends that are trying to break through.

Q. These events tend to bring out different sides of players. Do you have a sense of what you'll be like in big moments when they happen on the course? Animated? Subdued? Do you know what you're going to feel?

BEN GRIFFIN: I definitely will feed some emotions off with the crowd. There's no doubt about that. We see it from every player. Hopefully we get some emotion from Cameron Young this week. I think we will.

But no, most TOUR events, you just don't -- you don't have that because we don't play match play very much, or ever, now. It's really just here. And at match play, the format just brings that out. Because in stroke play events if you're fist-pumping on Friday or Saturday, it not as meaningful. When you're fist-pumping because you made a putt to go one up with three to play it has a lot of meaning, because you're playing -- each and every match is so important.

You're playing, you know, five tournaments within this one

tournament every single round you're playing, if you're playing five matches. So it's a different -- mentally you're going through your rounds differently than you would in any other tour events. Because of that, emotions are going to come up more often. That's why everyone loves the Ryder Cup. And I'm sure I will have some great reactions out there. I hope to have a lot.

But I haven't planned anything out. I think it's all going to be raw and real and in real time and I don't know what my body is going to do in those certain moments but hopefully it looks cool.

Q. I'm wondering, are you aware of the Benny Booms nickname?

BEN GRIFFIN: I am.

Q. What is the origin store behind it?

BEN GRIFFIN: Like Adam said, Eric Lottary, he's a content creator. I think he started that in a video we did at the FedEx St. Jude Classic or St. Jude Championship for the Playoffs. I think people commented on it and people needed a nickname for me because I'm a new face, and I guess that one landed for now.

I've also heard a lot of Bethpage Bennies over the last like four months. I might like that one a little bit more. But hey, people can say what they want. I'm all into free speech.

Q. How much players on the U.S. Team are capable of driving the green on 1?

BEN GRIFFIN: Maybe 1. Right now it looks like the flags are going down. It's a little rainy but I bet if Bryson went out now he could do it. I witnessed it him do it two days ago. Everyone else is probably playing it to the left. I know I certainly am right now. The wind has to be right. It got to be hot. It's probably going to be pretty loud.

Q. What would you handicap the odds in the optimal conditions of Bryson driving the green there, if you gave him ten balls, is he going to hit the green?

BEN GRIFFIN: If I gave him ten balls in the right conditions if he knows he can get it there, he's going to hit three probably on the surface or on the fringe, and five are going to be in a bunker or on the green, and then add another two that are going to be like 20 yards left and maybe one or two right. I don't know. Maybe one bad one.

But he's hitting it pretty good right now. I played a lot with him and he's pretty confident.



Q. Golf is essentially a solitary sport, as you said, and Ryder Cup is one of those exemptions. How much have you bought into the team concept? What do you enjoy most about it, and how much are you looking forward to that first tee experience when it eventually comes around?

BEN GRIFFIN: Yeah, this has been one of the coolest weeks ever and it's one that I have not really experienced since the Wyndham Cup AJGA event in junior golf where I was competing against Scottie Scheffler and Sam Burns representing the west side of the Mississippi, and I was representing the east side. My teammates would have been Davis Riley, Doug Ghim, I believe -- Illinois -- I have to look at a map. A lot of PGA TOUR players played in that and that's the last time I experienced a true team-against-team event.

Actually, I take that back. When I was on the Canadian Tour, the Mackenzie tour at the time, it was the last year they called what they called the Aruba Cup and we ended up doing it in Cozumel or Cancun where the top players in Canada played the top 12 guys who finished on the Money List from -- or maybe it was top 10 -- from the Latin America Tour. So that was seven years ago, end of the summer of 2018.

So I haven't had that much experience, at least in the last seven years other than playing in the Zurich Classic if I felt like I had a team even though it was a small team with Andrew this past year. But it's been really cool, again, like learning from other guys and just being together with guys who all have the same common goal. Like, sure, every week on tour you have a common goal of trying to win the tournament but you're not working together to win that tournament. You're working individually to win that tournament and beat the guy you're talking to. So in this team format it's just really cool to pull for each and every guy on the team. Everyone is just closer because of it.

You know, a guy -- for example, a guy like Patrick Cantlay, he's going to go about his business on a normal PGA TOUR week, a week like this, I've gotten to know Patrick way more, and it's really cool to see him buy into this full team format and he'll do anything and everything for every single guy on this team and that's what's so cool and not seen because it's behind closed doors. It's really cool to see how close this team really is, and you know, I had no -- I didn't know what a Ryder Cup was really like.

Even at the start of this year or two years ago I don't know what previous teams were like. I don't know what other captaincies were like but seeing it right now, I mean, it's truly indescribable how kind of close we are kind of getting and how much time we spend with each other. We are on

our own schedules a little bit in terms of, like, working out and physio and sleep. But I tell you, we are together all the time and it's been really cool, and it's memories that I'll be able to have all the rest of my life.

Q. First tee, are you looking forward to that experience?

BEN GRIFFIN: Yeah, absolutely. It's going to be insane. I'm really excited to go through the tunnel and hear the crowd and fire off a good one.

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