

The Ryder Cup

Saturday, September 27, 2025

Farmingdale, New York, USA

Bethpage Black Course

Team Europe

Captain Luke Donald

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Pleased to be joined by European Ryder Cup Captain Luke Donald. We'll jump right into questions.

Q. You guys have eight of the top nine players in strokes gained putting this week. What has been working so well for you guys on the greens, or what did you guys figure out in the lead-up that's allowed to you dominate that part of the game?

LUKE DONALD: I wish there was a good answer for that one. It not like the guys -- I told the guys to practice this, to practice that.

We saw some stats about Bethpage where putting inside six feet had a little bit more relevance than most weeks. But no, these guys are just, when it comes to their preparation, I leave that to them. We give them a guide to the course and some of the demands and some of the things that have proven to be successful in past tournaments here.

But you know, these guys are 12 very able guys that know how to prepare and get ready. Certainly I'm not going to take credit for that. That is more about their grit and their determination to hole those putts more than anything.

Q. You're very close. What would it mean to you and the team to win on foreign soil and maybe even win in record-breaking style?

LUKE DONALD: Well, I mean, I said it at the beginning of week, we came here to try and win, to try and create history. We know it was going to be a very difficult task, looking at past Ryder Cups, away Ryder Cups. Three of the last four haven't been very close.

You know, I didn't expect to have as big a lead like this. A lot of things have gone well for us. But very happy with how strong our team is, the firepower they have, the intensity. It kind of the anti-fragile mentality.



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Things got tougher out there, and it fired them up even more. They were able to get better through those difficult moments out there. That is what makes me most proud as a captain, just their ability to take the punches and come back even stronger.

Q. Can you elaborate on some of the difficult moments? What was your perspective of the fan behavior, and did it cross a line in your opinion?

LUKE DONALD: It was loud. It was raucous. What I consider crossing the line is personal insults and making sounds when they are trying to hit on their backswings or very close to when they are trying to go into their routines. That did happen a little bit. It's happened at other Ryder Cups, too.

It's something we prepared for, and I can see, I think, how well they have dealt with it.

Q. I'm sure nobody on your staff expected Scottie Scheffler to start 0-4 in this Ryder Cup. How surprised are you by how that happened, and why do you think that's happened?

LUKE DONALD: I have the utmost respect for Scottie Scheffler and what he's done in the game. How he keeps continuing to be -- he's going to be one of the greatest players ever to play this game. The way he's been playing the last three or four seasons, it's incredible to watch. He's great for the game.

But yeah, it hasn't been his time. Obviously match play, playing with a partner, it is different. You know, there's different scenarios. You have to rely a little bit on your partners, as well.

So you know, it's hard to do it all by yourself but Scottie Scheffler is a champion.

Q. Could you give us a status on Viktor?

LUKE DONALD: Yeah, Viktor, he was feeling quite uncomfortable in the middle of the round this morning. He



got some physio. He was given a lot of anti-inflammatories during the round.

He finished. He was feeling okay. He went in to rest, and then he went back out to the range to try and hit some balls. And when he got to the driver, he hit one, and it was very painful. He hit another one, and it got even more painful. It was at that point that he thought, you know, I'm not going to be able to play to the level that I think I can.

So it was a last-minute decision to switch him out. Tyrrell literally warmed up for about ten minutes. We knew it was a possibility, but we were hoping that he would play.

He is on his way now to go get an MRI, another 20, 30 minutes away, and we'll see in the morning what he's like. It's definitely stiffened up a little bit. He would love to play, and he'll do everything he can to play.

Q. And secondly, as we do, since we haven't talked to your players, we bandied about the fact that the setup here usually is supposed to favor the home team but it seems like maybe this week it doesn't favor the home team and maybe actually favors your team. What's your thoughts on that?

LUKE DONALD: You know, obviously I think it's quite difficult these days to set up courses to favor one side. Look at statistically 1 through 12, there's never a big margin between the two teams.

So again, course setup usually, you're trying to gain a little bit here, a little bit there. It's pretty fair game. Obviously our guys have handled the setup very well.

Q. A lot of that noise that we heard was centered around Rory and Shane's match. For them in particular, it felt like it almost fired them up. How did you see them respond to all that in particular?

LUKE DONALD: Look, we talked about that in the lead up. We've talked about it for a long time.

I think people have individually different ways to deal with it. But you know, crowds have energy, and you can use it however you want. It's however you frame it.

There's a stimulus, a response, and in between that is how you decide what you want to do with it, okay. I think some people find that motivating. So, you know, sometimes the crowd going at you can be a motivator for some of these players, and I think Rory and Shane certainly looked like they were sort of almost enjoying the difficult environment out there.

Q. And secondly, we didn't see Rasmus at all today. With a big lead, maybe he could have gone out there, gotten someone some rest. What was the thought of keeping a lot of your top guys out there?

LUKE DONALD: Yeah, we not for one minute are ever complacent about this U.S. Team, where we are playing, the environment we are playing in. We knew they were going to come out hard and they did come out hard. We kept it close with a lot of gritty putting and some just amazing shots.

But you know, yeah, it was a very tough conversation to have to tell Rasmus he wasn't playing. It's one of those conversations you don't want to have as a captain, to let someone rest. But he took it like a champ, he really did. He understands the team comes before everything, and we wanted to come out strong this afternoon, and we did that.

Q. Haven't seen your picks yet, but I assume they are in since you're here. Could you at least give us some insight into your philosophy in how you set things up?

LUKE DONALD: Well, I have 12 very good players. So you know, singles, you have to go a little bit with gut instincts. We obviously have a big lead. So we have to think about that, and we imagine that the U.S. are going to come out pretty strong. We're trying to kind of match them with some strength.

But looking at the last six, seven guys, I feel like we have some great, strong, gritty players, as well. So it's hard to -- it's a hard thing to do with a big lead but I think we are very satisfied, myself and the vice captains, with that lineup.

Q. Why do you think Tommy Fleetwood has been such a menace to the U.S. side in the Ryder Cup?

LUKE DONALD: Tommy just loves the team environment. He just loves everything about his teammates, the time we spend together, the experiences that I try and put on for the team. He just revels in it.

You know, I think when you have a player as good as him in a comfortable mindset and in a happy mode, in a happy place, you know, that's a very dangerous Tommy.

Q. Was there a moment today where the mindset or emotion for you guys shifted from wanting to protect a lead to thinking, We can potentially put this out of reach?

LUKE DONALD: Our goal is always to win every session, you know, no matter where we are, and that will be our goal tomorrow.

You know, we love to do things that haven't been done before, and we've achieved quite a few things this week already. But the goal for me is still, we're close to the finish line, but we still have a long way to go. These guys are very aware of what the difficult environment is going to be like tomorrow.

So we're excited for the challenge, but our goal will be to win the session tomorrow.

Q. Independently of what happens tomorrow, how would you like to be remembered as a captain?

LUKE DONALD: Again, I think legacy has something to do with winning and losing, of course, but for me it's more important what my teammates think about me.

As I said from the beginning this week, my anchors, what's important to me, means a lot. How I go about things, the preparation that I go into and the trust that I've created amongst the team; the fact that I do things -- I try to do things from a humbling way and integrity way.

Integrity is really just doing the things you say you're going to do. So I gave the team a promise that I would prepare as best as I could for them over these last 19 months, and that's good enough for me, whatever the result is.

Q. One more about fan behavior. You mentioned that you had planned for this kind of thing. Now that the yelling has actually started, can you let us in on what those plans were and how they have paid off for the team?

LUKE DONALD: It's a lot of communication. You know, there's lots of other things we've done. We've learnt from each other, from past Ryder Cups.

Again, my preparation started when I became captain. You know, I didn't know what the team was going to look like. I had no idea that 11 from the 12 was going to be back. So I was preparing a wider group for all kinds of things.

I think it's a lot of communication. It's a lot of talking. And it's a lot of getting to know the players. You know, if you get to know what makes them tick, how they want to be talked to, I think that helps, too.

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