

Truist Championship

Sunday, May 11, 2025

Flourtown, Pennsylvania, USA

The Philadelphia Cricket Club (Wissahickon Course)

Sepp Straka

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome and congratulate the winner of the 2025 Truist Championship, Sepp Straka.

Sepp, this is your fourth PGA TOUR win, second this season, and with the win you move to No. 2 in the FedExCup. Can you just open up with some thoughts about how it feels to be back in the winner's circle?

SEPP STRAKA: It's great. This year has been pretty good to me. Just really grateful for all the hard work from the people that don't get to stand on that 18th green and celebrate.

The whole team, my wife, just the stuff that she does every day for me to be able to do this. My parents that sacrificed pretty much every trip -- they didn't take trips without golf trips. It was really special to get this win. Yeah, just really grateful for the people in my life that allowed me to play golf this way.

Q. Sepp, you talked yesterday about managing your emotions today, knowing you're going to feel terrible while you're trying to do it. What were you feeling when you stepped into that bunker on 18? First of all, what did you hit, and what were you feeling?

SEPP STRAKA: The drive was not a terrible drive, but the wind was a little off to the right and just turned it over a little too much, went in the bunker.

I was just hoping for a good lie walking down there, and I got that. We had I think about 212 hole. I can't remember exactly. Hit 4-iron, and my fairway bunker game has historically been pretty bad. This week it's been really good. I was able to kind of capitalize on that and make good contact.

Yeah, it was one of the better shots I hit this week.

Q. I wanted to confirm a couple things. Your brother was more heavily recruited than you. Is that correct?



SEPP STRAKA: Yes, yeah.

Q. And you're now supposed to go in the top 10 in the World Rankings. How do you go from that to becoming a top 10 player in the world? What do you credit that to?

SEPP STRAKA: I would say consistency, consistency of working at it regardless of where I was in my game. Junior golf, I wasn't all that good. I definitely had some talent. I could hit the golf ball fairly well, but very rough around the edges.

At Georgia I just felt like I kept getting better. Had a quick bout with the chipping yips my junior year and redshirted, but other than that, I felt like I just kept getting better.

After I graduated, same thing. I just kept trying to improve my golf game regardless of where I was compared to other people in my class because my high school class was pretty stacked. A lot of guys ended up finishing early and going onto the PGA TOUR, and I was definitely not one of those.

Regardless of where I was, I just kept trying to improve my golf game and hoped that at the end of it, it would be good enough to play out here.

Q. When you first came out, you were maybe a longer hitter who's kind of inconsistent. You've given up some distance but become very consistent. When did you kind of make the decision that giving up some distance for consistency was the way to go, and how did you go about it?

SEPP STRAKA: The big thing was switching to John Tillery as my swing coach. Just the stuff we worked on. Once I started working with him, my iron play got really good.

At that point, I was just very much concerned with getting the ball on the fairway, so I could take advantage of that with my iron game.

Yeah, it just kind of naturally happened. It's not a crazy switch. I went from like 174 ball speed to about 170 or so. But, yeah, I've been able to hit a lot of fairways in the last couple years, and I've been able to kind of take advantage



of my iron play that way.

Q. Sepp, you had mentioned earlier in the week that precision would be the key to getting around here. Were you happy with the way you handled that, and can you talk a little bit about how important it was?

SEPP STRAKA: Yeah, for sure. It's not the best ball striking week I've had. Off the tee the first two days, I hit it terrible. I felt like I had the high odds going out with the driver the second round.

Made a little bit of, kind of a tweak with my takeaway, just a little sequence thing. From then on, striking it really well with the driver.

Iron play was decent. I wouldn't say it was great, but the putter was just excellent this week. I didn't miss above the hole very often and was able to kind of take advantage of that with putting. Made a lot of midrange putts, and that's something you have to do when you want to win a golf tournament.

Q. What was your caddie situation today or this week? I think it was Drew was out there with you?

SEPP STRAKA: Yeah.

Q. How did that come about, and what was the relationship like?

SEPP STRAKA: Yeah, Dewey, he hurt his back on Thursday last week, my usual caddie. He told me on Sunday night that it was starting to get better, then it kind of locked up Sunday night.

He just kind of made sure that I had a backup plan in case it didn't get better. Reached out to Drew, who I play golf with a lot in Birmingham. Yeah, he immediately hopped on a flight and was up here ready to go. Very fortunate that I was able to do that obviously.

I've played a lot of golf with him, so I was very comfortable being beside him. It was a lot of fun having him on the bag really. Dewey's been here all week supporting us and just, and just really grateful for those two guys. Dewey was also there to hug me on the 18th green. Just really, really thankful.

Q. And what was Drew -- what was his plan for this week if he wasn't here with you?

SEPP STRAKA: He plays professionally. He's on the mini tours. So he didn't have a tournament this week, so it was easy for him to kind of change his plans and come up here

for the week.

Q. Sepp, on Friday you'd mentioned that you wished you'd had another 20 yards to handle the fairway bunkers that are out there 300 yards. Obviously you handled it well. What was the key for you driving and handling those fairway bunkers?

SEPP STRAKA: It was nice the weather cooperated for sure. If the weather was like Friday, I wouldn't have been able to hit it over any of those bunkers.

Yeah, my driver actually, I gained a little bit of speed over the weekend. That's awesome. I haven't looked today obviously, but yesterday some 174, 175 ball speeds, which is pretty unusual for me. Yeah, that was nice. I was hitting it out of the middle of the face on just about every tee shot.

Just knowing that that's the case, I was able to be a little bit more aggressive on the tee than I was the first two days.

Q. How did you kind of bounce back and settle yourself after the bogeys on 10 and 11?

SEPP STRAKA: Yeah, I felt like I did a really good job today of just taking every shot for what it is. I didn't really -- I looked at the leaderboards, but I didn't really pay too much attention. I knew, if I executed, I'd have a chance. I made a lot of mistakes out there. Hit a lot of good shots, but I made a lot of mistakes.

Fortunately, I was able to kind of keep centered and keep trying to just execute. Yeah, those two bogeys were pretty tough. I was in a pretty good spot there going into the back nine. Yeah, the three-putt on 10 was kind of up against the collar. So it was kind of a tough lag putt.

After that, I just told myself just to keep at it, keep just trying to execute each golf shot for what it is. Fortunately, that was good enough.

Q. Sepp, I saw you and Shane chatting when you were walking off the 1st tee. He was definitely one of the fan favorites on the property this week. What was it like playing this final round with him as you go toe-to-toe, and how did you stay in this mentally?

SEPP STRAKA: Yeah, it was great. Shane's an awesome guy. He's one of my favorites too. So it was fun to hear support for him out there.

He's one of my favorite people to play with. He's a fiery competitor but a really good friend as well. It was really fun battling with him. Just grateful for him.



Q. Just was wondering how you kind of feel going into a major championship off of a win and how you perhaps feel about playing a big event like this the week before one of the toughest events in golf?

SEPP STRAKA: Last week I actually didn't touch a golf club. So this week was kind of a see what I got situation. Fortunately the putter cooperated early and kind of kept me in it the first couple rounds. Then my ball striking started feeling better and better.

Really looking forward to kind of continuing that ball striking and just trying to keep getting better every day.

Q. They rerouted the course to make 16, 17, and 18 sort of the teeth of the course, and that's kind of how it played out. You go par, par, par, and he goes bogey, par, bogey. You win by two. What did you think about the setup, and did you think that it was a fair test? What do you think about that last, those three finishing holes and what they ask of you?

SEPP STRAKA: Yeah, it was awesome. It was really -- you know, teeing off on 1 was really nice because honestly it felt like, as you kept going, the round kept getting harder and harder with a few easier holes sprinkled in.

I like the routing a lot. I love the way it finishes naturally with 10 and 11. I bogeyed those two holes, so maybe that wouldn't have turned out too good for me.

No, I thought they did a really good job. There was a little more room for infrastructure out there on 18 as well, which probably helped. It's a really cool place.

I think it was fun to play it in kind of four different conditions, the first day being very benign and then kind of the rain, then the wind, and then today it kind of felt -- started getting a little firmer but not quite as much wind. Really fun to play the course in all four different conditions, and it kind of made you think a lot, especially teeing off.

Q. Sepp, I saw you -- I saw Rory waiting for you at the end there. That was a nice moment. What did he say to you?

SEPP STRAKA: He told me at least this win counts for Ryder Cup points. Yeah, really, really happy for that. I've been kind of behind in the points because of that win at Amex not counting.

I knew that, if I just kept playing good golf, I would have a chance to be there. I'm sure this will probably help me out with the rankings a lot. So very grateful, and hopefully I can keep the good play going and keep getting some more

points.

Q. You mentioned how hard you've worked to get to this point, but when you think back to a couple years ago, you were outside the top 200 in the world. Now you're a four-time winner, top 10 player in the world. What emotions come to mind as you think about how hard you've worked to get to this point?

SEPP STRAKA: Yeah, just very grateful because it's not just my hard work, my coaches -- I switched to John Tillery right about that time, and Tim Yelverton, I've been working with him about a year. The work that they put in day in and day out is very special, and it makes me -- it makes it easier for me to go out and try to get better because I know that they're doing everything they can to help me out.

I think it's just kind of a culmination of a lot of people putting a lot of work that's gotten me to this point.

Q. Did you also change the setting on your driver before the third round?

SEPP STRAKA: No, the setting's the same.

Q. Do you remember exactly when you started with Tillery?

SEPP STRAKA: That would have been -- it was about three months before the Honda win that I had back in 2022.

Q. Can you just talk about this whole experience having this event here in Philadelphia, and how would you say the fans were this week?

SEPP STRAKA: It was incredible. It was awesome. You always hear about Philly sports fans, and it really is true. They get into it. They were out there during the practice rounds all the way through the end on Sunday.

Just really special. You could really feel that everybody was happy to have the event here. It made it so much fun to play in front of those fans.

I rooted for the Eagles a little bit last year because my Bulldogs had a lot of guys on defense there. Every time I heard a Go Birds, it was kind of fun to hear that. No, it was an awesome experience to play in front of the Philly fans. I think next year maybe the PGA is coming back here. So really looking forward to that opportunity.

Q. What were your first impressions when you saw the winner's trophy, that cricket bat?



SEPP STRAKA: That's pretty cool. I think that's a one-and-done. That's going to be my most special trophy for sure.

THE MODERATOR: We'll end it there. Thank you all for your questions.

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