

**PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE**  
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**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER**

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**JACK RYAN:** We would like to welcome Scottie Scheffler into the interview room here at the Hero World Challenge.

Scottie, welcome back to Albany, obviously runner-up each of the last two years. Can we just get an opening comment on being back here, a place where you've had some success in the past?

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** Yeah, it's good to be back here in Albany. It's a fun finish to the year. I mean, yeah, it's tough not to want to come to the Bahamas this time of year. In Texas it's pretty cold. So coming here in this nice warm weather, it's definitely a lot of fun. Yeah, should be another fun week.

**JACK RYAN:** As part of the changes to the schedule, obviously this week coming in between PGA TOUR seasons what are you looking to accomplish this week as we move ahead to the 2024 PGA TOUR season?

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** Yeah, I think it's good just to see where my game's at. I wouldn't say I'm as prepared for this event as I would be for a regular Tour event, this just being my first tournament coming back from a pretty extended break. So just looking to kind of get things running again, get my feet wet out on the course and just play some tournament golf.

**Q. Scottie, you mentioned we haven't seen you in a while. What did you do over the break? Anything fun?**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** Not a whole lot. It was nice. Yeah, we stayed in Europe for a week after the Ryder Cup and then we, Meredith and I, went on a vacation a couple weeks ago, and we did family stuff for Thanksgiving.

Other than that, just enjoyed some time at home with family and friends. Just enjoyed being kind of just living a more normal schedule day to day, albeit not having to go to work, which was nice. Just kind of getting some rest during the day, playing some other sports and making sure I was staying in the gym, staying working out, but I didn't touch a club for a good portion of the time there.

**Q. Did that time off give you any time to reflect on the season you've had, just a little more distance from it? Statistically one of the best seasons we've seen on Tour in a really, really long time.**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** I don't know if I'm much of a reflecter. I think when the time comes



for me to not be playing golf, I try not to think about it. Actually, I don't even know if I try not to think about it, I try to immerse myself in other things.

That's kind of what I did. I really just felt like it was a good time for a break. I feel refreshed kind of going into this tournament. I'm excited to be back out here and playing again. I'm excited to be back in competition mostly.

**Q. Scottie, you just said that you've had a fairly extended break after a long time. How difficult is it to keep your mind off of what is happening off course in global golf? There's so much happening, people stepping down from policy boards and people coming in, talks about merger, not merger and so on. How difficult is it to keep your mind off it, because if you didn't, it wouldn't be a break?**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** I mean, a lot of that stuff was news to me. I didn't really know any of that stuff was going to happen. So, I mean, usually some sort of notification on my phone would be the only time it really pops up just because I'm not really around many people from the PGA TOUR when I'm in my off time. I still see some of my buddies at home that live in Dallas, but outside of that I don't really see too many guys that we see almost every week out here when those discussions are more prevalent. During the time off we had a few talks with some players, but other than that, I really wasn't doing too much.

**Q. What's your schedule like to start the year after Sentry? You've got to go to Kapalua, I assume --**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** Yeah.

**Q. -- but after that?**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** Yeah, that's another tournament I definitely don't want to miss. So I'll go play Sentry and I think I'm playing AmEx, and I'll kind of get into the meat of the schedule. I'll mix in a few non -- what are we calling them this year?

**JACK RYAN:** Signature **events**.

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** I'll mix in a few non-signature events as the year goes on. I haven't made it too deep in my schedule but I have a pretty good idea of what it'll look like at the beginning of the year. I'll obviously play Phoenix again and then play every signature event that I can.

**Q. Can you speak briefly to just seeing Tiger back out again? I mean, this guy has had so many comebacks, he doesn't go away, he keeps at it. Pretty inspiring?**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** It's just a lot of fun for me to see him out here. You know, I love looking down the range and seeing him hit balls and hearing that sound. He's still got the same sound, which is amazing. I feel rusty coming off two months without a tournament. He



goes almost a year at a time and he comes back and he plays fine golf.

For him to come back and make cuts in majors and do what he has been doing in his comebacks, I don't think -- it's really hard to comprehend until you do it out here. You need to be -- to make a cut in a major, you really have to be on your game. I couldn't imagine taking a year off and going to try to make the cut at the Masters.

Getting back into competitive golf is something you can't really simulate at home, it's so much different. For him to be able to do it like he has been doing it for so many years is pretty miraculous.

**Q. One last thing. You said you haven't really been too immersed in the Tour business, but is there a sense, is there conversation, have you been privy to anything in which Tiger's been involved and just the amount of effort he's spent, what's going on behind the scenes? Seems like he's doing a lot for the Tour.**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** Yeah, he's doing a whole lot. For us as players, I mean, Tiger's not someone that's going to go at anything 50 percent, he's going to go 100 percent into whatever he's doing and right now that's a lot of stuff for the Tour.

As a player, I'm extremely grateful for what he's doing. He has our best interests in mind and he's not going to compromise when it comes to what's best for the players. His voice definitely holds a lot of weight. So for us as players, it's great to have him on our side, it's great that he wants to do this stuff.

That's another thing, he doesn't have to do that. He could easily sail off into the sunset, never touch a club again, never do anything again, just go live his life and enjoy kind of the second half of his life and do whatever, hang out with his kids. But he continues to come back and want to compete. He continues to do what's best for the players and the PGA TOUR. So it's pretty inspirational for the rest of us that are involved in the game with what he's been doing right now.

**Q. Scottie, I know you said you don't like to look back, but given your season this year, what you accomplished, not just the wins but sort of the strokes gained mark that you set ball-striking, that type of thing, how would you grade this season?**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** Yeah, I thought I played pretty well. I feel like I said it a few times, I feel like I could have won a few more times than I did. Still able to win twice, won a signature or designated or whatever it was called last year.

**JACK RYAN:** We just went over this.

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** What was it called last year, though?

**JACK RYAN:** Last year, fine, it was called a designated event.



**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** There you go, designated, won a designated event last year. This year it's just a regular event, isn't it?

**JACK RYAN:** Yeah. Full field.

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** We're learning all the terms. Jack, he's going to coach me up after this.

Yeah, I was able to within THE PLAYERS. I was very proud of my consistency, I think that was the thing I was definitely the most proud of. I was near the top of most of the events that I played in. And I'm sure if you looked at like a winning percentage against the other guys out here in terms of like if you look at an individual win loss, it was very good and I'm very proud of that consistency, but like I said, I definitely want to win more.

**Q. And you have a vote for Player of the Year. Who would you vote for?**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** I don't know, I don't think it's in good taste to vote for yourself.

Honestly, I think with the way Jon played at the beginning of the year with his four wins and one of them being a major, I think these are pretty -- I mean, we play this game to win. Yeah, the consistency's great, but you want to win golf tournaments and Jon was able to do that at such a high clip at the beginning of the year. If it was something that, you know, if he finished off the year that way, it probably wouldn't even be a discussion. But since it was six, seven months ago, eight months ago, whatever it is, people aren't thinking about it as much, but he was pretty unstoppable to start the year.

**Q. Scottie, you were talking about Tiger and being amazed how he's done what he's done coming back like that. As someone who strikes the ball well like you do, what do you make of his at this point? Is that the key? Is that why he's able to do it, he's still an elite ball-striker, or is there more to it than that?**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** I mean, I think he's just a freak athlete. I would say in my head, I never got to see Nicklaus up close but in my head Tiger I think is the best to ever play the game. The way he did it winning at such a high clip and for so many years is pretty insane.

When you watch him play, he really didn't have any weaknesses. He won 82 times, 15 majors? I mean, and when you watch him play, like I even saw -- the first time I played with him was the Masters we had during COVID. It was in the fall and he wasn't really at the top of his game. It was the day he made a 10 on No. 13, or sorry, No. 12 at Augusta.

He's just different than everybody else. Anybody else would kind of say, oh, whatever, I've already won this tournament four, five times, whatever he has and just kind of pack it in for the last six holes. He turns around and he birdies five out of the last six. He hit still to me or still to this day it's the purest iron shot I've ever seen on 16. He got mad still, and he's so



competitive and he's so driven and he's so good, he's different. He's different than the rest of us.

**Q. Even for somebody who plays at such a high level like you and obviously sees a lot of other guys strike the ball very well, Tiger is still at a level that is -- that is the same or maybe even above?**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** I mean, I don't know what he's at right now, I haven't seen him hit a ball in a while, but yeah. Like I'm telling you, the shots that he hits when he hits them well, like it's pretty inspirational for me to see. I learn a lot just by watching him because he always has a shot in mind, and there's not a shot that he can't hit and there's not a shot that he's not willing to try and hit, either. So when he's out there playing and competing, I can only imagine what it was like at the peak of his game. I'm seeing him kind of in the twilight of his career, But I'm sure at the peak it was pretty fun to watch. YouTube I guess doesn't really do it justice.

**Q. I wonder in the time you had off if you were able to reflect from a personal perspective on the Ryder Cup and the Saturday morning in particular, obviously the feeling you had then. Did you take time to reflect on that and how do you plan to use that going forward?**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** Well, judging by your accent, you probably appreciated that week a little more than I did. So nice question, that's good. (Laughs.)

Let's see. As far as the week went, you know, I played -- in alternate shot I struggled, I didn't play my best, and the best ball in singles I played really pretty nicely. I went up against Jon in both those matches. Sometimes you just get beat and it's not a fun feeling, I wish it could have gone differently. But like we go out for that first alternate shot match and Jon was just firing on all cylinders and unless a lot of us are playing really, really good golf, it's hard to keep up with. Like that first match Friday morning, we just went out and got beat, Jon just played great.

And then go out in best ball in the afternoon, we played pretty good and then he eagles 16 and 18 to halve the match with us. It's one of those things, you walk off 18, Brooks and I had two really good looks for birdie inside of 10 feet so odds are we're going to make one of those to what we think to win the match and then he makes the putt. It's like, okay, that's a halve. Just played pretty good, just happened to get nipped again.

It's one of those tournaments where the guys pulling off those kind of miraculous shots, those are the guys that win that tournament. It's not a good feeling to be on the losing end. I'm 1-1 in the Ryder Cup, and going into Bethpage in a couple years, first of all I'm hoping to be on the team, but I'm definitely hoping to win a few more matches than I did this year.

**Q. I remember you going down the line in Rome to the European players and congratulating them. How important was that to you to show that respect to them?**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** Well, yeah, it's one of those things where the heat of competition is a ton of fun. I've been fortunate enough, Jon's been a guy that I've played in almost every Ryder Cup match. That's one of the things I reflected on. I was like I really feel like I've played against Jon a lot in this format and I think I've played seven matches and I've played him in five of them and we've halved three, he's won one and I've won one.

It's just one of the things, it's one of the great joys about our sport is being able to have those battles. Those are the things I'm sure at the end of my career I'll look back on most fondly is the friendships that are made through that and the joy of the competition.

So when the tournament ends -- you know, I'm not talking to him Monday through Sunday, it's all business. When the tournament ends and they beat us, take your hat off, shake hands and congratulate them. There's really nothing else to do. We got beat and as a sign of respect, just take your hat off and say good job, that's it.

**Q. Scottie, right before the Ryder Cup, you started working with Phil Kenyon on putting. How much time have you spent with him since then and is there anything you're trying to implement this week?**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** So I would say the stuff that we put in place when I saw him before the Ryder Cup is the same stuff we're working on now.

I saw him two full days in Dallas before Ryder Cup and since then he's come to Dallas one for time for two days to work, and he's here this week. A lot of it's been done over video.

Putting's one of those things, I think what Phil has helped me the most with is just getting a clear mind. Right now I feel like my mechanics are in a good place to where I can use my athletic ability instead of using it more as a crutch, kind of overusing my athletic ability.

It's kind of hard to explain, but I felt like I was using too much, like too much hands and stuff like that in my stroke. That's something I also battled with my swing when I was in college. I found myself in certain mechanical positions in my swing that I was having to use my hands so much that they became more of a hindrance, if that makes sense.

My swing in college I would get really far underneath and I would feel the club back there, feel it open and I would use my hands and I fought a hook all of college from swinging underneath and using my hand to flip it over.

My putting was something where I got out of position in my backstroke and I was having to use my hands too much. That's where I got a little bit of the heel strike that I fought a little bit this year and some pulled putts.

So now I feel like Phil has helped me get into place where my mechanics are good enough where I can kind of turn off and use my athletic ability to kind of help, whereas now my



swing, I'm in a place where my mechanics are good enough to where I can use my hands.

Sometimes you'll see me have weird finishes and stuff like that, but that's because I'm just getting so into the shot that I can use my athletic ability to hit good shots and not use it too much to where I'm either saving it or hitting poor shots.

Now I feel like I'm in a place with my putting where I can use my feel, my instincts to kind of turn off and just go there and try and hit putts and be OK with the result whether it goes in or doesn't.

**Q. Scottie, you spoke about Tiger and how much you guys appreciate what he's doing for the Tour and for the players, but just consider this scenario, that after coming from all these, his next comeback, he's not able to play that well and he's struggling on the golf course. What I want to ask is how important will it be for you guys to still see him inside the ropes and playing even if he's not the old Tiger Woods?**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** For us, especially myself being someone that hasn't competed against him too much, it's definitely great just to see him out here playing. I think it's great for the game of golf and I think it's great for Tiger to come out and still compete. It's obviously something that he loves. For us to be able to see him do it is still a great experience and we're glad to have him back out.

As far as his play goes, I mean, that's something you'll have to ask him. Tiger's probably not going to be teeing it up too much if he doesn't feel like he can win. But with that being said, I'm sure with his mental attitude, I'm sure he feels like he can win no matter how he's playing.

We'll see what the golf game's like, but like I said, it's just great to see him back inside the ropes and we're greatly appreciative of the stuff he's doing for all the players off the course, but it's even more exciting to see him inside the ropes competing again.

**Q. Scottie you mentioned having about a month off and spending some time with the wife and traveling. Just wondering, you'll have some time off after this before Sentry, what are you planning, what are you working on? Anything coming up in the next month or so that you've got going on?**

**SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER:** I'll just continue to fine tune stuff going into Kapalua. Now it's at the point where it's more full time golf stuff, so going through full practice routine, all that kind of stuff and just getting ready for the season to start.

**JACK RYAN:** All right. Scottie, thank you very much for your time.

