

PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE
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ADAM SCHENK

MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Adam Schenk to the 2025 RSM Classic. Adam, you're fresh off your victory at the Butterfield Bermuda Championship. How have the last few days been for you?

ADAM SCHENK: A whirlwind, just same stuff that everybody says when they win for the first time or multiple times or haven't won in a while. You wonder if it's ever going to happen.

It finally did. Putting in a lot of work over the last couple years, not seeing a lot of results. Then you start to wonder, "hey, is what I'm doing ever going to work?" You never really know, especially when the results aren't going your way.

But in the end that last putt dropped and that was a nice, nice time not to get a big gust of wind, albeit it was already pretty windy, but if it would have gusted more, it could have broken a couple so fortunate time to have a four footer go in.

MODERATOR: How many texts did you receive? Did you have time to finish them or go through them all?

ADAM SCHENK: I haven't started. Long story short, I've kind of had text phobia over the last like five months. I probably have 300 messages that I've needed to send and I know once I start, I can't just like "like" the message and move on, or say "thank you!" Hey, thank you, have to ask, hey, how are you and Jean and the kids? How's your job going? I know you got a new job, what's going on in Memphis or wherever they're at, because then they respond to me and I'm back in the same boat I started in.

I think I have like 700-some on my phone unread right now, albeit some of those are group messages, I'm sure. But I will take some time and respond properly and not just -- love to just go through and "like" all the messages, but like those people are important to me, and some I'll have to figure out who the contacts are because I am a lazy saver. Okay, I'll save their number. I'll remember who that is when they text me, and then you get 20 of those and I don't have any idea.

But I also haven't played well in a long time, so when you get over that big a stretch over a period of time and then you play well, then everybody wants to text you and say hi because everybody's been a part of it, my whole journey, so it means a lot to have that support.

MODERATOR: Yeah. It took you 243 starts to break through and get your first victory on Tour. What has this past weekend done for your confidence?

ADAM SCHENK: Just validated what I've been doing has been going in the right direction and that it is possible. I always -- it's possible. I almost won several times. Like, am I good enough to win on Tour?

The answer is astoundingly yes because I've come that close. Whether it happens or not is a different story. It's not being said in a cocky way. Anybody in this field, I don't care if they're amateur, they're still able to win this golf tournament, which just happened at La Quinta. Who won the --

MODERATOR: Michael Brennan.

ADAM SCHENK: No, Nick Dunlap. Nick Dunlap just won and he's won one or two more times since then. One more time, so two total.

Everyone out here is good enough to win. Now whether you do it or not is another question that needs to be asked. And sometimes it works out in your favor and other times you can be good enough to win on Tour and it just never happened in a sense.

The last thing that I really, really wanted to do in golf was I've done everything else kind of, for a career grinder, 243 starts and never winning, 242 starts never winning. Got the monkey off my back and I would love to go do it again.

MODERATOR: So you jumped up to No. 67 in the FedExCup Fall. No. 51 through 60 at the end of this week will serve as the Aon Next 10 for 2026 AT&T Pebble Beach Pr-Am and the Genesis Invitational. Is that something you're thinking about going into this week or are you satisfied being in the top-70?

ADAM SCHENK: I would have taken top 70 at the start of last week, start of last fall, middle of last season, end of last season. Gosh, I hate to say it, beginning of last season I would have taken top 70.

I always thought like I still had some gas left in the tank, and I really had a good year, great year two years ago. I really thought I could repeat that and then had the worst two years of my career possibly. It started with putting. If I would have putted better I think it would have been a lot different two years, so I should have started putting one-handed two years ago and it might have been a little different story.

Honestly, it's true. I just made some putts last week and didn't do things all that differently. The conditions helped me immensely. If it would have been blowing 10 or 20 miles an hour, would I have won? I have no idea. Obviously playing good golf. I made five cuts that row so that's huge for me after having two periods of six missed cuts in a row two times last year, which I didn't know about but that's -- that hurt the confidence a little bit hearing that in the press conference last week, but I can start a new streak of good things.

Q. Adam, congratulations. Have you always been pretty good under adverse



conditions like wind?

ADAM SCHENK: I like to generally think the harder the course is or the harder conditions are, that favors me.

With that being said, I think I've also shot in the 80s two times last year, maybe Pinehurst and somewhere else. There's always an exception to every rule, but generally the harder the course is, the more thinking that's involved, the better I would do over the course of a period of time.

Q. You just referred to yourself as a career grinder. With the changes, and I'm sure you hope that this victory is kind of a launching pad for you to kind of stay in that level where year in and year out you're going to be not really worried about your job, but with the changes coming, the reduced fields, the reduced number of exemptions, are you concerned that guys who are in your category before you won, it's going to be harder and harder for them to make it in this game? Do you think fair, unfair the changes coming?

ADAM SCHENK: I mean, time will tell. I'll say one thing that's definitely not making it any easier is how much better everybody's gotten. It was tough eight years ago, but I would be really interested to see like a statistical analysis of how much better everybody's gotten over the last eight years because it is different. Like you have to play good to make a cut out here.

If you just play mediocre, average golf like eight years ago, you're going to be around the cut number unless you do something silly or you make two or three 40-footers and chip in you'll probably be OK.

But like now, if I come out here and play just OK average golf, like it's hard to make the cut. Like I've played a lot of tournaments this fall and played pretty nice and made the cut by one or two because the cut ended up being T-52 or T-49 because of the T-65 rule now and there's 28 guys that tied for 51.

So I know conditional status is 101 to 125, but I was on the PAC two years ago and projected they're not -- you're still going to get a lot of PGA TOUR starts, especially 101 to 115, and I believe 116 to 125. I don't know what happens -- is there a 126 to 150 category anymore? Is that a thing or not? It still is a thing?

Q. There's so many other categories that there's some tournaments you would be hard pressed to get a spot (inaudible)?

ADAM SCHENK: All the categories, yeah, yeah. I don't know what they projected like the 116 to -- or the whole group, 101 to 125 was broken down, 101 to 115 was going to lose one and a half starts maybe and 116 to 125 was going to lose like maybe just over two starts.

It will be interesting to see whether that holds true because everybody's playing more than they ever played just with how important it is to play during the year because if you're top -- you don't really have to play again.

If I'm top-50 I'll probably still play three or four times in the fall because I do enjoy playing, I really enjoy this event.

But it will be interesting to see what happens. I don't -- if you finish 120, yeah, you're still going to Q-School, right, but you're still going to get a lot of starts on Tour next year. So I don't think it's the absolute end of the world, but it's not getting any easier in any direction, I'll say that.

Q. Is it not easier because of the quality of the entirety of the PGA TOUR membership or the new categories? Do you think even if the categories hadn't changed it would still be hard given what you said is improved quality of golf?

ADAM SCHENK: Absolutely. Like a lot of the tournaments, I don't know maybe Sony -- some of the information I'm going to say up here may be really false, but I want to say it's a 144 field. Now it's going to 120, so we've got 24 spots we're losing. I guess there's no Monday qualifiers. The section winner may be gone as well. There's two sponsor exemptions that are going to go off the list.

It's not losing as many spots. There's five less Korn Ferry spots. Used to be 25 cards, now there's 20. So a lot of the spots you're getting back in a sense.

But I don't -- I don't think it's going to be dramatic maybe as everybody thinks it is, so the overreaction Monday, but it will just be interesting to see. I think you'll still get a great amount of starts if you're 117 on the FedExCup. If you play good and you're 117, I think that you have a great opportunity to keep your card.

Q. I was really intrigued to see your bag setup after you won. Other than your wedges, all your clubs are like pre-2018. Someone told me that you're one of the most notorious gear switchers on Tour but it's not to new equipment, it's like a rotation of old stuff. What is your relationship with equipment and how do you get into that?

ADAM SCHENK: It's complicated. Yeah, a lot of old stuff. I like to -- I like to tinker but I usually play the same clubs most of the time.

I'll rotate drivers. I swing the club pretty fast, a lot of guys out here do. I don't hit it the furthest. Like Rory drives the ball 20 yards further than me in the air, probably more if he wants to. There's a lot of young guys out here that hit it much further than I do.

I generally set up my bag to go straight. So like my driver, I launch it lower so I need spin. So I have a lot of speed, kind of created in a little inefficient way, but like I have to have enough spin.

So like the older equipment a lot of time goes shorter for me and it spins more, so that's why I generally set up my bag that way.

Or if it's the John Deere Classic and it's 95 degrees, I can swing 124 or 125 pretty easily. If you're at Pebble Beach teeing off and it's 52 degrees, good luck. You're not going to be able to swing that same driver that fast. You're going to be able to swing 116, 17 maybe. So like that driver setup that you have when it's the 95 degrees is not going to perform the same.

So I don't know why -- I would say anyone, that's a stretch. I'm not going to play the same driver if it's 52 degrees or if it's 95. I'm going to have to make some small change or I'm going to have to swing the driver that I would play at John Deere significantly different or I'm going to lose it really, really, far right once or twice.

I see it happen a lot early in the mornings, especially when the ball's wet. I feel like the balls nowadays spin a little bit less, too. I play an old ball, 17v, that spins a little more.

You just, especially when the golf ball's wet in the morning, it will not draw. It's a lot harder to draw everything nowadays, so that's one reason why the older stuff just draws a little bit easier for me, less spin. It doesn't go as far but it works for me.

That's why most of the guys cut the ball here now I think.

Q. How did you settle on your irons last week? I know 3-wood, 2-iron and what was it, the 210 through 5-iron, and then the old Mizuno 18 SCs, and then I saw an MMC in your bag as well in the 8-iron.

ADAM SCHENK: Yeah, that 2-irons got -- I've got probably three different grips on the clubs for no other reason than I just didn't change them before I got home.

Stuff doesn't necessarily -- maybe it matters to some people. Like if you think it matters, then maybe it matters.

To me, I've hit all those clubs plenty of times. I was having problems with my 8-iron not spinning enough so that was the first 8-iron that I found. I was looking for the split cavity 8-iron, I couldn't find a new one. The one new one I have has a big rock mark in the middle of it. I was like, I don't know if that really matters but it's big enough to where it could.

So I made my first cut ever on the PGA TOUR, funny enough, with those Mizuno MP 18s MMCs, multi material cavity. That's the 8-iron that I played in Jackson, Mississippi my first cut ever on Tour and that was my third or fourth event with it in the bag. My other 8-iron was just going way too far, not spinning enough. So that was in there.

And the long irons, the Ping i210s, they're so nice to hit. You can hit them anywhere on the face and they just go pretty darn straight.

And you were having to hit the ball so easy last week. Like that 4-iron I hit, like if I had to hit like a low hard 4-iron, I would have played the Mizunos, but since I was able to hit the really smooth shots and take spin off of them, you could hit those Pings anywhere on the face and they go about the same distance and relatively straight.

Q. Along this journey, what was the low point for you, do you know?

ADAM SCHENK: Several to choose from, but there would be a lot of times when I would be so frustrated but I weirdly enough -- I think some golfers do, they just don't know it, kind of enjoy the struggles. Like gives you a process, something to work towards.

Like I don't -- I kind of just like to do my thing. If I won the U.S. Open, like if nobody ever talked to me about it, that would be OK with me. Like I don't play golf for attention. The money's great, but I just really enjoy it. I enjoy tinkering, I enjoy learning about golf more than anything. And if it's to my detriment a little bit, sometimes I don't really care.

I'm going to learn from it, be better from it in the end. People may agree, disagree. And I may be wrong, I may be going down the wrong path for a second, but I'm pretty quick at figuring that out sooner rather than later.

So I might try something that doesn't work, but then in my mind I'm not thinking about, hey, what if I try this other driver, would that work?

I'll try it and then if it's better, I'll put it in. If it's about the same, if it's not, then I won't. But I won't not try it and then maybe be playing that driver during a tournament and then wondering the whole time, hey, is something else better?

That way in my mind I've tried other things so I know when I'm playing something that it's the best for me that week. There's no question of wondering if I put a club in play, there's no like, oh, I wish I wouldn't have put that club in play, or I wish I would have played that one.

If I put a new club in play, that thought never crosses my mind. I'll tell David, my caddie, I'm like, I'm going to put a new club in play once in a while, but I promise you I'm only doing it if I think it's better or I think I'm gonna play -- I'm never going to tell you, hey, I wish I wouldn't have put this club in play or I wish I would have done that.

If I put a club in play, I'm doing it because it's the best chance I have to play well. So that's a big mental hurdle to get over because I can, because I've done it so many times. For I don't want to say an average guy out here, but for another guy out here to do that, that's a pretty big mental hurdle to get over. Like I could play --

I was joking, my coach from Purdue, he's at South Carolina now, Rob Bradley's caddying for me this week because he always caddies for me this tournament and it's nice for me to get some time with my coach and he gets to see me get some tournament reps in, which is

when you really can learn some things rather than, hey, it's nice on the range, we go play a fun round of golf.

Low point, I don't even know if I answered your question. I didn't.

I drove back from the airport several times. It's easier, I have a golf barn on my dad's farm that I fixed up. It's a massive barn. Ryan Dunn, a buddy, a really great friend of mine fixed it up and half of it's finished, half of it's not. I am going to finish the other half of it now that I have made a nice check and build a chipping and another putting area, so hopefully my chipping and putting statistics will improve.

But I would stop by the airport on my way home at midnight or 11:00 a.m. or 1:00 in the morning from Evansville, which is on the way to my house, and sometimes I would get these, OK, this swing thought, this idea, this new -- I call it a new theory.

Nothing's really new, it's just a different way to think about things sometimes. And I would come from Indy. I'd have to go past my house, 15 minutes to my golf barn and hit balls for 20 or 30 minutes just to try something because if I don't stop there and just go to sleep, try to go to sleep, I'm going to be thinking about it for probably a couple hours. And it's always hard to go to sleep sometimes after a long drive, so that would help me relax and allow me to go test what I'm thinking.

And there for two years I did not a lot of different things but some different things and didn't find a lot of success with really any of it, but found something two or three months ago and kind of led to this moment.

Solving my problems on the fly, going to the golf barn and it still sucks. Then I'm sitting there going, door open to my bay hitting out of the building into the darkness going, wow, this isn't it either. I guess I'll try again tomorrow, I'll shut the door and go home. So those were some of the lowest moments.

Q. When's the last time that you hit balls --

ADAM SCHENK: After Wyndham. I flew from Charlotte to Evansville so that was a shorter trip so I didn't have to drive past my house. That was an on-the-way trip, that was easier. I probably stopped there, hit a few putts and hit a -- hit balls for probably 20, 30 minutes and that was the last time I've done that.

Q. Did winning feel as good as you thought it would?

ADAM SCHENK: Yes. It was as much relief probably just from the conditions standpoint. Like everyone that played that golf tournament, like it's just hard to talk about how hard it was and how different of golf it was.

Like mentioned this before, I played with Braden Thornberry. He hit a great drive on 15 that's

going to fly 305 and right down the middle, a little cut. The wind flew it 70 yards left to right. It almost missed the hazard right down on 17 fairway. It was a perfect drive, but it was that windy.

You would feel it blowing 30 or 35 sometimes, but it's gusting up to 50 in front of you, but there's some shrubbery that's blocking the tee box a little bit so you can't feel it.

I was a little bit terrified to get the ball in the air. I'm like the best chance I have is try and hit a low draw and squeeze it between those bunkers. If it gets in the left bunker, I can hit it up by the green. If it doesn't, then maybe I have to leave it short and I have a 40-yard pitch. But if I get this ball in the air, I don't know what's going to happen to it.

My thought on 16, we were between 6 and 5. You could have hit a 4-iron but if the wind's off the left that hard --

Back in my Purdue days, it's the fifth hole. Wind off the left marsh left, par 3, it's like a 3- or 4-iron, maybe it's a 5-iron. But if I don't hold the wind well enough, it might hold for a second but it starts going left to right with the wind and now it's helping it.

So if I'm playing a draw shot up against the wind, it's going to hurt it pretty good. But with that amount of wind, like Braden hit a 5-iron there that drew against the wind for a second and then rode the wind and went out of bounds long. That was my thought going in.

He had actually hit after me and I'm thinking, if I hit that 5-iron, don't draw it enough, it's going to ride the wind and go long right. Like that's not good.

I can't hit 6-iron low and hard enough against it to hit it 145 yards. I can change my grip around, I do that all the time. I'm going to strong grip it, put it back in my stance and start it right. So now this is really a 5-and-a-half iron but I'm hitting it with a 6-iron, so I can put a little more, like start right, draw spin. But that's not enough club to get there.

But I know that shot's not going to end up in a really bad spot. That's why I chose that club. That was the level of thinking that went into that for me, which was probably -- maybe it's too much thinking, but generally the harder the course is, the better chance I have.

I know a lot of people know a lot about golf out here. I feel like at least for my golf game I know a lot. I know exactly what I need to do to be successful on the golf course.

But the conditions definitely allowed me to win last week. If it wouldn't have been that windy, I would probably not have won.

Q. You mentioned dialing in your clubs at the John Deere. That's a tournament among others that you've been part of the conversation, you're leading, you're contending, you're atop the leaderboard at times, and now you finally established yourself. What's the mindset right now? You talked about a change, maybe mental

process of having hoisted a trophy?

ADAM SCHENK: Yeah, just, it's just really nice to know like what I was working on was the right things because whether I believe it or not, if the results aren't there...

I guess it really doesn't matter if you were right or not. If the results aren't there and you still want to argue you're doing the right things, like that's a pretty tough argument to make. So like you have to have success to back up what you're doing.

And it really doesn't matter to me, I'm not going to sit there and argue with somebody, hey, you need to do this. Well, I think I need to do that. That's kind of a waste of time. If you believe in something, you might as well just do it.

But in order to like not be right, but in order to justify the process that you're doing, like you have to have success at some point.

Even this fall I played really well in Napa, 30. I played really well in Jackson. Really well, like good enough to almost win I feel like and 21st. Just wasn't -- not making a lot of putts, missing a couple three-footers on the last two holes on Friday in Jackson was pretty defeating because I really went two days and didn't miss a golf shot and I was in 38 position. I was like what do I got to do?

Just feeling like I was playing better than I was, but you can't feel like you're playing better than you are for two years. Like at some point you have to just, you have to start getting it done or maybe getting a little closer to getting it done is a good start.

That for me was the biggest blessing, relief just to know that like I believe I could get it done Sunday. I told myself I was going to go play to win the golf tournament.

I wanted to hit driver on 17 because I knew if I hit a great drive and a, I don't know, a 7-iron or 6-iron in there and birdied it, I had a two-shot lead.

So that was going to be pretty hard to mess up on the last hole. Possible with how windy it was. Missed the putt on 17 so that would have been huge. Hit a nice putt.

But just to know and to get the validity from what I've been doing for two years and knowing that maybe all the misery and hell that you're going through, and at the end of the day like it's not that bad.

Like it's pretty hard to get people to feel sorry for you. You're out playing golf on Tour for two years, who cares if it didn't go well. It's like such a first world problem. It doesn't make it any better because everybody knows how that feels out here but like in the grand scheme of things of having actual problems in life or in the world, like it's really not that big of a problem.

So whether I won last week or shot 76 in the final round, of course you want to win, it feels good to win but it's not necessarily the important thing in life.

Before last week I'm still the same exact person. If I would shot 78 in the final round. And if I had to play it over again, like probably 1 out of 10 times I am going to shoot 75 or 76 or 77 in that round. Fortunately enough, it was the time that I shot 71 or whatever even par is. I think 71, I don't even know. But just to have the validity that what I was doing the last two years is paying off. I always believed it, but at some point you have to see the results and it was nice to see them.

Q. For you as an individual, is momentum a thing? I would think after winning an event like that some guys would like to spend a week on the beach or at their farm and not be back into this week's grind.

ADAM SCHENK: No, it definitely makes this week less stressful, but when you're on a heater you kind of need to ride it. Whether momentum's a thing, you know, I don't know that you can prove that it is, but I don't know that you can prove that it isn't.

I think that mentally, as soon as you start to believe that it is real, even if the momentum has nothing to do with it, and there's a lot of things in life in the world that literally have nothing to do with something, but if you believe that it does, then it does.

Mentally, if you believe something, your mind is obviously very, very powerful so if you think that something helps you, superstition.

I don't even know that -- everybody knows what superstition is, but like I ate with Tyler Duncan and his caddie Bobby last week. We went to Scottie's the last three nights, last three or four nights. Went there on Friday night and Saturday night. Tyler was like, where do you want to go? Like kind of got to go to Scottie's. Not that I'm superstitious but if I play a really bad round of golf tomorrow and we don't go to Scottie's, it'll be like, oh, I should have went to Scottie's.

But at least if I go to Scottie's and then play bad, I could be like, well, I went to Scottie's, it definitely wasn't because of that.

So like I think that's part of where superstitions come from. It's like OK, at least if I do this and then I play bad, I'm not going to go to be like, oh, I know I should have worn the same pair of shoes or I knew I wish I would have worn another green shirt.

It's not like the green shirt or Scottie's has anything to do with it, but for me to get that small doubt out of my mind, I'm like, well, you played great on Saturday so why wouldn't you do the same thing again?

Not that it has an ounce of anything to do with winning or playing good on Sunday, but when I know that if I go near the same restaurant, OK, well, I got that demon taken care of so I

don't have to think about him anymore.

Q. (No microphone.)

ADAM SCHENK: Gosh, you know what's actually funny? This is not surprising to me, but the restaurant's actually called Harry's. I don't know why I said Scottie's. I said Scottie's to Tyler and he goes, It's Harry's, Adam.

I looked at Tyler when we were at the bar, I go, you know, I really thought we were going to be at a Harry's this fall but I thought it was going to be in West Lafayette at Harry's chocolate shop.

Harry's, Scottie's. Who does that? I'm not surprised. Harry's nonetheless. We watched football games, just really relaxed, maybe Tyler and I talked a little bit about golf minimally, but we could go six months without talking just like a lot of guys in this room and then pick up right where you left off in six months. Not that we ever go six months. We probably rarely go a couple days.

But one of my great friends and he was there to see my win. I wasn't there to see him win. I tell the story, I was at my father-in-law's house burning leaves in between commercial breaks. They were yelling at me, hey, Tyler's walking up the fairway, coverage is back on. He made his putt to win the RSM 2019? '18? I don't know what year it was.

Jumped up off the couch and hurt my back, I was so excited for him. To truly, I want him to do awesome at golf, he wants me to do awesome. To really pull for your friends, like really genuinely pull for your friends, a lot of guys do that out here, he's one of them that I really do and I think pulls for me as well.

MODERATOR: And with that, we'll let you go. Thank you for the time, Adam. Congratulations again and good luck this week.

ADAM SCHENK: Thank you. Harry's, how did I get that wrong? Scottie's.