

25CUT01 LOOKAHEAD MASTER SCRIPT

VO: WELCOME TO PGA TOUR – THE CUT

A1 – Group Discussion New Year, Opening Drive

ANNC: It is the opening drive of the calendar year start to the PGA TOUR season.

CELIA PALERMO: It's already a new year, a new FedExCup season, and we begin with the PGA Tour's opening drive, its a two week swing in Hawaii with the Sentry and the Sony Open in Hawaii. Scottie Scheffler obviously dominated the headlines in 2024, but Xander Schauffele had a banner year as well.

CAMERON MORFIT: He had 15 top ten finishes in 22 starts last season, which is pretty remarkable in and of itself. You think about what could happen in 2025 if he were to convert a handful of those, into victories he might have the kind of season that Scottie Scheffler had in 24, where he racked up maybe five six victories. That could happen. He's young, he's in his prime. He's got all the tools and he's got confidence

PAUL HODOWANIC: And when you look at his progression last year, he goes from coming close but not getting it done at the Players, at the Wells Fargo. And then basically the next few times he has a chance at the PGA Championship and at the Open Championship. He gets it done. So you saw just the improvement within a season for him. Now with a couple more months to build that confidence he's comfortable. He's confident. That protends a lot of good things heading into 25.

A2- XANDER SCHAUFFELE FEATURE

ANNC: Not a bad place to live here, south Florida, Palm Beach, Jupiter area. It's a hotbed for Pros. Xander Schauffele. Two time Major Champion this season. The world number 2 he is that guy now. Count it. Just clutch. Boom. What a putt. Xander Schauffele is such a different place with this game than he was a couple years ago.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE SOT: You have to walk through the fire.

MUSIC LYRICS: I ain't takin days off, glory's what I came for.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE SOT: But if you are trying to get to the top and beat everyone you got to do it, knock on the door till you beat it down.

ANNC: Xander Schauffele

XANDER SCHAUFFELE NAT: Here we go...

XANDER SCHAUFFELE SOT: We've been we've been here for a little over a year maybe. Up in Jupiter it's a sort of sleepier slower pace of life, which I enjoy, especially when I'm home away from competing in tournaments.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE SOT: Easy transition from the West Coast it's a much shorter travel and you can get home Sunday nights and figured things like that would add up in my career.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE SOT: You know if you have an offseason, that means you've certainly played well enough to earn some time off or you don't feel like you have to keep playing. It's definitely something that I shoot for every year.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE SOT: It's nice to have AVIS, you know I have been in a rental car for my entire time in Florida so, going to the airport just leaving it, come back just grab another one. I get the convenience factor there for sure. They do all the planning and prepping and for me it is like clockwork I can show up and get going. It's nice to have someone really reliable to count on.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE SOT: We are headed to the brand-new SoFi center for the TGL league. It's the bright lights, the sort of being in an arena versus sort of being out on a field or course. It's going to be by first time in the facility, it's quite a visual when you walk in.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE NAT: Sup guys, how ya doing, what's going on.

NAT: Here is Andrew Scott he is going to walk you through the demo.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE SOT: TGL...Tomorrow Golf League. It is a technology-driven golf competition. You got 24 players. You got teams. You got a screen that, is something I didn't even. You could have had the screen half the size and, that we hit into and it would be big so it's got a lot of wow factor.

NAT: So 35 yard tee box, everything from like 130 or longer, real rough, same sand as Augusta National, this is the turn table. Got it. This whole thing spins?

XANDER SCHAUFFELE SOT: It's a very different vibe than what we're used to being in an arena or stadium-like feel. And you'll really see the tech come in, come in, into play when it comes to sort of going from the screen to your short game where they can spin a green in a circle, they can change the slope on the greens, things of that nature. So, it'll be the first of its kind.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE SOT: If you're in the building you're gonna have a really good experience and get really close up to what we're doing.

NAT: This is inspired by 10 at Augusta, huge speed slope right here. If you hit it right there it'll go down another 50 yards, okay, okay.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE SOT: It truly is a, stadium. You know, you got a revolving green, the green that moves, a monster screen and pretty cool sort of turf patches we get to hit off of it's real grass. So, it's cool.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE SOT: Ten and two, let me ten and two this, this feels less safe for me. I'll figure it out.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE SOT: These are one of the perks of the job here. Being able to sit out here in a sort of late afternoon. A little breeze, a little bit of sun. Perfect weather for shorts. Really relaxed environment here at Panther s It's definitely something I enjoy. It's pretty much easy to forget you guys are here.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE NAT: I rarely go to the range to just swing a club I'm definitely working on something.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE SOT: I'd say general warmup I start with low clubs and work my way up and get in the swing of things, turn it both ways a little bit, a little left right, a little right to left and you can slowly advance through the bag. Being on the range its not too hard to put the blinders on and really try an replicate the feeling you have now when you are in a tournament. Obviously, you are going to be a little bit more amped up and high strung.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE SOT: There is times when I get the itch to get up and go practice and that's when I know I'm really ready to go for the new year.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE NAT: That's as good as I can do

XANDER SCHAUFFELE SOT: I've been lucky to go to Sentry every year, it's still such a treat to go.

ANNC: And Xander Schauffele has won the Sentry Tournamnet of Champions with one of the best rounds you will ever see.

XANDER SCHAUFFELE SOT: It's a fond memory of mine, it was a special day. I refer to it as kind of a black out moment for me. Starting your year in Hawaii is very special something I haven't taken for granted. Its definitely a really cool place to start. I'm done practicing and preparing I feel pretty ready to go.

B1 - CHRIS KIRK FEATURE

ANNC: And the stage is clear for Chris Kirk. Back in Maui for the first time since 2016 and back in the PGA TOUR winner's circle.

CHRIS KIRK: I had a really great offseason and got a lot of good work done and felt good about the year, but you never really expect to go shoot 29 under.

PRODUCER: Where do you want to go in 2024 with your game?

CHRIS KIRK: Wherever it takes me. I'm enjoying competing. I'm enjoying the work. I didn't have that for a while. And to be back to loving what I do, I love the process of working to be the best player that I can, and I'm just loving every minute of it.

VO: TEN MONTHS AFTER WINNING ON TOUR FOR THE FIRST TIME IN EIGHT YEARS, CHRIS KIRK KICKED OFF THE 2024 SEASON BY CAPTURING THE SENTRY AND TAKING DOWN A FIELD FULL OF THE WORLD'S BEST AS ONLY A SEASONED VETERAN COULD.

CHRIS KIRK: I think experience is really big for me, and there's nothing really that's going to surprise me now. I've been through about every situation that you can go through out here. I feel very comfortable in my own skin and I feel like I belong here. I think just that comfort level and the experience and those kind of things together can help me out.

ANNC: Oh, boy, what a beautiful shot there.

CHRIS KIRK: It's been an interesting year for me. There have been parts of my game that have been really fantastic. There's been parts of my game that have struggled. Putting especially has been very hot and cold. That's kind of what's held me back from having a monster year, but made some changes and feel like I'm working my way towards potentially being a little bit more consistent.

ANNC: He put this putter in two weeks ago. There's a momentum riding putter.

VO: KIRK FOLLOWED UP HIS WIN IN HAWAII WITH FOUR TOP-25 FINISHES, INCLUDING A CLUTCH T9 FINISH AT THE BMW CHAMPIONSHIP TO SEND HIM BACK TO THE TOUR CHAMPIONSHIP FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 2014.

ANNC: Kirk finishing at seven under par. That should be enough for Chris Kirk. Yep, job well done today.

CHRIS KIRK: I haven't played my best golf on Sundays this year, and I've had a lot of times where I wasn't able to finish the way that I wanted to, and or move up the leaderboard the way that I wanted to. So to be able to go out and play under some difficult, windy conditions. A really solid round of golf when I needed it the most.

CHRIS KIRK: Definitely a great feeling. The playoffs are such a challenge mentally because they are so much different than what we face on a week to week basis. I got to the Tour Championship by one shot, basically.

VO: KIRK'S T27 FINISH IN THE FEDEXCUP STANDINGS WAS THE SECOND HIGHEST OF HIS CAREER AND HE RETURNS TO MAUI AS THE PGA TOUR CELEBRATES THE START OF A NEW YEAR WITH OPENING DRIVE, A TWO-WEEK KICKOFF TO THE 2025 SEASON.

LOOKING TO DEFEND HIS TITLE AT THE SENTRY AND BUILD UPON HIS RE-FOUND SUCCESS ON TOUR.

CHRIS KIRK: At this stage of my career, I want to play as well as I can for as long as I can. I want to see what is the best version of myself and enjoy the work that I put in to try to achieve that goal as much as possible.

B2 - Group Discussion – Who will win Sentry

CELIA PALERMO: Last year, it was Chris Kirk who got the opening win at the Sentry, the first signature event of the year. Who are you two looking to to kind of take control of the season early on? Get that first win of the season at the Sentry.

PAUL HODOWANIC: It's hard not to look at Scottie Scheffler first and foremost. I mean I think he was just a couple of strokes off last year. That was when the putting was much more of a concern than it is now. So if he starts putting the way he ended last year, I think he just has to be the immediate favorite. Another one I'd point to is Justin Thomas, has won this twice before. Finished in the top five three other times. Kind of getting himself back into form, last year was a solid year for him, but I think he still has higher aspirations. He's going to win anywhere this season. Kapalua is kind of the place you'd expect him to do it. So those were the two guys I have my eye on.

CELIA PALERMO: I like that one.

CAMERON MORFIT: The guy that I'm looking at is Sahith Theegala. He finished 28 under par in 2024, and the only guy who beat him was Chris Kirk beat him by one. If you look back at the Sentry the previous 20 iterations of that tournament Sahith would have won 18 of those 20. He's got a lot of confidence now. He just played in his first Presidents Cup. I think he kind of got some of the jitters out. You know, playing with the big boys. I think that's only going to serve him well going forward.

B3 - RAPID RECOVERY

VO: THE CUT PRESENTS RAPID RECOVERY

ANNC: Chris Kirk tied for the lead off the tee at the par five 15th. Uh oh. That's the penalty area.

VO: AFTER PLAYING A DROP, CHRIS KIRK FAILED TO FIND THE GREEN

ANNC: Battling the 15th. It's his fourth shot now.

ANNC: A chance at saving par, but it appears that Kirk is going to drop out of the tie with Bhatia at 20 under. I think it's difficult to judge that fringe coming out of there.

ANNC: Chris Kirk pulled off an amazing par at 15 to remain tied for the lead.

C1 – Rejoin

C2 – Players who will make the TOUR CHAMPIONSHIP in 2025 that didn't in '24 inbump

PRODUCER: Who is one player who is not in the field here at Eastlake this week that you expect to be next year?

AARON RAI Oh, that's a very good question.

SAHITH THEEGALA: There's a lot of guys that are really, really talented.

LUDVIG ABERG: Oh, okay. That is a good question.

SAHITH THEEGALA: Max McGreevy

BILLY HORSCHER: Cam Young

SAHITH THEEGALA: Nick Hardy

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Max Homa

LUDVIG ABERG: Nicolai Hogjaard

AARON RAI: Austin Eckroat

SAHITH THEEGALA: We're already at the highest level in our game and the PGA Tour especially. Every single player out here knows that the guy who finished 65th on the FedExCup, the guy who's 120th in the FedExCup right now are all absolute killers.

BILLY HORSCHER: Cam Young is a really good, talented player. When you look at him, I think he's got every aspect of the game to be a great player, if he continues to work hard, progress and do the right things, once it finally does happen, he does get that win. It's going to happen in droves.

LUDVIG ABERG: Nicolai Hogjaard is definitely going to be here next year. He's a great player. He's got unbelievable abilities and unbelievable potential. So I definitely think he'll be one that I'm looking out for the most.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Max Homa is an easy one for me to pick. He's someone that I think over the past couple of years has really shined and really shown the golf world what he has.

I mean, he's proven to a lot of people that he has what it takes to compete and win at the top level. And, you know, I definitely expect him to be here next year.

SAHITH THEEGALA: One guy that pops up into my mind is Nick Hardy. He's a really nice player and, He could be a sneaky pick to make it back to the TOUR CHAMPIONSHIP.

SAHITH THEEGALA Another guy, Max McGreevy, he's won twice on Korn Ferry this year. He'll get his card back. I can see him flipping a switch and getting here.

AARON RAI: The one name that comes to mind is Austin Eckroat. Whenever we've played together, I've been so impressed with every part of his game. Yeah, I think he has a great chance of being here next year.

SAHITH THEEGALA: Man, if I had a list in front of me, I'm probably too nice. But this guy, this guy, this guy. But generally, that's how I feel inside. Like, these guys are so good. They've earned their way out here.

C3 – Group Discussion – Who will make it to East Lake in '25 that didn't in '24?

CELIA PALERMO: Those are some great names, Cameron. Who do you expect to make it to East Lake that did not in 2024?

CAMERON MORFIT: Maverick McNealy is the guy that I'm looking at. He's really got things settled in his career right now. He's got his little brother on the bag with him. He won the RSM Classic. He's got some confidence now. He's also changed his swing quite a bit. And he's really a guy who I think has no ceiling right now.

CELIA PALERMO: I'm looking to see Denny McCarthy make it to East Lake. He finished 35th in 2024 on the FedExCup. We saw the flurry of birdies that he made at the Valero Texas Open. He birdied eight of his last nine holes to get into that playoff with Akshay Bhatia. He's been known for those runner-up finishes. He had four top tens overall in 2024. He's yet to get that maiden PGA TOUR victory. I hope that 2025 is a big year for him. I hope to see him at East Lake in 2025. What about you, Paul?

PAUL HODOWANIC: I'm gonna go with Max Homa. I really think last year was a bit of an aberration missing out. I think this is a guy we expect to see at the Tour Championship. Year in and year out that he didn't last year, I think was just a tough little spell last summer that kind of kept him from being there. Pressure, wanting to make the President's Cup team and the swing just not quite being there. I think with a few months of the offseason to get his swing intact, it's going to be a good 2025 for Max.

C4 – PGA TOUR FANTASY PROMO

ANNC: The 2025 PGA tour season is here, and now is the time to sign up and play the PGA Tour Fantasy golf game. Create or join a league and set a new roster every week, playing for bragging rights and special prizes. Sponsored by PGA Tour Superstore. Boost your points by selecting a team captain and these scores in real time.

With the tournament action every weekend. I got to sign up and play for free with the all new PGA tour fantasy golf game.

D1 – Scottie Tiger Comparison Mini

ANNC: The way he's hitting the ball for the sustained amount of time reminds you of what Tiger did.

TIGER WOODS: We see shots into the greens very similar. How we miss golf balls and the correct spots. It's not always pretty, but it's not about the pure analysis playing the long game. It's over 72 holes and it's not a sprint. This is over a marathon. I think that there's a similarity between how we play the game.

ANNC: Tiger Woods had that same look, that everything was in slow motion. You could slow down time.

COLLIN MORIJAWA: People show it in a different way. Tiger was very, very focused. Scottie looks a little bit more relaxed, but you know, he's focused.

TIGER WOODS: I did it differently. My game was very violent at times. We played differently. He slid on it and I snapped on it.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: The control of the ball play is what amazes me the most. The spin, the trajectory and the shape.

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Just the ease of it and how it looks. I say how it looks. I know he's so moving his feet all over the place

TIGER WOODS: Forget all the footwork stuff. If you just sat behind him and you only look at a golf ball, how tight it is, he doesn't move the ball very much. Either way.

ANNC: It's like he's playing golf in a ten yard wide tunnel. It's a video game. Darn right.

TIGER WOODS: If you understand the fact that he hits in these tight windows and he's shapes it varying degrees, you can understand why he's able to control distance into the greens as well as he does.

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Coaches that are looking for the perfect swings, the perfect positions. I think that's what makes Scottie so good is he doesn't care about that. He's just trying to get the ball as straight as possible, as long as possible. Close as possible.

RANDY SMITH: He's like a little computer. He takes in all kinds of things that will affect his shot. But the best thing is that really sets him apart from other people is how graphic the shot he sees is. And if he sees a certain thing or a chippy little curve small 8 iron everybody else hitting the nine iron, that's his creative side coming out in. The more his creative side comes out, the better he performs.

CELIA PALERMO: 2025 marks the 25th anniversary of Tiger's historic 2000 season, and after what Scottie Scheffler did in 2024, there are some comparisons to that 2000 season. Cameron, you covered Tiger Woods for so many years, including in 2000. Do you think those comparisons are fair?

CAMERON MORFIT: Scottie Scheffler's year was tremendous in 2024 and he actually is doing something the Tigers used to do to keep finding the tournaments where he plays well and he is feasting on them, whether it's the Arnold Palmer Invitational, Waste Management, Phoenix Open, Masters, Players Championship, he's won those tournaments a total of eight times in the last three seasons, which is a lot.

CAMERON MORFIT: But the thing is, he has to have seasons like he had in 24, again and again and again. It's very premature at this point. It's probably likely that no one will ever even come close to Tiger's win totals. But listen, anybody getting you know, compared to that has got to take it as a feather in their cap.

CELIA PALERMO: When we look at the season at large, Paul, do you expect to see similar things from Scottie Scheffler's season.

PAUL HODOWANIC: Similar. Yes. I don't know if the amount of wins we're going to get is the same. I mean, it's just so hard to replicate that. If there was going to be a guy that can repeat it for a second season. I think it is, Scottie. But yeah, it's not quite fair to compare him to Tiger. I think you can say he's the best since Tiger, but to say he's as good as Tiger is going to take another five years of this before we're ready to do that.

CELIA PALERMO: Well, guys, as we start to wrap things up, I want to get a couple of predictions from you guys. Who do you think will win rookie of the year? Who will have the most wins on the PGA TOUR and who will win the FedExCup in 2025? Paul, let's start with you.

PAUL HODOWANIC: Rookie of the year, I'm going to go with one of the incoming DP World Tour grads. That'd be the young Irishman Tom McKibbin. Most wins I'm going to go back to

the well Scottie Scheffler and then FedExCup I think Xander Schauffele after some close calls the last couple of years gets it done.

CELIA PALERMO: Cameron what about you?

CAMERON MORFIT: Rookie of the year? I'm going to go with the Korn Ferry Tour Rookie of the year. And you keep that going on the PGA tour Karl Vilps. The guy with the most victories I think is going to be Xander Schauffele. And the FedExCup Champion is Viktor Hovland again after having an off year in 2024.

CELIA PALERMO: Like those, there's a couple of points that I agree with Paul on. I agree Scottie Scheffler will have the most wins on the PGA tour. I also agree that Xander Schauffele will win the FedExCup. But on Rookie of the year I'm thinking it's going to be Tim Widing But either way guys I think we're in for an exciting 2025.

CELIA PALERMO: But I am going to check back and see who was the most correct at the end of the year. We're going to have a great year. What do you say?

CAMERON MORFIT: It's going to be a lot of fun.