

26CUT29 – TOUR CHAMPIONSHIP

A1 – TOUR CHAMP SIZZLE

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER: Being able to win the season long races is a tremendous accomplishment.

CAMERON YOUNG: It's really easy to think that you're you're so close.

A2 – TOMMY TC FEATURE

THE TOP 30 ARE FINALLY SET AT THE TOUR CHAMPIONSHIP, WITH TOMMY FLEETWOOD RETURNING TO DEFEND HIS FIRST PGA TOUR TITLE THANKS TO A UNIQUE MOMENT ON THE BACK NINE WHEN IT SEEMED HIS MAIDEN WIN COULD HAVE BEEN SLIPPING AWAY ONCE AGAIN.

ANNC: Fleetwood leader by three off the tee at ten.

ANNC: Biggest back nine of his career right here. It's all in his hands.

ANNC: And that one handed left.

ANNC: That's way left. Dan way left. That's almost on 18.

TOMMY FLEETWOOD: Through 8- 9 -10 to much pressure. I can probably feel like I could really do with winning this one, you know, like being in contention again. And I feel like I, I want to get this one done.

FINNIS KENYON: But I knew he wasn't feeling it just there because he had a bit of a snap hook after the 10th. It's not like him to do a big hook.

ANNC: And Fleetwood with another bogey. This is one pressure packed final nine Fleetwood. feeling it as much as anybody.

TOMMY FLEETWOOD: Like my dad, when we used to go practicing. We used to go to Southport and Ainsdale Range, and he used to make sure that we went to the very far end when there was a railway line and trees on the left side you used to hit, so I never hit it left 30 years later or whatever it is, I still struggle with coming on the inside and starting it right and drawing it.

Things like that. Like definitely, definitely mold you like definitely mold your game. So I hit a shine to 11. It felt like 11. Just felt like it was like inside late. Like sort of Glancey flippy that got onto the green and it was just that my timing, my timing was getting all out.

BUTCH HARMON: My wife and I were watching it and I said to Christie, I said, I wish I could yell at him, do your practice swing drill. It'll smooth you out a little bit.

TOMMY FLEETWOOD: I think I went to Butch in February in 2023, and I stood on the range with him and done, um, done a lot of drills where I take it back and stop and wait and then and then swing through to, first of all, get my good back swing, but then work on my transition and and feel what I need to do coming down. And I remember still on the back of the 12th tee and I had some really long like my practice swing for the rest of the round.

I did like a pause drill with a with a really slow transition so I could film myself and how I wanted to move and get the club. I just thought, I'm gonna have to focus on that. This is what I want to do. And that was my practice swing going into the shot for the rest of the round.

ANNC: Fleetwood, goin to the driver again here, Colin. He's gone to this a lot here.

BUTCH HARMON: They showed a picture of him to the side of the 12th tee. And he was doing the drill. And I was saying to myself, he's going to be just fine now and then. He never missed a shot coming in.

A3 – AKSHAY ANXIETY FEATURE

ALSO IN THE FIELD AT EAST LAKE IS AKSHAY BHATIA, WHO CAPTURED HIS BIGGEST WIN THIS YEAR AT THE ARNOLD PALMER INVITATIONAL. THANKS IN PART TO SOME ADDED MOTIVATION FROM HIS WIFE, PRESLEY.

AKSHAY BHATIA: Star of the year. I was struggling with anxiety a little bit, giving it a lot of power.

ANNC: We all have him. Tough day 78.

AKSHAY BHATIA: I was very nervous that I wasn't going to play well, especially the start of the year, and I didn't. I missed my first two cuts. My wife, we had a talk, which she never does. She's pretty soft spoken and we she sat me down, she talked about it. And the advice she gave was like, if you're going to give anxiety power, at least give it a different meaning.

So, whether it was energy, whether it was focus, readiness. I took that to heart because I felt like we all are very nervous and want to do so well. And I think when she put that perspective in into my head, I realized that. And I started to play my best golf of the season.

ANNC: There it is. Akshay Bhatia. Getting the people going here at 16.

ANNC: Bhatia pays it off with a birdie. My goodness. Unstoppable.

ANNC: He is just looking very relaxed.

AKSHAY BHATIA: I stopped saying anxiety. And then I also just kind of turned it into like excitement. That was really powerful. And I think a lot of people can learn from that.

ANNC: The door wide open for Akshay, his wife Presley, his dad sunny, about to watch his son perhaps win Arnold's tournament.

AKSHAY BHATIA: So I give her the credit for my win, especially.

NATS: Oh. Were you nervous? That was crazy.

B1 – MIN WOO EVOLVING HIS GAME

MAKING HIS TOUR CHAMPIONSHIP DEBUT IS MIN WOO LEE, WHO HAS ELEVATED HIS GAME ON THE BIGGEST STAGES THROUGHOUT THE SEASON. TO EARN A SPOT AT EAST LAKE.

ANNC: It can be feast or famine with Min Woo Lee. When he's good, he's really, really good. Consistency. Something he constantly works toward improving.

MIN WOO LEE: I had a very struggling year last year in the signature events. The rough was so thick that distance didn't matter as much as it used to. Yes, it's nice to hit it 15 yards further, but you know, when you're in the rough, four inches deep, it's very hard to get it on the green or near the green.

ANNC: Fancy bunker, but a little displeased with that.

MIN WOO LEE: It's been honestly very bad at the end of the day. Um, just got to keep your head up and keep going. In the long term, you want to play the signature events, you want to play those events, and you want to hit it as accurate as possible. But still trying to figure out driver. Driver was a big part of that, not knowing where the ball was going.

ANNC: It's been a struggle this week off the tee for Min Woo. Essentially last in the field of the driver accuracy.

NATS: Oh my god.

MIN WOO LEE: With the results I wasn't the happiest golfer. The team wasn't the happiest. And we need to do something different. So it had the change of swing a little bit, got more stable and hit it a lot straighter. So I guess it was a little blessing in disguise.

ANNC: This man can move it out there and we talk about his driving accuracy, which is something he's trying to clean up a bit. He plays so aggressive from the tee, that's going to be something that he's really going to have to spend some time with, maybe scaling back some of his power at times and maybe finding more fairways.

MIN WOO LEE: At the time, it seemed very close to where I wanted to, but not close enough. So compete out here. Decided to do a couple swing changes more. Just stack on the left leg a little bit more. Still a work in progress, but we did a lot of good work in the off season, and I think the results this year are showing that I'm hitting it a lot straighter and off the tee, hitting more fairways, I'd say.

And I guess I gave up a tiny bit of distance, but not too bad. The iron play has been a lot better too, which is the main thing.

ANNC: What a shot. Oh man, he loved that one.

B2 – MIN WOO EVOLVING HIS GAME

ANNC: Here in Saint Louis at Belle Reve. Clark and McIlroy are just underway and we're at the first. This is for par for Clark. Oh.

ANNC: Oh my goodness Jim.

ANNC: Rory. For birdie.

ANNC: Oh the match is on!

What began as a five shot lead is already down to three.

ANNC: Yeah And you think about momentum in sports and in golf. Now Wyndham Clark's last three holes yesterday he missed the short birdie putt at 17. He made bogey at 18. And now a three putt bogey at the first.

WYNDHAM CLARK: It was a very stressful day I just you know really didn't have my stuff mentally. Not that my game was off. I just kind of wasn't focused, just was making some dumb mistakes, didn't make any putts.

ANNC: Falls back to 14-under. We saw it at the US open. Started with a six shot lead. It got really tight.

WYNDHAM CLARK: I guess I'm making, uh, a habit of having a lead and then choking it away with, you know, after 7 or 8 holes. As much as I would have loved to run away with this, it was fun getting the juices going and feel the angst coming down at the end.

WYNDHAM CLARK: I kept telling myself, hey, you told me before the week with ten holes to go, I'd have a 1 or 2 shot lead. I'd take it. If I was tied with six weeks ago. I take it. Regardless of what happened, I think that helped keep me in the moment rather than being bombed. Kind of look at that as an opportunity and finally had a putt to drop in 16 and propel me to birdie the last two.

ANNC: First birdie of the day for Wyndham Clark. Couldn't have come at a better time.

ANNC: This is a smart play. Ryan your wedge game.

ANNC: Settled. Settle. This is a big mistake.

ANNC: Terrible mistake.

ANNC: This is left.

ANNC: Short sided himself.

ANNC: McIlroy's travails. Really? He can blame it on the poor layup. That will spell the difference.

ANNC: Why not one more? You made it at 16. You made it at 17. Similar length. Now at 18.

ANNC: Oh, yes. And Wyndham is the winner of the BMW Championship.

ANNC: Talk about finishing in style.

WYNDHAM CLARK: Shows that I'm one of the best players in the world. You know, I think I've kind of come into my own. I mean, three wins in one season is my best year yet. Coming off my worst year ever. Really proud of myself that I didn't let it get away. And even though it seemed like it did, I was still mentally there and then finish strong.

B3 – FEDEX CUP STANDINGS

WITH THE VICTORY, WYNDHAM CLARK CLIMBS TWO SPOTS TO NO. 3 IN THE FEDEXCUP STANDINGS.

HE NOW TURNS HIS ATTENTION TO EAST LAKE, WHERE HE WILL MAKE HIS THIRD TOUR CHAMPIONSHIP START. HIS BEST FINISH CAME IN 2023, WHEN HE FINISHED THIRD.

C1 – REJOIN

(NO COPY)

C2 – RORY'S WALK

PRODUCER: How would you describe the walk?

RORY MCILROY: I would describe my walk as bouncy. It's very bouncy.

MATT FITZPATRICK: Bouncy, haha.

LUDVIG ABERG: It seems like he's always leaning forward, like he's always kind of bouncing. He's got a good pep in his step.

RORY MCILROY: I think it's a positive walk. I'm pretty short, so like, my stride length isn't the longest, so I feel like to keep up with like some guys or keep up with the pace of walking. Sometimes I need to be a little bit that way. And yeah, I like to sort of spring off the front of my foot.

LUDVIG ABERG: Even if you're feeling a little down, a little low. It seems like that walk will give you energy. It's definitely an iconic walk.

ANNC: Fist pumps from Tiger Rory Pep in the step. Brooks Koepka swag. I mean, there are distinctive body language moments that tell you how comfortable they are.

PRODUCER: You know when you started getting questions about it, when people started noticing it, your walk?

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, I think it was early on, like maybe the first couple of years on the European tour, like 0809. I actually think it might have been even more pronounced back then. I think because I started to get questions of it, I got a little self-conscious of it. I started to try to walk a little more normally.

LUDVIG ABERG: Obviously when he's on, he's he's on and he is, in my opinion, the best player in the world. So it's cool to watch, but it's also fun to compete against it.

C3 – COLLIN RITUALS

RORY'S STRIDE WILL BE PREVALENT THIS WEEK AT EAST LAKE AS HE VIES FOR A FOURTH FEDEX CUP VICTORY.

BUT JUST AS RORY HAS HIS STRUT, COLLIN MORIKAWA HAS HIS OWN UNIQUE RITUALS IN HIS PREPARATION - THAT HE HOPES WILL LEAD HIM TO HIS FIRST FEDEX CUP TITLE

COLLIN MORIKAWA: It's a funny thing when you think about preparation, because you truly never know how everything's going to play out. You always get a different lie, you know? No two shots are ever the same. That's what makes golf so great.

NATS: First on the tee. From LA Canada, California Collin Morikawa.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: There's a fine line between superstition and rituals. I like to think of them as rituals and routines. That allows me to say, okay, now I'm ready to go off and play golf.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: We don't just show up to the golf course. I mean, I wish I could just show up and start hitting golf balls, but there's a lot of prep that goes into it. The biggest routine for me is to make sure I show up about 2.5 hours early. Like, I'm a very time oriented, on time person, nutrition and physical aspect of our game.

Working out, being in the gym, stretching. It's a huge part of what we do. So I give myself about 2.5 hours every day before I actually go teed up gym physio. I worked with my PT, I got some body work in. I usually have an hydration packet. It's a long five hours. It's a grind. You're mentally battling yourself out there and battling the conditions.

So just staying hydrated is a key.

And then about an hour until my tea time, that's when I head out. And that's where the real routines happen is in the prep work leading up. And start on the putting green. Hit some plates, hit the mirror, go from there to the chipping green, hit a few chip shots and then this is where the numbers start coming in. So, I always start my range session with six balls to warm up chip shots about 30 yards. It's just a routine. It just happens. That's what I do. And then at that time, I'm always putting and starting the round with five tees in my pocket.

Five is my favorite number. Number five golf ball. Uh, whenever I can have that sense around me, it just feels a little more comfortable for me to go out there and do what I do. My last checkpoint when I'm on the tee is always count. 14 clubs, five tees in my right pocket. I've got my ball marker and my pencil in my left pocket. I've got my yardage book in my back left pocket.

We're on the golf course for six plus hours, so I've had to learn how to manage myself, how to have small snacks, have a bar on the ninth hole. That's the number one thing because you have to keep a baseline, and if you can keep that baseline as steady as possible throughout, you can perform your best.

When you get to playoffs and you look back at the entirety of the season, you're drained. Playoffs is a long, long stretch. I mean, it's a three week stretch of everyone grinding it out because we know what's at stake. It's a small thing that can make enough of a difference come Sunday afternoon when you're, you know, trying to win a golf tournament.

DI – CHAMPIONS HOLE

THE PGA TOUR WRAPS UP ITS PLAYOFFS AT EAST LAKE COUNTRY CLUB THIS WEEKEND, AND USING HISTORICAL DATA AND COURSE INSIGHTS, WE'VE IDENTIFIED THE CHAMPIONS HOLE.

SINCE THE COURSE WAS REROUTED IN 2016. THE PAR FOUR, 390 YARD 12TH HOLE AT EAST LAKE HAS SAT ON THE NORTHWESTERN BORDER OF THE COURSE'S LAYOUT, AND NO OTHER HOLE HAS HAD MORE OF A SAY IN WHO WINS THE PGA TOUR'S CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT.

OVER THE LAST TEN YEARS, THE WINNERS OF THE TOUR CHAMPIONSHIP HAVE AVERAGED THE 3.53 ON THE 12TH HOLE, WHICH IS 0.31 STROKES

BETTER THAN THE REST OF THE FIELD. THAT DIFFERENTIAL OF NEARLY A THIRD OF A STROKE IS THE LARGEST BETWEEN THE WINNER AND THE FIELD OF ANY HOLE ON THE COURSE.

ANNC: We've only seen three birdies here all day.

ANNC: And it's looking like he'll make the fourth.

AS EVIDENCED BY THAT AVERAGE SCORE, IF YOU WANT TO WIN THE TOUR CHAMPIONSHIP, YOU NEED TO PUT CIRCLES ON YOUR CARD AT NUMBER 12 IN THE LAST TEN YEARS, THE WINNER HAS HAD BIRDIE OR BETTER 50% OF THE TIME, WHILE THE FIELD AVERAGES ALMOST HALF THAT NUMBER. IN HIS THREE WINS OVER THE LAST TEN YEARS, RORY MCILROY IS SEVEN UNDER IN 12 ROUNDS.

ANNC: This aggressive just left of it. Great shot for McIlroy is fantastic.

AND WHILE BIRDIES HELP YOU GO LOW, SAVING PAR HELPS YOU STAY THERE. THE FIELD IS FOUR TIMES MORE LIKELY TO RECORD A BOGEY ON 12 THAN THE WINNERS. THE ABILITY TO SCRAMBLE IS THE REASON WHY. TOUR CHAMPIONS HAVE A SCRAMBLING PERCENTAGE OF 85.7. THAT'S 20 POINTS HIGHER THAN THE REST OF THE FIELD.

ANNC: Nipped very well. What a shot. Well. Very nice.

ANNC: Made that look a lot easier than it is.

IN THE LAST DECADE. THERE HAVE BEEN 40 ROUNDS PLAYED AT EAST LAKE, AND THE EVENTUAL WINNER HAS RECORDED JUST ONE BOGEY. AND ALL TEN WINNERS HAVE FINISHED THE 12TH HOLE UNDER PAR FOR THE WEEK. AND THAT'S WHAT MAKES IT THE CHAMPIONS HOLE.

D2 – TV TIMES

THE TOP 30 PLAYERS IN THE FEDEXCUP STANDINGS HEAD TO ATLANTA FOR THE TOUR'S FINAL STOP OF THE SEASON.

AN UNLIKELY PAIR MAKING THEIR FIRST APPEARANCE TOGETHER AT EAST LAKE ARE THE FITZPATRICK BROTHERS.

D3 – FITZPATRICK BROTHER FEATURE

WHO STUNNED AT THE ZURICH CLASSIC WITH A JOINT VICTORY, EARNING ALEX A TOUR CARD FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE 2026 SEASON.

MATT FITZPATRICK: Did you feel butterflies mind.

Huh?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Rory I just watched it. It's one of the disgusting boogers. Yeah, I just watched it. I'll enjoy the round.

ANNC: This could be a massive day for the Fitzpatrick family. All eyes are on Alex today.

ANNC: I can't honestly. Describe how good it was. I was hoping for a crappy line in the bunker, and he got one that was sat on like a tee peg.

ANNC: All golf ball? Does it spin?

ANNC: Oh, what a shot.

ANNC: Is that any good?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: You could almost hear it spin from where we were. I wish I could picture it even more clearly in my head, but I was too busy, like, in disbelief. And the fact that he's hit it so close.

MATT FITZPATRICK: The biggest thing I was saying is when you're ten years old and we're at Hallamshire in the UK and you're practicing on the putting green, and you wouldn't even think twice about tapping in a pot at that length, you'd just walk up to it and knock it in.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: I couldn't feel my hands on my legs, so I was thinking, if as long as I throw my hands at the ball, it should have a chance to go in.

ANNC: A day the Fitzpatrick Family will Never forget.

MATT FITZPATRICK: That was a really big moment to to win on any tour is difficult. And you did it in Challenge Tour and he's done it on the DP World Tour. And now, you know we've done it together here. I think that in itself should give him confidence that, you know, he is his own person and he is has his own game and he has his own strengths and his own weaknesses, just like we all do.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Obviously incredibly lucky to have him as my brother. I don't think there's many people that can say, you know. One of the best places in the world is your brother, but also just what he does for me. Yeah, just love him to bits as much more to say.

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah. And I didn't charge you any rent at my house, I swear.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: This is absolute bonkers.

NATS: Yeah. Hold on a second.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Has it sunk in for you? Or?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Not yet.

RUSSELL FITZPATRICK: Alex is, uh, a real happy kid. I wouldn't say flies by the seat of his pants. That'd be a bit unfair, really. But he's the complete opposite of his brother. His brother does everything down to the last 15 minutes in terms of warm up, statistics, everything. I was just a different guy. He just does his thing.

And he's very cheerful, very polite. So he's not really. But I was much more outgoing, I'd say.

PRODUCER: How did you all celebrate?

RUSSELL FITZPATRICK Which event? Haha.

ANNC: There's your leader at 11 under. Matt Fitzpatrick closes the deal,

ANNC: Man. Life's good for the Fitzpatrick family.

MATT FITZPATRICK: He sent me a really nice text the morning afterwards. That was like, as much as this win is both of us.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: You know, you deserve to be here from a like a competitive standpoint, and it's so nice to be able to practice against someone who is inside the top five in the world for me, as well as him, be my brother. Like, there are little things that I don't think other people have the opportunity to do.

Like pick his brain definitely provides a more competitive environment when practicing, and I think it almost keeps you more motivated. Keep pushing on.

MATT FITZPATRICK: I think he's really sort of done well for himself from a work ethic standpoint and an organizational standpoint and, you know, technical standpoint.

I think this year he's driving the ball so well for these golf courses on the PGA tour. So demanding off the tee. If you can hit a lot of fairways, you know you can put yourself in good positions. He looks fully comfortable and good enough to be out here for sure.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Obviously not to get emotional. But you know we both grew up wanting to be the best golfer we could possibly be and be one of the best players in the world.

And yeah, I'm incredibly appreciative of him. Everything that he does for me.