2024 PGA TOUR: The CUT #36

International Script

COLD OPEN

ANNC: Just inside three feet. This for a par to finish at 30 under. Scheffler sends this to the cup and that’s in! And Scottie Scheffler has won the TOUR Championship for 2024 and with that, he captures the TPA TOUR’s ultimate prize, the FEDEXCUP!

**WELCOME TO PGA TOUR THE CUT**

TOURNAMENT SETUP

PALERMO: We’ve made it Atlanta, the season finale, the TOUR Championship. The top 30 players on the PGA TOUR, Sean, but all that matters is who finishes number one.

MARTIN: Yeah, I love coming to East Lake, it’s a chance to reflect on the season that we’ve had but there’s still a ton at stake and what happens this week will define the 2024 season.

PALERMO: What will also define this TOUR Championship is the golf course. It just went under a restoration back to the golden age.

MARTIN: Yeah it looks like when Bobby Jones roamed the grounds. This restoration takes East Lake back to its early days and gives it a historic look.

EAST LAKE RESTORATION

GREEN: Just knowing that Donald Ross was a founding part of the vision here, and that it was painting this legacy of not only major championship golf, but great golf in the state of Georgia.

We pulled a lot of the features from some of the historical documentation, but then also kind of had to present what we felt like those look like on the ground in Ross's time.

The greens have an incredibly unique shape, very interesting. Some places where there are squared off corners, some places where there's appendages that flow left or right, and that allows us to really provide a variety of hole locations. That aspect at its heart are really the biggest thing from a Donald Ross perspective, that we tried to pursue.

PARKER: I am looking forward to seeing the old East Lake reveal itself. We've seen pictures, we've done a lot of study, but to actually see it happen, and see the golf course kind of returned to the golden age the way that it was when Bobby Jones played here, and Alexa Sterling and Charlie Yates and a lot of others. The way that we thought about the renovation is, this is the golf course that created those players, so why was that? It has to have something to do with the way the golf course was designed. I'm looking forward to seeing that reveal itself, and if it's even possible to become more authentic.

GREEN: I'm really intrigued to see what they're gonna think. They're so good and they're so smart that they'll beat me a couple times, I would think. Thinking their way through the course, and I'm all for it. I really think the response will be that it is more interesting, more memorable, that they could use more of their creativity to find success than the previous version.

PLAYERS ON RESTORATION

FLEETWOOD: It’s amazing seeing what you can do and how different they can make a golf course. It’s good to have a risk-reward hole and one that you have to think strategically like off the tee.

SCHAUFFELE: Really good test if the wind picks up a little bit and you could definitely hit a ball that lands on the green and maybe trickles off. I think you just have to execute your shots and if you don’t, you’re going to get penalized pretty brutally for it.

SCHEFFLER: The greens are significantly firmer and the greens are also a little bit bigger and there’s good little sections for them to put pins and stuff like that.

THEEGALA: Feels like more variety and a little more fun to be honest.

18TH GREEN TRANSITION

PALERMO: 18 it is a memorable finishing hole on the PGA TOUR and it sets up for a dramatic finish to the season finale.

MARTIN: And the drama has been added with Andrew Green’s changes. The lake has been made larger, the green now opens up on the right and what that means is a smaller layup area which means it’s really crucial that you hit the fairway so you don’t have to lay up and you have a chance to go for the green in two.

18th HOLE RESTORATION OVERVIEW

GREEN: So here on 18, this golf hole for its history, really had never had a great identity. In a previous version, this used to be the ninth hole. We felt like it was important as the finishing hole for the FedExCup and the TOUR Championship that we needed to make sure that it represented the overall dynamic of the golf course, and we started up at the tee and into the fairway by trying to make the landing zone more natural.

As the ball now travels over that slope, for the most part, the ball’s always going to settle on a downhill lie. That is meant to put some thought or potentially doubt in a player's mind as they stand over that shot and try to anticipate playing to this green or to a layup.

We've taken the lake that used to cross the driving range and turned it and brought it down the golf hole. So now a layup, especially out of a heavy lie, has to be mindful of that. Depending on your play, you might lay up back of it, have a full club in, play up closer and be able to chip or pitch onto the putting surface.

This is where the PGA TOUR season will end in 2024 and we just think it’s appropriate to add a little bit more drama, volatility.

OPENING ROUNDS

PALERMO: Justin Thomas and C Bez are already off, but all eyes are on the final tee time, Scottie Scheffler and Xander Schauffele.

HODOWANIC: Yeah, Scottie starting at 10-under Xander at 8-under, so familiar spot for Scottie but he hasn’t gotten it done. So, I’m really just excited to see the two most dominant golfers this year if one of them can close it out and take the TOUR Championship.

PALERMO: Xander Schauffele and Scottie Scheffler have officially begun the TOUR Championship, the two best players in the world. The question is though, will Scottie Scheffler be in the lead at the end of the first round.

MARTIN: Last man in the field means first man out and good start for JT, obviously 10 back of Scottie Scheffler I think even he’d admit the odds are not in his favor but still it’s also one last audition for Jim Furyk and potential captain’s pick.

PALERMO: Nice make from JT.

MARTIN: Bounce back birdie back to 4-under and the move is back on.

By getting back here, in what ways do you feel like maybe you're and things are better than last year, and where do you feel like you still need to go?

THOMAS: I said at my presser yesterday, I really took for granted being here. I'm still proud that I am here and have a chance. So just keep building off that.

PALERMO: Collin Morikawa is on some stretch right now, he’s rattled off six birdies in a row on the back nice, yeah!

You spoke yesterday about feeling like even being six shots back was not too big of a margin to overcome, you've done it before. Was that on your mind at all as you began the day?

MORIKAWA: No, I just wanted to keep making birdies and climb up the leaderboard as much as can. We’re going to use that back nine to hopefully push ourselves the next three days.

PALERMO: Since that opening bogey, Scottie has managed to keep and clean score card with six birdies.

MARTIN: They were tied after the first hole. You started to wonder if things were going to get tight but now he’s up by six, you almost wonder if it’s over.

SCHEFFLER: I wasn't thinking about the lead out there today. There's no reason to. It’s the first day of the tournament. I was just focused on staying in my own world and continuing to just try to execute.   
   
NATS: Scottie, Scottie, Scottie!

PALERMO: Scottie Scheffler begins the day with a 7-shot lead. He doesn’t tee off with Collin Morikawa until 2 o’clock this afternoon. So, Sean do you think there is anyone out there that can put up a low number today and maybe close that gap just a little bit?

MARTIN: Close the gap sure, but 7 strokes over 3 rounds I don’t really see it. I don’t think there’s a chance.

PALERMO: Until that 2 o’clock tee time let’s see if any of the guys with recent good form can continue on with that.

HODOWANIC: That’s another missed putt for Bradley who, 2 over now thru 4. That’s the opposite direction that he needs to be going today.

PALERMO: So Hideki makes bogey, moves back to 7 under par, these guys are going to have to find something if they want to make an impact on this leaderboard.

HODOWANIC: I don’t anticipate Scheffler going backwards, so they need to be moving forward and they’re stuck in reverse right now.

PALERMO: Scottie has 3 birdies so far thru eight holes, you’ve been walking with him for a little bit what have you seen?

MARTIN: Just clean Scottie Scheffler golf. Just what he needed.

PALERMO: Scottie Scheffler doing Scottie Scheffler things.

Xander Schauffele so far, 6 under on his day with 3 holes to play.

MARTIN: I guess Xander’s getting used to the new East Lake, right?

SCHAUFFELE: I played with Scottie yesterday so, he's not going to let up, so there's only one way to get him.

SCHEFFLER: I feel like my swing’s in a good spot, I’ve hit it nice the last couple days. Looks like we're going to be getting some more weather tomorrow and Sunday, so maybe getting mentally prepared for a few more of those delays.

NATS: Come on Scottie, keep it up!

HODOWANIC: It’s now kind of a 3-horse race with him, Collin and Xander. They’re the only ones within 9 shots. So, feels like we’ve narrowed the pack but between the 3 of them it could really be anyone going into the weekend.

THIRD ROUND INTRO

PALERMO: Well guys, it’s Saturday at the TOUR Championship, it’s a hot one. What are you looking for out there today?

MARTIN: It’s a big day for Scottie. He could put this thing away or he could let people back in it.

PAUL: Yeah, Xander and Collin are the only ones within 8 shots of the lead so if it’s not Scottie, it’s almost certainly going to be one of them.

PAUL: Stagnant couple of holes for the leaders here. Scottie drops a shot, Collin and Xander, not doing much. So, as of now, Scottie’s still got the lead.

PALERMO: And he’s garnered all season the respect from his peers, Collin Morikawa included, he is one of the most consistent and steady players on TOUR.

PLAYERS ON SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER

ÅBERG: I think he's so consistent.

PENDRITH: It seems like he never plays bad.

AN: Every week he's up there, top five.

CLARK: Just the consistency, obviously, six wins is really nice.

ANNC: Scottie Scheffler with another tournament title!

CLARK: Outside of that, even when he didn't win, he was right there and had a chance to win.

HOVLAND: He had an amazing year last year, and to be able to come out here and basically top that, that's very impressive.

SCHAUFFELE: I'm sure the self-belief bucket for him has grown. Just being at the top for so long, he's had to learn to live with the target on his back. I think he's done an unbelievable job doing that.

MORIKAWA: It's hard to compare many other players. When you see what he does, the control of the ball flight is what amazes me the most.

ANNC: Unbelievable!

MORIKAWA: When you have full control of the golf ball, not just for one week, but throughout an entire season, it's incredible to watch.

HOVLAND: His game day in, day out, it's just such a at a high level, he doesn't need the luck involved to win as much as maybe other players, because his standard game is just really, really good.

ÅBERG: Not only consistent in his golf, but just a consistent person. From the outside looking in, it seems like he treats everything the same way, whether it's his practice, his training, his approach to the game. I think that's very inspiring. I try to do the same and if there's anyone you can try to learn from, it's definitely him.

SCHAUFFELE: He really is just generally a really good dude. He's hard to hard to get mad at or not like or, you know, try and paint this image in your head of, like, I need to beat this guy, you know. He hasn't changed as an individual. He's really been genuine to sort of himself. So, it's funny to call someone Mr. Consistent that wins all the time.

THIRD ROUND

PALERMO: Third round heating up… out here with Scottie on 7.

Scottie’s got a little momentum, back to back birdies.

HODOWANIC: Xander is off on a scorable 8th, has made up any ground on Scottie yet but this is an opportunity to do so.

It’s another missed opportunity for Xander who will walk away with a par on the easier 8th hole. He’s still 5 shots back of Scottie Scheffler.

SCHAUFFELE: Got off to a bad start, I hit 6 fairways maybe? 5 or 6 fairways. I mean, I haven’t really hit any fairways all week.

HODOWANIC: It’s kind of an encapsulation of his day. Just not sharp and when you do that with Scottie Scheffler out in front of you, you end up 8 back.

Collin just outside of Scottie Scheffler here for birdie. Very doable. He converts. Makes that birdie to get back to 18 under. Can’t waste strokes out here, especially against this guy so massive putt for Collin.

Wow, rolls it right in!

MARTIN: 20 footer on 14, 25 footer on 16

HODOWANIC: Collin Morikawa is in the best spot out of any of the chasers, 5 back of Scottie Scheffler heading into the final day.

MORIKAWA: Not so much the moving day that i quite needed. But look, I knew this entire week that I was going to need something special to come out on top and I’m going to need something special.

SCHEFFLER: It’s disappointing anytime I don’t win. Two years ago I had a really good chance to win and wasn’t able to get it done and then last year I was close. I think I had a couple bad last rounds. I feel like I’ve done all my stuff well and played solid so I’m looking forward to the challenge of trying to finish off this tournament tomorrow.

PALERMO: Xander Schauffele failed to get anything going today but Collin Morikawa pretty much went shot for shot with Scottie Scheffler all day but he knows it’s going to take much more than that on Sunday if he’s going to get the job done.

MARTIN: Yeah, I like the way he put it. Just 24 hours left in the season, you got to lay it all out on the line.

HODOWANIC: He’s up 5, you can’t quite call this thing over.

RAPID RECOVERY

**THE CUT PRESENTS… RAPID RECOVERY**

ANNC: This has gone way to the right here, guys. And it’s found that bunker. Up in that lip too, it’s going to be tough to get it all the way to that hole location from there.

Well it sounded like good contact. Hitting a cut shot. He’s screaming at it to go. Just barely covered that bunker and releasing right to where you thought he would play it to. That is world class.

ANNC: This has got to go down. Good save! We always remember the birdies; players remember good par saves. They always remember the saves.

FINAL ROUND INTRO

PALERMO: There are just 18 holes left to decide this thing. Scottie Scheffler has a five shot lead over Collin Morikawa but we’ve come into Sunday at the TOUR Championship with Scottie Scheffler holding the lead before not hoisting the trophy at the end of the day.

MARTIN: He’s lost a bigger lead. He was up six in 2022 but I think that was two years ago, that was a different Scottie Scheffler, he’s learned so much in those two years, I don’t expect him to repeat that mistake.

HODOWANIC: I’m just interested in the first couple holes and how he responds. I mean he’s bogeyed the first hole twice so can he get off to a better start and kind of keep everyone at an arm’s distance and make this thing a done deal early?

CELIA WITH BONES (NBC)

PALERMO: Throughout the playoffs, we've had the pleasure of spending time with NBC talent from Smiley Kaufman to Kevin Kisner. We figured we'd go to the guy for the TOUR Championship who's getting a front row seat to the final pairing. Let's go find Bones.

BONES: I’m concerned about getting out there a little bit early and having a look at how Scottie’s warm-up goes. I'm going to be following the last group today and of course, he's the man that we're all talking about as we head into this last round. So, you're looking for things like interactions between him and his teacher. Is it a comfortable warm-up, are they joking and laughing or is it does it seem a little bit more serious?

ANNC: Bones you’ve seen a lot of golf from Scottie recently, is this the best with the putter that you’ve seen him?

BONES: Yeah, I would say notice noticeably so, and his warmup today was just perfection.

ANNC: And that warm up bones has translated into a great start!

BONES: I like being in the middle of it, you know, that's why I started caddying years ago. I wasn't a good enough player to play on the PGA TOUR, so I just love watching golf being played at an extremely high level.

Just perfect position,148 and you got to think with this back left hole location Scottie’s favoring just a little short and right with this wedge.

ANNC: Ball just above his feet so easier to draw.

BONES: Drawing it is. On an aggressive line, but smartly under the hole.

You know, people talk so much about Xander Schauffele and Collin Morikawa and Rory McIlroy, but I just think that this this this place that Scottie’s got to in his own head and certainly he's got the physical tools to back it up. He's just at a level right now that we haven't seen since Tiger.

FINAL ROUND – PART I

HODOWANIC: Sahith Theegala four-under so far through eight holes. Made three birdies in a row and he’s making a run up the leaderboard. It’s massive for Sahith even if he doesn’t win this tournament. Career high FedExCup finish he’s made quite the leap this season and he’s finishing it off with a bang here at East Lake.

PALERMO: Between hitting it in the trees on seven and then having some mistakes around the green on eight, things are starting to get tight here in this final pairing, Paul.

HODOWANIC: Yeah Scottie birdied nine but he’s still now only up three so Collin’s cut into the deficit by two shots from the start of the day. Only three to make up on the back. So for a while there it looked like this thing was over… this is not over as we head to the back.

FINAL ROUND – PART II

MARTIN: All right, three holes left. Scottie’s up five. It was looking a little dicey there on 8. He was only up two but he responded with three straight birdies.

What Scottie’s going to be most proud of after today is that fortitude where there were some loose swings on 7 and 8 and then he just pulled away and ended this thing early.

 I think the only fitting end to the season Scottie has had is a coronation which is what we are going to have on the final two holes. He can walk up eighteen knowing he’s the FedExCup Champion.

NATS: Scottie Scheffler!

HODOWANIC: If there’s a nit to pick from his last two years it’s, he’s come to this tournament with a lead and he hasn’t been able to convert on it. It’s left a bit of a sour taste in his mouth at the end of the last two seasons. Seems fitting that this year where he fully breaks out is also the year that he finally gets it done.

ANNC: One of the all-time seasons for Scottie Scheffler. Takes it all! Answered all the questions.  It is a season that just may never be duplicated.

MARTIN: Scottie Scheffler, your FedExCup Champion. It’s the way he wanted to end this incredible season.

HODOWANIC: Really the icing on the cake of a breakout season. He was maybe the number one player in the world as we began the year, he ends it as the unquestioned top player in the game.

MARTIN: He finally can call himself a FedExCup Champion.

WRAP FROM EAST LAKE

PALERMO: From Memphis to Denver to the season finale here in Atlanta, the CUT team has traveled to all three playoff events telling some pretty incredible stories along the way. Sean, what’s your takeaway from the season finale?

MARTIN: Just the perfect ending to Scottie Scheffler’s incredible season.

PALERMO: Paul?  
  
HODOWANIC: And for me it’s just, we saw it was a generational season. Seven wins, an Olympic gold, heights that no golfer has reached since Tiger Woods. It was just awfully, awfully impressive.

PALERMO: Fitting way to end. Now I just have one question left, guys… who’s driving us back to Ponte Vedra? Not me.  
  
MARTIN: Shotgun!   
  
HODOWANIC: Not it!

SEAN MARTIN REFLECTS ON SCOTTIE’S SEASON

MARTIN: Winning the FedExCup was the only fitting end to Scottie Scheffler’s incredible season. And yet, the season-long title had been one of the few to elude him. But no more. Scottie Scheffler can finally call himself a FedExCup Champion. At East Lake he authored the perfect crescendo to an incredible season.

ANNC: Scottie Scheffler, still the king of the PGA TOUR!

MARTIN: He won on expansive canvases and cozy confines this year.

ANNC: I mean how are you gonna beat him?

MARTIN: Courses both historic and modern, short and long, wide and narrow.

ANNC: Hey hey, here comes number one in the world.

MARTIN: Jack Nicklaus and Arnold Palmer couldn’t stop him with the thick rough and firm greens that have become the trademarks of their tournaments.

ANNC: Yes! Scottie Scheffler the winner at The Memorial.

MARTIN: Nor could Pete Dye’s diabolical creations.

ANNC: Oh yeah!

ANNC: Scheffler showed that he possesses the creativity and competitive fire to win anywhere.

ANNC: Scottie Scheffler is the 50th PLAYERS Champion and the first to go back-to-back.

MARTIN: He was holding a magic wand during his first win, the mallet putter that he debuted at Arnie’s place.

ANNC: Scottie Scheffler is the king of Bay Hill again.

MARTIN: And his young baby boy as he celebrated his last one.

ANNC: With his wife and son. This is Bennett’s second win.

NATS: Are you so proud of your dad?

MARTIN: Scheffler brought home a green jacket and a gold medal in 2024, and his season ended with him holding the Tiffany’s silver cup that signifies season-long excellence.

Through it all, he was unapologetically Scottie…

NATS: Scottie!

MARTIN: Simple sometimes works best. Scottie showed that in 2024.