

# RBC Canadian Open

Tuesday, June 3, 2025

Caledon, Ontario, Canada

TPC Toronto at Osprey Valley (North Course)

**Laurence Applebaum**

**Ryan Paul**

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon. Welcome back to the Media Center for the RBC Canadian Open. Very pleased to be joined by Golf Canada's CEO Laurence Applebaum to my far left as well as our new RBC Canadian Open tournament director Ryan Paul. Thank you both for joining us today.

Laurence, maybe we'll pass it over to you for a quick opening remark before we get to any Q&A.

LAURENCE APPLEBAUM: Thank you. Great to see everybody here. Finally we got some nice weather in the GTA and in Southern Ontario. It feels like our unofficial tag line of Summer is Open is here.

I hope you won't mind, I just have some opening remarks to share with all of you and then hop into it. It's nice, first of all, to be beside my colleague here, Ryan Paul, in his first RBC Canadian Open as tournament director. As you know, we were a perennial LPGA Tournament of the Year under his direction with our CPKC Women's Open, and for Ryan, his first PGA TOUR at the helm event is really exciting for all of us on the team. Everyone's been having a great week under his leadership.

First, I just want to talk a little bit about where we are here at TPC Toronto. Obviously this is our inaugural event, and this has been many years in the planning. We have a lot of our colleagues and friends here from the PGA TOUR, which is really exciting. Our incredible title sponsor in RBC has been walking sort of hand in glove with us as we walk through this evolution of being here up at TPC Toronto.

For the Humeniuk family, Chris, his dad Roman, and his recently passed Uncle Jerry, it's a real honor for us to be up at TPC Toronto at Osprey Valley.

For those of you who haven't been here before, it is a spectacle. We're sitting on 54 holes and the recently renovated North Course, our championship course, is going to be a fantastic test for all the amazing PGA TOUR



players.

We are so excited about the Canadians in the field. We could not be happier with how the best of our best, our PGA TOUR players have been playing, obviously with Nick Taylor's result over the weekend at the Memorial and just how our Canadians on the PGA TOUR have been playing this year. It seems like week in, week out we're having top 10 finishes. We're having guys compete for titles, and we've had already a few victories this year.

What is really one of the missions of Golf Canada and bringing our amateurs -- our juniors, our amateurs, our young pro squad up on the PGA TOUR, we are going to have -- I think the final numbers, as Ryan will talk about a little bit, is 25 Canadians who will tip it up this week. Probably in our most recency or the recency bias we have is we had an incredible qualifier just south of us at the Pulpit Club, where people battled it out in pretty tough conditions, and we were thrilled to see the result of a few more Canadians make it into the field.

I do just want to highlight how gracious we feel and full of gratitude, I should say, for our support from the province of Ontario. The province of Ontario has been an amazing supporter of the game of golf in many areas. From the Tourism Ministry led by Stan Cho, to the Sport Ministry led by Minister Lumsden, the province of Ontario has just been an amazing supporter of golf in this province and, in particular, the RBC Canadian Open. I would be remiss if I didn't send a shout out to Minister Lumsden and our Premier Doug Ford, who's done an amazing job of supporting golf.

Minister Lumsden will be at the opening ceremonies tomorrow as we have our official opening ceremonies, which everyone is quite thankful, will be at 3:30 p.m. tomorrow instead of 6:20 a.m. on Thursday morning.

Ryan will talk about it a little bit, but being in a new location, one of our greatest trepidations was about our ability to find volunteers and bring people to this golf course. Ryan and his team have been incredibly successful in finding and engaging with over 2,100 volunteers to join us up here at TPC Toronto at Osprey Valley. A big shout out to all the volunteers who have



committed their time and energy to be part of this event. We have a huge percentage of them that are returning volunteers. This tournament is built with them and all the love that they have for this game of golf.

Then finally, I'll just speak to very briefly the state of play. May was a very challenging month across the country for play overall with the weather being pretty challenging and pretty wet, but as we pop into June, we're pretty confident we're going to still continue to see that growth that we're seeing in rounds played and the growth of the game in general in Canada has been fantastic.

We're so pleased to be here. I'll turn it over to Ryan, who had a couple things that he wanted to share with all of you. Thank you very much.

RYAN PAUL: Thanks, Laurence. Good to see everyone here today. Welcome to the RBC Canadian Open at TPC Toronto in Osprey Valley. This is the third venue to host the RBC Canadian Open and a really special one.

When I was looking back to my time from being appointed tournament director to where we got today, really a big thanks to RBC, the PGA TOUR, and TPC Toronto at Osprey Valley, that this group together and the collaboration has really made this place into a very special property, not only for public golf at TPC Toronto, but to host the Canadian Open.

It is a big ballpark. We're using all of it. It is incredible what we've been able to do, and we've heard nothing but positive comments from our players, our fans, our volunteers just what this is going to become.

The first place I always start is our Rink Hole. It's going to be one of the most exciting Rink Holes we've ever had. We have more public viewing and seating than we've ever had before, and at a shorter distance than we've ever had in the past, we're going to generate a lot of excitement and energy. That's what we've been trying to do with this Rink Hole since its inception in 2017.

Laurence mentioned the volunteers. On that too, with this property we squashed a lot of rumors that were coming up from the fall to winter that this place was going to be too far away, it was just out of city center, it wasn't a member club.

But to have over 2,100 volunteers coming back to us, to have ticket sales that are running neck-in-neck with what happened in Hamilton last year really shows the growth of this tournament and the success we can have regardless of the that property we're at.

Adding in now the TPC Toronto, the Humeniuk family, Terry Kim, the general manager, Brad Parkins, the director

of golf, and we've got something very special to show the fans when we open the gates tomorrow.

**Q. Logistically this place seems to provide both great opportunities and some challenges. Can you sort of tell me some of the things that you're most excited about having, I guess, this much space and some of the things that maybe kept you up at night in the last year thinking about the what ifs with the new site?**

RYAN PAUL: Maybe I'll start backwards in the what ifs. One of the exciting parts of my job -- and we got to do this with our CPKC Women's Open -- was opening up a golf course to become a championship one.

The what ifs for me on a personal level is did we put the Media Center in the right place? Did we have the entrance in the right spot? Is the merchandise going to work? How are the fans going to move around the property? That's where our team spent a lot of time, and I feel confident with the plan we have around the place, but until we have fans come in for the first time, I don't know if we've made the right decision.

Those are the things that keep me up, but it's also the things that excite me. What we did with the Rink Hole, and the viewing that we have in the range and the practice facility for the players and the Pro-Am experience and all those things certainly add to the level of excitement too.

With this property and being so big, we've got a great plan for our spectators coming right in the middle of the property where they're a short distance away from the Rink and our fairway and all of our fan initiatives, and then the 18th hole, the range, the clubhouse is the other way. So rather than splitting the middle, kind of taking them into a longer walk.

LAURENCE APPLEBAUM: I think maybe, if I could add, one of the art and the science of these sites is when you get some momentum and you get some rhythm from being here, you start to figure out how people are going to move and where fans are going to watch and how people are going to enter the golf course, leave the golf course, all the things that Ryan has always been great at. We're already seeing things on the second day that we're making realtime tune-ups.

What's so fun is to have -- we know we're a little bit further away from the city, but we know that, when you get here, we just have this palate to work with that we've never had before with such a long -- we've got three 18s effectively to space things out and do the things we need to do.

Very excited to see Thursday balls in the air and see how people are starting to move around the golf course.



RYAN PAUL: I think I'll touch on that as well just from the location. The one thing that we're really excited about is the parking. While it being further than maybe from the city centers at most, we've got an opportunity with this town and this golf course, that parking has been closer than we've ever had. We have two public parking lots that are six minutes or less from the golf course. To get from your door to the golf course on a six-minute shuttle is really good, and that's going to add to the spectator experience.

Media parking, we have media parking onsite. I don't know the last time we had that as well. Media, caddies, everyone, limiting those shuttles onsite has certainly been a benefit to our plans here at TPC Toronto.

**Q. Just a couple of the players that I've talked to so far today, they kind of got a different vibe here, meaning that they -- and it's a positive one. A couple have said I feel like I'm on a fishing trip in the northern part of Canada, which I thought was really kind of a cool assessment. Is there something you can take advantage of in that in terms of the marketability to the players and the PGA TOUR in this particular site in this location?**

RYAN PAUL: I don't know if they'll feel that way when the crowds start showing up and it becomes so big. Yeah, it's an interesting one. I know we continue to try to build on the Canadiana of this event and where we can add to that.

There's been a few opportunities that we've had with maybe that kind of cottage theme and that we're maybe looking to bring into the future.

LAURENCE APPLEBAUM: I think you've written about it a little bit, but there is -- the family and Chris Humeniuk, in particular, have established a vibe and an atmosphere and a culture here that is pervasive, and it's authentically Canadian. It feels different.

We always sort of said, when you get out here, the agronomy, the earth, it's a little bit different, and because it's a big expanse, it feels a little freer, it's a little more open. As Ryan said, it's going to be great to see when tens of thousands of people are joining the players on property and what that's actually going to feel like on course for them because we want them to feel that energy.

But it has that vibe -- lots of water, big trees, that really great feeling. Although it's not my lane really, we know that over the last 30 years they've learned this property inside out, and they know how to deal with it so this wet spring that we've had has really dried out really nicely and it's firming up, and all those good things for the golf course

competition are in play.

**Q. Putting this tournament together, did you learn anything from any sporting event across the country such as like Presidents Cup, Formula 1, any other sporting events?**

RYAN PAUL: Yeah, sure. I was down at the Presidents Cup last year, PLAYERS Championship this year. Whenever I'm watching PGA TOUR golf, I'm looking around at different builds and hospitality and coming up with ideas.

We're not just a golf tournament, we're a sports and entertainment property. So whether it is golf or F1 or baseball or hockey, we're always looking at what are the ways to improve the experience for all stakeholders and tournament goers. You get those ideas from those sports.

Yeah, we're always looking for ways to improve and new initiatives to remain the best.

**Q. Can you go through your initiative or whatever you put on the ground saying like we get this idea from this tournament, this sporting event? Can you go through what you did for this week?**

RYAN PAUL: I can't think of a specific one, but just as we look at how the volunteers operate and some initiatives and different things for them, if it's adding more food to their programs or doing happy hours or programs like that, just adding more elements to the tournament grounds. I think just those things that kind of build in it, but nothing like specific as this event's doing this and now we're doing it this year.

LAURENCE APPLEBAUM: One comment maybe you were thinking about, which we did a big trip, our Golf Canada staff, we did some hosting at Presidents Cup. We worked with the PGA TOUR. We think about that Friday at Royal Montreal and the electricity that was going on the property on that day with the great International storming back.

We ended up having more than a dozen points that we brought back from that championship that we learned from Presidents Cup, and having it out there, seeing the grandeur of it, seeing what the next -- what looks like is a bigger build in many areas. We learned a lot from the PGA TOUR.

We keep our eyes open. We're trying to be one of the premier events on the PGA TOUR, and we learn from some of the best.



**Q. Going back to last year, coming from a French market, there was no French signage or anything on the course. What's the state of French this week at TPC Toronto on the ground?**

RYAN PAUL: We took a very big focus on making this tournament as bilingual as we could, and you'll see that with all of our signage and directionals and everything on the property that everything is bilingual in that.

I think last year what we found really opened up our eyes to say that we are a National Open, Canada is a bilingual country, and we need to operate in that way. That was one of the things we made a big step forward for this tournament's presence and signage.

THE MODERATOR: Ryan, Laurence, thank you for joining us. Ryan, congratulations on your first, and let's have a great week.

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