Internationals try to snap 26-year Presidents Cup drought

AFP – The Internationals will try to defeat the United States for the first time since 1998 and snap a nine-event losing streak when the 15th Presidents Cup begins Thursday at Royal Montreal.
US golfers dominate the all-time rivalry 12-1-1 and seek their 10th consecutive victory since a draw in 2003 at South Africa.

“We’re determined to go out there this year and change the script. I have a lot of belief in this team,” Australian Adam Scott said. “I’ve never seen our team look so confident.”

The lone win by the non-European Internationals came in 1998 at Australia’s Royal Melbourne while the Americans are coming off a 17.5-12.5 home triumph in 2022 at Quail Hollow.

“It’s just an extremely emotional week as far as there’s ups, there’s downs,” US captain Jim Furyk said. “The US team gets on a run, then the International team gets on a run. It’s kind of a roller coaster ride.”

Canada’s Mike Weir captains the Internationals squad against a US lineup featuring eight of the world’s 14 top-ranked players with all 12 in the world’s top 25.

“Jim has a great team. There’s always going to be difficult matches,” Weir said. “We’ve got a tall challenge, but the guys are up for it, they’re ready for it, and they’re embracing that.”

Top-ranked Scottie Scheffler, whose eight wins in 2024 include the Paris Olympics, his second Masters and the Tour Championship, and world number two Xander Schauffele, a two-time major winner this year and Tokyo Olympic champion, lead

the US team.

Weir has his charges concentrating on the formidable American lineup, not past failures.

“We’ve got a lot of young guys on the team and they’re not remembering past defeats or anything like that,” he said. “Not really leaning into that.”

Japan’s Hideki Matsuyama leads the global group at seventh in the rankings followed by 18th-ranked Scott and South Koreans Im Sung-jae at 21 and Tom Kim at 24.

“We’re putting forward our strongest team for quite a while,” Scott said. “We’re putting together a formidable team.”

Scott makes his 11th Cup start still seeking a victory while countryman Min Woo Lee and Canada’s Mackenzie Hughes make their debuts.

“You never know what can happen,” 2025 US Ryder Cup captain and 13th-ranked Keegan Bradley said. “They all work really hard and I know they’re highly motivated to win this Presidents Cup.”

Royal Montreal previously hosted in 2007, when the Americans won 19.5-14.5 but Weir edged Tiger Woods 1-up in a singles showdown.

The event, which began 30 years ago for non-US golfers unable to compete in the Ryder Cup, starts with five four-ball matches Thursday then sees five foursomes matches Friday, four of each format on Saturday and 12 concluding singles matches Sunday.

“Definitely a bit of a different format, but I think it’s a lot of fun,” Scheffler said. “Some of my fondest memories are the memories in the team room.”

– Schauffele in opener –

Thursday’s four-ball opener sends Schauffele, the 2024 British Open and PGA Championship winner, and Tony Finau against Australian Jason Day and South Korean Ben An.

Other matches include Scott and Lee against Collin Morikawa and Sahith Theegala; Im and Kim against Scheffler and Russell Henley; South African Christiaan Bezuidenhout and Canada’s Taylor Pendrith against Bradley and Wyndham Clark and Matsuyama and Canada’s Corey Conners against Patrick Cantlay and Sam Burns.

Kim hopes to avenge being beaten by Scheffler at the PGA Travelers Championship earlier this year.

“I’d like to be able to have a revenge match,” Kim said. “He’s always going to play really well but at the same time, if I can do something special on Sunday against a player of caliber like him, it’ll be huge for our team.”

Australian Day, making his fifth Cup appearance, says the bond of his side has grown over time.

“The team environment has shifted a lot since when I first started,” Day said. “Back in my day, maybe not a lot of the guys bought into the Presidents Cup as what I’m seeing now, myself included. I probably could have done a little bit more. It means so much more now than what we had before.”

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