

**PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE**  
**November 8, 2023**

**PADRAIG HARRINGTON**



**JULIE NELSON:** Paddy, welcome back to Phoenix. You are defending this week. Just thoughts on being back here in Phoenix and kind of emotion going into the finale.

**PADRAIG HARRINGTON:** Yeah, it's great. The golf course is fantastic as always. It really is great when we come to some of these old golf courses that hosted events, you know, back in the day because obviously we're a little bit older at this stage, the golf course is perfectly suited to us now. We haven't outgrown it at all.

The course is in fantastic condition. Certainly seem to have tried to toughen it up a little bit this year, they don't want to see 27 under par again. I don't know if that plays into my hands, I'm hoping it does. But conditions, weather seems awesome, so we're looking forward to a great week.

**JULIE NELSON:** Coming off a win last week and closing out this season, is there still motivation to get one more -- obviously we know Strick locked up the Schwab Cup, but kind of just thoughts on the tournament?

**PADRAIG HARRINGTON:** Anytime I tee it up I'm trying to win, so yeah, there is motivation. As I said, I've had a couple of wins this year and I'm happy with that. Yeah, but I think I probably need another one to give me -- to upgrade my year a bit, let's say, so I'm keen.

I think as a player we always know trying to win back-to-back tournaments and also trying to defend a tournament, those are two things that elevate you in your ability to handle pressure. There's a little bit more focus on you when you're trying to do something like that. These are the things that I think as a player you want to be able to handle that situation. I'm sure I'm focused on trying this week, try not to be too focused and too trying, trying to treat it as normal, but yeah, I'm really keen to get another win at this stage.

**Q. Besides it being your week last week, what all was going right?**

**PADRAIG HARRINGTON:** I think the golf course suited me. I played nicely. I probably would say I putted well. Yeah, just the game fell into position nicely.

You know, tee to green was probably the same as most weeks and I just putted a little bit better last week. You know, when you win like that by seven shots, you are getting the right break at the right time, there's no doubt about it. Another week that same week a couple of things mightn't have gone your way, but I think I played well enough last week that it would have been -- it would have been tight at the end anyway. Getting the extra break or two or holing the right putt at the right time maybe made it a comfortable win at the end.



**Q. Do you know that going into Friday, like I've got it this week?**

**PADRAIG HARRINGTON:** No, I don't think you ever know. I think the worst thing you can ever be is playing well on the pro-am day. Every golfer will tell you that. The expectations are a very difficult thing to handle.

I think I personally try and ignore it. I'm not trying to go into a tournament without confidence, but I'm not necessarily trying to build myself up. I'm just trying to turn up and play every week and see what comes of it. I try and prepare the same, try and have the same attitude when I go out there.

Yes, so I'm definitely not one for thinking hey, I'm playing great, look at me this week, it's going to be a great week, because I've seen that fail many times. And I've performed quite well in a lot of tournaments over the years when I've been slightly off form because then I manage myself on the golf course.

Personally, I don't play my best when I'm overconfident. I definitely play -- I've certainly perform very well at times in the past when I just, just managing myself, just have a little bit of worry and trying to take the edge off something and just manage my way around. I think when you lower your expectations, it's a lot easier to handle this game of golf.

**Q. What was your reaction when Steve Stricker had to withdraw?**

**PADRAIG HARRINGTON:** We're all at that age in our lives, we've a lot going on, it's part of life. We feel for Steve. I'm sure he would have loved to have been here and take a bow for his great year.

But there's more important things than golf, family comes ahead of it, and he's definitely doing the right thing staying at home. We wish him and his family and his father all the best. As we know, family definitely comes ahead of golf.

We still all admire the year he's had. It would have been nice for him to be able to spin around here and wave at the crowds and, as I said, take a bow for his great play this year, but we all know how well he played and he's thoroughly deserving as the winner of the Schwab Cup.

**Q. Shifting gears, were you surprised how the Ryder Cup went this year?**

**PADRAIG HARRINGTON:** No. I think our team was really in great form. They seemed to bond very well. Home advantage, you know. I knew Luke would do a good job, I'd seen him behind the scenes, so no, I wasn't surprised at all.

**Q. Why is it so hard to win on the road in the Ryder Cup?**



**PADRAIG HARRINGTON:** It seems that way, yeah. Home advantage and setup is definitely very important. I think both sides have figured out that the winning formula over the years now, I think the U.S. probably left it to chance for a few too many years, but now they also know what sort of golf course suits them, and Europe certainly has figured that out.

Yeah, home crowds as well, I think that has a big effect on it. Yeah, fine margins between winning and losing so having a margin is important and home advantage can be that margin.

**Q. (Question about distance off the tee.)**

**PADRAIG HARRINGTON:** Yeah, you know, I think for me it's a lot to do, it helps my own attitude. I feel good about myself.

I'm very, very much like your typical amateur; when I'm hitting it good off the tee and good drives, it boosts my ego.

So yeah, it is quite important for me. It doesn't win tournaments or anything like that, but it does help with my overall feeling of confidence. It should help this week.

The greens seem to be quite firm and fast, so the shorter clubs you're going to be hitting in there usually means the more greens you're going to hit in regulation, should be the closer. You know, obviously with shorter clubs, stopping the ball a bit quicker, it would be easier for me.

The setup, it will be interesting to see. Obviously it worked pretty well for me last year, but the greens seem very, very quick this year. And you don't want to short-side yourself in any way, so that would be interesting to see if that's good for me or not.

