

# The Presidents Cup

Wednesday, September 21, 2022

Charlotte, North Carolina

Quail Hollow Club

**K.J. Choi**

**Geoff Ogilvy**

**Camilo Villegas**

**Mike Weir**

Press Conference



PRESIDENTS CUP™

THE MODERATOR: Geoff, your third time as assistant captain for Trevor, and you've played the Presidents Cup three times previously as well. Just give us an overall impression of what is the challenges ahead for this team as you guys try to turn the tables on the Americans?

GEOFF OGILVY: The challenge is, I don't know, we've got to win 15 1/2 points against a really good team. Ernie did an unbelievable job last time. I think we got a little bit of momentum out of it. We've got eight new players, maybe more, this week coming out here.

It's a perfect year, I think, for a really sort of fresh young team. Everyone is super excited.

Yeah, I don't know. I think we learn a little bit every single time. We learned a few things out at Royal Melbourne, and we learn something every time.

It's been a three-year gap because of COVID. The chat groups never stopped. Communication has been great. Trevor's been an incredible captain to this point getting everyone excited, getting it all organized.

We're just excited to get going. It feels like you wait a long time to get these things started. Just happy to be here, and we just want to get it going.

THE MODERATOR: K.J., we have four Koreans here on the team for the first time, which is a record for the international team. How proud are you, being a fellow Korean, to see so many of your country golfers playing in this edition of the Presidents Cup?

K.J. CHOI: Definitely. Four guys is fantastic. 2003, it was just me in South Africa, very difficult. Now we're chatting together in the practicing and information and everything together.

Tom Kim is the youngest in the Presidents Cup, and the last couple months, and then the four guys are getting very strong in the mental strength and everything. This week, I'm very proud this international team. Many, many times to see the players have a good mind and are ready for tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: We have the four captains' assistants from the national team, K.J. Choi, Geoff Ogilvy, Camilo Villegas, and Mike Weir. Ask each assistant a question. We'll begin with my far right, Mike, question for you. Maybe just give us a summary of what the mood has been with the international team over the last few days ahead of these matches this week.

MIKE WEIR: Sure. The mood has been great. The guys are very enthusiastic. We feel they're up for the challenge. Their games look great. There's a great buzz in our team room. All positive things.

So I think coming here, you guys know that we were here a couple weeks ago. We got to get together and see the golf course a little more, and the guys bonded, and they're just a great energy amongst the guys. There's a good mix of young and old, mostly young.

We're very excited, and the guys are very pumped to get started tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Camilo, your first time here as assistant captain. Perhaps just give us an indication of what you've tried to do with this team here this week along with your assistants and captain.

CAMILO VILLEGAS: First things first, it was an honor when Trevor gave me a call. It's good to be to be here with those guys. It's my first time I had a chance to play on this team. It's been a fun ride. Trying to learn, trying to support, trying to get those guys motivated.

It's a very special week, try to tell them how special they are, and we're going to have a great week. I'm really looking forward to it.



Today a little bit of practicing so they're more comfortable.

**Q. Geoff, you mentioned what Ernie did in 2019. Trevor mentioned it yesterday. Adam actually referred to it as kind of a line in the sand. Are there any specifics that you can talk about as to what he actually did to kind of instill that team spirit?**

GEOFF OGILVY: Look, I think the shield, I think, is pretty important. I think it was often hard for us to sort of have an identity, bringing so many different cultures together in the same place.

The first year was great. This is the second time. It's more and more recognizable. People are starting to buy the merch. Kids growing up in the world look at that and think I want that on my shirt one day, and that's really powerful. You might underestimate that, but that's a really powerful thing. We represent the rest of the world. That's a lot of people.

And he's just an inspiring -- I think that's important, and he's just an inspiring guy. He did a lot with the TOUR to sort of get our team a little bit more respected in the whole show, to step up the level of the whole thing, of the Presidents Cup for us to excite -- the players are so excited. You should see the looks on their faces when they went in the hotel room this week and when they come in the team room and stuff.

This is like something they've never seen, and Ernie really, really stepped it up in all those respects. He's a commanding presence, Ernie. When he was talking last time, we were listening. A lot of golf wisdom. One of the best competitors we've ever had on this team or golf really in this generation.

There's a lot of wisdom, and there's a lot of respect for Ernie. Him and Trevor, I know, had lots and lots of chats. Trevor was there last time learning it all, and he's just taken the ball. He started working as soon as we got home. He got home from Royal Melbourne, how can we do this better? How can we just continue on?

More than anything, he's given this team an identity and given international kids something to aspire to.

**Q. For Geoff or K.J., can you give us the best Tom Kim story of the week?**

K.J. CHOI: Tom is really a younger player, in the young age. Out of country, many in Asia, Australia, New Zealand and Ireland. Many experiences, many different grasses. He's young, but he's quality. The team make it very

opportunity more and more strength and strong mind. Very fun.

The team we need -- very cute, many talking. He is a very approachable, and many people reach out locally and combine together as friendship. I love it.

The four of us captains this year, as player, very different minds. More friendship. He's good English. Better than me. He's more better.

Last 15 years, not much coming for the younger players, the Koreans. But now more than seven, nine, ten. More bigger. I'm starting in America 30 years old, it's very difficult English. But younger guy is already out of the country and experienced in English. That's why the more friendship, comfortable in the play, everything.

This week is very fun. Watching you guys is more and then the big game this week.

CAMILO VILLEGAS: I've got a good Tom Kim story, pretty short too. We're on 12 today, and he makes a mistake doing simple math there. So I look at the kid and said, Tom, is that a college math? He looks at me and goes, Dude, I didn't even graduate from high school.

(Laughter).

**Q. K.J., not only, as you mentioned, are Koreans comfortable out here on the PGA TOUR now, but they are succeeding. Why is that happening? Why are Koreans having so much success on the PGA TOUR coming from your country here?**

K.J. CHOI: I don't know. 25 years ago, many Korean people go there, America, and they can't beat anybody. English is so bad, and hitting ball is not too good, and the tee shots are not too good, a little different.

In 1987 I play Davis Love and Justin Leonard together. It was so good experience. I try a little bit more in America PGA TOUR. I did it later, and then five years starting later and trying to do good in the PGA TOUR cut.

Now it's the mindset, okay, K.J. is a young man, and he did it. We can go. It's possible. Now they're practicing. Now it's 23 years. Many follow me or many researching the PGA TOUR and the more information, more technical in the play, more strength in the body, more information, more technical, better than me.

So anyway, I'm very proud of my younger player. He's Korean guy, that many people could strengthen their goal mentally and better. I love it. It's more supporting

together. The future is more better player coming. So I like it.

**Q. Mike, you said in Melbourne that the Presidents Cup has been some of your best memories in golf. You've played in five and now coaching in three, and there's been no wins over that span. So what have you gotten from it, even in defeat, sort of as a person and competitively?**

MIKE WEIR: There's a couple things there. I think personally the relationships you build, the friendships you make, there's a bond there when you're on a team and such an individual sport.

So when you get to this chance one week every two years to see familiar faces and bring in new people and meet them, especially with our diversity on our team and the different cultures, to tap into that and form those bonds is personally very rewarding and very satisfying, especially when you get to my age. It's great.

On the playing side, just some of the things that boosted my career, my first Presidents Cup, feeling do I belong? It's my first one, my second year on TOUR, getting out there, getting thrown in there with Nick Price, who I looked up to and playing well and playing the singles and beating Phil Mickelson in the singles my first one.

Then going on in the memories, playing with Geoff and K.J., Camilo, and the different little stories that we have that we maybe don't share with you guys all the things, but that we have to kind of hold on to those memories are always special.

I think there were different times in plenty of Presidents Cups that there may have been a little sign of hope in my game that parlayed into good play going forward. So those are things that are always important.

You see that on both teams, that guys play team events and then play well after. So there's been a little boost to my career after playing Presidents Cups.

**Q. Question for anybody in Melbourne. You talked about how Ernie Els did things differently and talked about how statistics is a big change, including putting some pairings together that were paradoxical, or you wouldn't expect from cultures or whatever. Is the mindset the same this time? Is it more reliance on stats, less in terms of the pairings? How has that changed in two or three years?**

MIKE WEIR: There's no doubt that's a factor. There's a lot of factors. That's why we have a team, and we have all the

captains, and we discuss all those things. If I can again relate back to 2000, my first one, the captains said you guys look good together. Let's go out there. It's evolved. Sports has evolved, obviously. Analytics has evolved.

So, yeah, that's part of the factor we use, and that's an important factor that Ernie used, and we still do.

**Q. More prominent or less prominent than 2019?**

GEOFF OGILVY: Don't remember.

MIKE WEIR: Exactly.

**Q. And just a quick nuts and bolts thing. Do you expect, with the picks today, do you expect the Americans to defer the first pick?**

MIKE WEIR: I don't know.

GEOFF OGILVY: I wouldn't know. That would be out of character. I don't know.

MIKE WEIR: No idea.

CAMILO VILLEGAS: I think either way, it's fine with us, obviously. But just for me to chip in, I don't know. Probably won't. But if they do, that's fine.

**Q. It's very difficult to follow Ernie. But some of the statements you've made so far about Trevor and some of the statements that Adam made as well, there seems to be a lot of thought that he's actually taken it to another level. Could you give some examples, maybe just short examples of what he's done differently or what he's doing now that really has taken it to another level?**

GEOFF OGILVY: My cart's really fast. Have you seen our carts? They're really nice?

If you haven't been in these teams or been in the rooms, not to throw anything out there, there are all these little nuances, but we can't really explain why it's just feeling more and more and more like we've got an identity and we're a team. We're incredibly organized.

As I said, the chatter and the communication used to start the week before the tournament, like ten Presidents Cups ago, eight Presidents Cups ago. Like I said, it never stops. We've had groups the whole time.

We were all in the loop. The captains were organized really early. Camilo was a great addition. We were all pumped about that. Just the communication and the

organization and his passion for this job has been fantastic. He's been so well positioned because he's out here every week, you know, actually getting paid to watch the golfers play. It's a perfect role to sort of stay in touch. They all know him. He's very sort of current for them.

It's just got such a strong identity now, and it's only getting stronger. The communication has been nuts, and the organization is really good, and my cart's nice.

**Q. K.J. Choi, you are the assistant captain for three times in a row at Presidents Cup. Can you tell me what's the difference since you started and how you can contribute more this year? You can answer in English.**

K.J. CHOI: (Speaking Korean).

**Q. I'd like to start with Geoff, but if anyone else would like to follow up. Geoff, do you have a good story or example of just how much Adam Scott burns to win this event?**

GEOFF OGILVY: No, I don't really have any stories, but really it's quite self-evident. I don't know how he is with you guys when he comes in here, but he really, really wants this. Can you imagine? It sucks to lose these things.

You've seen us mope in here and mope out of here, and you see how fun it is for the team when they win. It's not very fun to lose these things, and he's done it nine times.

Yeah, it's brutal. You're just compounding sort of frustration. As Weirys said, you build up such incredible relationships and friendships and connections with the people you play teams with, and he was starting in the era with Nick Price and Vijay and Norman, and he's all the way through here to this team, which is incredible through really big generations.

He just wants to win it for everybody. It's like he wants to win it for everybody who never got a chance to win one. Yeah, I don't know how you qualify all that. I don't have any stories, but he wants this really bad.

He's kind of the fifth assistant captain. He's the captain of the players, if you like. He's been here the longest. They're all leaning on him. He's great with experience. He's putting his arm around all their shoulders and making sure they're all having a good week.

Yeah, I don't know. Clearly he wants it really, really badly.

**Q. Camilo, what are your thoughts about Latin golf? Compared to many years ago when you debuted on**

**the PGA TOUR, now that you have two Latino players, you are a vice captain, and we have two caddies on the team, what's going on? What is happening through the years? Are we expecting a Latino duo this week?**

CAMILO VILLEGAS: First things first. It's great to have Sebastian and Mito here. They're a great addition to the team. My brother on the bag and me as an assistant captain, I think it's an honor for Latin golf.

I think the game is going the right direction. I think the PGA TOUR has done a great job with the PGA TOUR Latin America and giving opportunities for those guys to move on to the Korn Ferry Tour.

You've seen it. You've seen how there's good players being developed and just believing in themselves. I think it all starts with belief. That's what I tell those young guys. Now we have Nicholas Echavarria, who just got his TOUR card from Colombia. So that's a great thing.

When we talk about Latin TOUR golf, it's moving in the right direction. It's an honor to be here with all those guys, and I've always said I love helping the younger generations. I've been very fortunate to do this for a long time out here, and enjoy the process, learn.

Like Weirys said, have so many great experiences. I'm not a selfish guy. I want to help everybody just accomplish their dreams. Playing golf for a living has been -- the game of golf has given me so many things than I thought it was ever going to give me. Why not? Why not more Latin guys moving up?

**Q. And a Latino duo this week, Mito and Sebastian?**

CAMILO VILLEGAS: We'll talk about that Sunday.

**Q. Camilo, first Latin American to become an assistant captain. What does it mean to you personally, and where do you place this accomplishment compared to all you have achieved in your career?**

CAMILO VILLEGAS: Like I said, it was a great honor when Trevor gave me the call, joining this group of guys, being alongside them. I got a chance to play this tournament in 2009, but this is different. This is different. It's been a learning experience. It's been a fun one.

Going back to Trevor, being around Trevor, Trevor's communication, Trevor's attention to detail has been overwhelming, to be honest. It's been so much fun to be around him; the way he communicates with the team, the way he communicates with us, the assistant captains. It's been a very cool experience.

I hope this is not my first and only time. I want to help this team moving forward, and from a personal point of view, it's pretty special. You take certain things for granted when you're younger, I can tell you that. When I played this tournament in 2009, I was young, and you take things for granted.

Now that you're here as an assistant captain, you realize how special it is. You realize how special it is to be part of these teams. You realize how special it is to live these moments. Man, it's been a blast.

**Q. Mike, a lot of people are going to be, I guess, meeting or getting exposed to Taylor Pendrith this week for the first time. I was just wondering if you have any insight on his background, who he is as a player and as a guy.**

MIKE WEIR: I think people are going to come to know Taylor Pendrith this week and going forward. Very impressed with his game. I think you guys all know how long he is, and that's what's talked about. He has a good, well-rounded game. Watching him hit iron shots, pitching, putting, he's a very good player.

He's kind of the modern build of player now, powerful, with all the shots. That's what does well on the PGA TOUR now. So I suspect he's going to have a great career.

He fits well in our team. He's a very likable guy, easy to pair up with anybody. I think he's really enjoyed himself and fit in quite nicely. So I'm really enjoying watching his game.

I hadn't played much golf with him or hadn't played any golf with him at all or watched his game much, just through Danny Saul, who caddies for Corey Connors. Knowing Corey, they've been telling me about his game for years, but to see it up in person live is impressive.

You could put him on the range against anybody, and you would be like is that guy the No. 1 player in the world or going to be? It's that impressive. So excited that he's on the team.

THE MODERATOR: We want to thank the four assistants and wish you all the best for the rest of the week. Thank you.

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