

BMW PGA Championship

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Virginia Water, Surrey, England

Wentworth Golf Club

Patrick Reed

Press Conference

MODERATOR: Delighted to be joined by Patrick Reed, our Race to Dubai No. 1 at the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth this week. Patrick, just give us a sense of how excited you are to be back at Wentworth, because you only came over last year for the first time. So what are you expecting for this week?

PATRICK REED: I'm expecting to play some good golf and to play well. It's a treat any time we come over and play on the European Tour. Just the way everything is run, the way the fans normally are, and the way the guys are out here, it's such a blast to come over and play. I enjoy it a ton.

Coming here this week obviously feels a little different because unfortunately we don't have the fans, but at the same time the golf course is -- even though it's softer because of all the rain, it's still in perfect shape. So it's a golf course that's going to rely on you to hit quality golf shots and play well.

And really, for me, it's just kind of get in my zone and start playing. Because from last year compared to this year, with the fans, with how amazing they were and how supportive they were of golf, coming over here and how supportive they were of me, especially being a guy on an American Ryder Cup team rather than a European Ryder Cup team, it was awesome to see.

And it definitely made it one of my favorite events to come over and play, and I definitely had to make sure I came over and played this year.

MODERATOR: Well, some questions on the ground first.

Q. Was it a late decision to come, or were you always planning to come over, and was it motivated by the chance to win the Race to Dubai?

PATRICK REED: It definitely was motivated by winning the Race to Dubai. When you're in the lead, being able to come over is always nice to try to stay on top.



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But it was a late entry into the event, and it was mainly my team and I trying to figure out, okay, safety-wise, with everything that's going on in the world and traveling over, making sure, one, we're not putting people at risk when we come over, but at the same time, when I go home, not putting my family at risk when I get back to the States.

So it was a tough decision. It was a long decision. And it's one of those that at the end of the day, every time we thought about it, it was -- we've always supported the European Tour, we've always enjoyed coming over and playing on the European Tour, and being a lifetime member of the Tour, it was something that I had to come over and play.

I wouldn't have felt right not coming over and supporting the European Tour. And really at the end of the day, all I can control is what I do. And as long as I feel like I'm being responsible, being safe and social distancing and taking care of myself, whether I'm traveling, whether I'm on the road, and with knowing the protocols that the European Tour has and how locked in their bubble is, I knew I was going to be safe once I got here.

So at that point I was like I need to come over, I need to come play, come support, and come to a place that I really enjoyed playing last year.

For me it was a longer decision than it needed to be, but it was a very confident and good decision, I feel like, coming over and playing.

Q. You mentioned the tight protocols were a bit tighter here than they are on the PGA TOUR. Have you found the adjustment between the two?

PATRICK REED: It's definitely a lot tighter over here. But at the same time, it's smart. And you totally understand. On the European Tour, you all travel country to country, and you have people from so many different countries coming in and playing.

On the PGA TOUR, you're mainly staying in the United States, so you're still inside the same country, and you have 90, 95 percent of the guys on Tour from the United States.



So they're following our protocols. And when we go to different events in the States, the state -- basically the state officials are the ones that decide how strict our rules are over there. When you go from country to country, it's a lot different.

So they definitely have a tighter one here, but at the same time, it's the right thing to do. It's basically everything we're doing in a States, just a little tighter.

And at the end of the day, when they get tight like that, especially seeing spikes coming back with COVID, it definitely makes you feel comfortable when you come over and play. You definitely feel safe. You feel comfortable when you're out playing around everybody.

So for me, it's nice. It's nice coming back.

Q. Justin Rose was in just a minute ago, he was giving you plenty of kudos for making the journey, given how easy it would have been to stay in America. Has that been the general reaction on the practice round?

PATRICK REED: It has been. The guys seem excited to have me over and thankful to have me over. And honestly, at the end of the day, I've always wanted to be worldwide player. I've always wanted to travel and take my game all around the world.

And I'm thankful enough to have an honorary membership, lifetime membership on the European Tour. When you get something like that, for me, as a player and as a competitor, when you have an event that is as large as this one and means so much to the European Tour, for what they have done for me, there's no question.

Really, with that late entry, it always was trying to figure out how I was going to get here, making sure it was the right decision on safety-wise, but it's one of those things that I know the guys, guys seem pretty happy to have me over here, and I'm happy to be here.

I can't wait to tee it up and get ready and hopefully give the fans that are watching on TV something to cheer about.

Q. Just wondered, when did you actually make the final decision?

PATRICK REED: Oh, it was -- I think it was like a couple days after the deadline. I had to get a sponsor exemption to get in the event. So it was a couple days after the deadline. I was thinking about it, I thought I had a little longer.

With COVID, with everything that's been going on, my mind

was kind of on the deadline for the PGA TOUR, which was the Friday before, and I knew I was going to make my decision before that obviously, but I forgot that it was a couple weeks before that.

So at that point I was like -- whenever I got the email, actually checked the email, like, oh, deadline is Thursday. And I was like, wait. I looked at my phone, it was Friday. So I was already past the deadline. I was like uh-oh. So I contacted the Tour quickly, and they're like, oh, no, we have two sponsor exemptions, if you'd like to come over and play it, and we'll use one of those.

Like I said, it's another thing I'm really thankful of the European Tour for basically looking after me and having my back, especially in a situation like that.

Q. You obviously had a front row seat for Bryson at Winged Foot. It didn't go for you that day. What did you take out of it? Were you surprised that it just didn't happen for you?

PATRICK REED: You're always upset with the outcome, especially when you have the lead going into -- after Friday, and really after -- I think I was tied for the lead after nine holes on Saturday.

But really the way I hit the golf ball from tee-to-green, I didn't deserve to be in that spot. My short game was so spot on the first 45 holes that I was getting (indiscernible) from everywhere. You could literally put my ball in a trash can and I would have figured a way to get it up-and-down.

I mean, I was missing it wrong spots, I was hitting tee shots, whether it was driver, 3-wood, hybrid, even the 4-iron into the rough consistently. I was scrambling every time. And when you do that, especially at a U.S. Open or any big event like that, it's hard to make birdies. It's hard to salvage pars. And it caught up to me, and it showed.

And so right after we got done with the U.S. Open, I wasn't pleased. Obviously, especially with how I was hitting the ball. I was pleased with the short game, and I was -- can't really say pleased with the finish, but really with how bad I hit it, actually it was a decent finish.

So I got right back to work. Monday was down with my coach, worked 9:00 to 6:00 on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday on full swing, trying to get it locked in. And it feels a lot better this week. It feels like we're now trending the right direction on a full swing. And as long as my short game stays halfway sharp, you know, if I hit the ball better, I'm expecting good things.

Q. Obviously second in the Race to Dubai a couple

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

years ago, was that when it became an ambition maybe to go one better, or was it already something you were eyeing?

PATRICK REED: It was always an ambition of mine. I mean, ever since I was little, I always wanted to be a worldwide player. I wanted to travel the world and be known as a worldwide golfer, not just stay at home and play in the States.

That would be the easy thing to do. With the purses we play for, with the world ranking we play for and everything we have in the States, that would be the easy thing, to kind of stay home, play on the PGA TOUR full-time only.

But that's not who I am. I see myself as a guy who travels, a guy who plays worldwide, who tries to better my game and figure out not only different cultures, different grasses, different time zones, try to become a more well-rounded golfer. And the only way I'm going to do that is by playing on the European Tour and playing around the world.

And to have that opportunity to come over and play, it's always been a dream of mine to win over here, also win in the States and win the Race to Dubai, win the FedExCup, win as many majors as I can, just try to collect hardware.

Q. Just on Bryson, do you think the way he approaches the game is going to change golf generally, and do you see yourself making any adjustments, on the back of what he's done?

PATRICK REED: When you look at generations, just kind of going back farther, every generation has seen guys get bigger, faster stronger. So, I mean, as we move forward, yes, guys are going to be get longer. I mean, that's just how it's always worked. Everyone always seems to get longer and longer.

But I think you're going to see guys come out that all of a sudden are having 200-mile-an-hour ball speeds, can carry it 370, 360, maybe very, very few, but also feel like what's going to happen is golf courses are going to start to change a little bit and where you -- if you're going to try to hit it that far, you're going to have it on a string, you're going to have to hit that straight.

There's going to be penalty areas, I feel like, rough is going to get thicker and nastier, they're going to put pin placements in spots.

And look at it, I mean, he's playing amazing right now. And I think a lot of that comes to he has control of where that driver is going.

Was I impressed with when we played how he hit the ball at the U.S. Open on Saturday? No. I mean, he was missing fairways. But with that length, when you go to an event like the U.S. Open where the fairways were as firm as they were and how narrow they are, a lot of the guys, it didn't matter how far you hit it, it's hard to hit a lot of those fairways and keep it in.

If you can fly it 350 and you hit it in the rough compared to hit it 290 in the rough, you're 60 yards closer to the green. I mean, you're going to be hitting wedges, 9-irons, 8-irons; other guys aren't going to be able to get to the green.

So he knew that that was going to be a strength of his, so he was able to kind of unleash and use that. And it's always nice to have something like that in your bag.

But I was more impressed at Detroit. I played with him at Detroit when he won, and when he was gearing back off the driver, he was hitting it sideways. When he was hammering it, it seemed like he hit the middle of every fairway. And to swing that hard and make that much of a change that quickly and hit the ball straight, that's impressive.

But, I mean, U.S. Open, he got it done, and he hit enough quality golf shots, but that length, with how hard it was to hold those fairways, in general, that length definitely helped him.

He was able to hit it out there. And then with that extra speed, he's able to kind of get out of the rough easier. Then it comes down to a putting contest. I feel like he putted pretty well.

Q. Would he be able to get away with that at Augusta?

PATRICK REED: I don't know. See, I -- when I look at golf courses, since I can't even come close to flying it 350, I don't even look at that stuff. I look at yards, says, oh, it's 354 through the fairway with that tree, it's usually my target, like my start line. I'm not thinking, oh, you know, might hit it through on that line so I might need to gear off. I'm sitting there going, oh, this is driver wedge to get to that point.

So it all depends. But you look at golf courses, you look at guys who win every week, usually they're inside the top ten in putting that week and their ball striking is usually top 25, but their short game, they're in the top of the field.

And it's because at the end of the day, all of us can hit the ball well. And if you're hitting the ball in the short grass, you have control of your irons, you're hitting the ball on greens, hitting it close, you make birdies, that's what wins

golf tournaments.

He could go hit it 380 yards on every hole, but if he doesn't have control or is hitting in the wrong spots or is not making putts, if a guy who is hitting 280, hitting every green and making -- having 28 putts round shooting 5-, 7-under par every round, he's going to be the one that wins the golf tournament.

So I think what he has exposed is he has exposed there's now a complete different way to play the game of golf to get the job done. I mean, you see these guys that love drive contests, a lot of them they can hit it forever, but you put them 70 yards, 60 yards, they can't hit a 60-yard wedge shot.

Bryson has now figured out how to hit it a mile and hit a 60-yard wedge shot and putt. So he's just showing that there's now a new way that you can play the game of golf.

But I think that the old way is always going to work. The guy who has full control of their game, the guy who's making putts is going to be the guy that wins a golf tournament.

Q. Patrick, don't you have quarantine issues in coming over here or when you go back?

PATRICK REED: Coming over, I don't. We have a special exemption coming over playing golf and being inside the bubble. I had to get tested before I came over, before I even got on my flight, and I tested negative, my whole team tested negative.

So I flew over, and once I land, I basically isolated ourselves in a hotel room, and we just kind of waited until our test results came back once we got here. And once our results -- once we got tested here and our results came back and came back negative, then I was able to enter into the bubble.

Really, I mean, the bubble here, it's golf course, hotel, and eat at the one restaurant at the hotel or the golf course. So you don't leave those two areas.

And going home, I haven't really thought about it going home. But when I go home, I'm obviously going to self-quarantine right when I get home, I'm going to get tested right when I get home to make sure that I'm negative and go from there.

But if I have to go home and quarantine, that's fine. It's definitely worth it coming over here and playing and supporting the European Tour.

Q. When did you arrive?

PATRICK REED: I got in Sunday morning.

Q. Can I have a quick follow-up. Is the attraction the event or is it the venue or is it both?

PATRICK REED: It's the event, the venue, and supporting the European Tour. I mean, the biggest thing for me is it's their biggest event, and for what the European Tour has done for me, I felt like I had to be here. I had to support. And I was going to figure out a way, and my team was going to figure out a way for me to be able to come over to show that support considering what they've done for me, and especially during times like this where everyone is struggling.

This is something where the entire world is struggling, and to be able to come over and support someone other than just my home in Houston, in Texas, was something that I feel like needed to be done.

You can still do things responsibly, safely and show support and hopefully give the fans something to watch so they can stop thinking about all the bad things that are going on right now and the scary things that are going on right now.

And I felt like that's something that needed to be done. And to be able to come over and do it, for me, meant a lot. And for me, it was to come over and support as many people as I can.

Q. Very quick question. How long did it take to get the results of your test after you arrived?

PATRICK REED: I landed at 9:30 in the morning, and by the time -- I literally landed, went straight to the -- landed, went straight to the hotel, isolated until testing opened up at noon, got back at noon, and then by that point I think my tests were back at like 3:00, 3:30. So it was a day of sitting around and kind of just staring at a couple of walls, but it was definitely worth it.

Q. Just back to your support of the European Tour, are you committed to playing the DP World at the end of the world?

PATRICK REED: Definitely. Unless -- you never know at that time of year what happens with COVID, I mean, that's a day-to-day thing. And if it gets really bad where all of a sudden travel bans are happening where I can't physically get out of here and to get over there to play, then that would be probably the only thing that stops me.

But I definitely plan on coming over, definitely plan on playing and supporting and trying to win my first Race to Dubai.

Q. Has Collin Morikawa been speaking to you about the Race to Dubai and the European Tour?

PATRICK REED: He hasn't.

Q. Anyways, I ask because I was on the call last night, and he's not played a European Tour event on European soil, but he's talking about teeing up in Dubai, which probably, at least in these uncertain times, pretty weird that a guy who's got a chance to win the Race to Dubai has not played on European soil.

PATRICK REED: Well, you know, I mean, it's one of those things that you -- he hasn't won a European Tour event in Europe. He won a major, which is a European Tour and PGA TOUR event.

Q. WGC.

PATRICK REED: Yeah, so it's kind of one of those things that with how the times are, I feel like the more support we can get, especially from guys from the States, the better.

That's one reason why I always come over and play, is because I know how important it is for our games to travel. I mean, look at the guys back in the day, Mr. Nicklaus, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Watson, their games traveled. They traveled and played golf and traveled around the world to play.

And I've always wanted to do that. And having this opportunity, hopefully I'm inspiring others in the United States as well as younger kids that when they start growing up, they start to travel and play more around the world, not just take the easier route and play at home.

Q. Good answer. Play well this week. Thanks.

PATRICK REED: Thanks.

MODERATOR: Patrick, thank you for your time. Wonderful to have you back in Europe, and all the best this week for BMW PGA.

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