

# BMW PGA Championship

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Virginia Water, Surrey, England

Wentworth Golf Club

## Luke Donal

### Press Conference

**Q. The Hero Cup in January, the chances of Jon Rahm and Rory playing aren't that good given that it's straight after the Tournament of Champions. Does that matter or is it more for up-and-coming players to get experience and yourself and vice captains?**

LUKE DONALD: Yeah, we'll try and get as good a number of players as possible but I'm sure there will be some experienced players and also some kind of younger, new generational players that have not been part of teams before. That's part of the process to get those kind of involved in that team aspect, and understanding how important they are and what the meaning is behind them.

Again, we will endeavor to try and get as good a player there as possible.

**Q. So just to follow on that, which captains did you speak about their experience at the Seve Trophy and what they learned from that experience before being Ryder Cup Captain?**

LUKE DONALD: Yeah, I talked to Thomas. I talked to Paul McGinley. I talked to Pádraig a little bit. You know, I think some of those felt it was very beneficial in terms of just a lead-up to them being a future captain and just learning to be around how the whole process works. You know, it will be great for me to be there, as well, to see, again, how all this is kind of working and all the motivation behind it and getting the teams together in the right kind of frame of mind.

Yeah, they thought it was pretty valuable and I'm glad it's back in the schedule and hope this event goes from strength-to-strength.

**Q. Obviously someone like Ewen Ferguson, how much of a boost do you feel this announcement will be for him that the old Seve Trophy is coming back: Ewen Ferguson, obviously having a great season and have maybe an event like this to look forward to?**

LUKE DONALD: Yeah, I walked to Ewen last week



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midway through the tournament and congratulated him on his good play and he obviously had another very, very solid week and had a good chance to win. Those are the type of players that I'll be looking at. Hopefully that will give him motivation to push on and get a little kind of sense of what team events are like and get his appetite up for The Ryder Cup, the main event, I suppose.

**Q. You've made a tremendous impression as to molding this team into the way that you want it to be, six picks, your involvement in The Hero Cup. Are you able to give us an idea of what other tricks you've got up your sleeve? Are you, for example, going to have fewer vice captains or many more? And I believe you're not going to use the 15th club, the statistical work will be done by Edoardo; is that right?**

LUKE DONALD: That is correct, yeah. Edoardo has been great so far and he was somewhat instrumental in coming up with the six picks and the way we went with the criteria. I think statistically, it makes more sense. I didn't really see any downside with having more picks. I think form leading up to a Ryder Cup is key and that will give us an opportunity to see who is playing the best.

I think a few of the picks will probably be self-explanatory and it's nice to have some other picks to kind of round out the team, create great partnerships, great foursomes and fourball pairings that really work.

You know, and also looking at players that suit well to that golf course at Marco Simone. Having six picks is nice. It gives me a lot of flexibility to really choose the strongest lineup coming nearer when the Ryder Cup starts.

**Q. And the rest of my question, any other tricks up your sleeve that you can reveal now?**

LUKE DONALD: Well, I've been a part of four Ryder Cups playing. I've been a part of another two as a vice captain. I've certainly picked up a lot along the way. I'll be having conversations with past captains about what they learnt. I'll certainly be taking parts of what I enjoyed as a player and as a vice captain but also adding some of my own stuff. I'll kind of keep that close to my chest but I certainly learnt a lot over those six Ryder Cups and I tend to give everything I've got to try and get that Cup back.

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**Q. Going back to The Hero Cup, how hands-on are you going to be in terms of picking the two teams, and do you envisage your vice captains actually leading the two sides?**

LUKE DONALD: We are very close to finalising who the captains are going to be. Yeah, I hope to be very involved with the picks. I'll be talking to the two captains, who those will be, and myself and my vice captains -- I'm probably giving that away, but it probably will not be Thomas or Edoardo at this point.

It's better for them to be their roles in what will be The Ryder Cup, but there will be another two guys that you're very familiar with, and I'm excited to -- again, we are very close to finalising that and that will be announced very shortly.

**Q. Given the furor that the LIV guys playing this week has caused, is there any circumstance where you envisage picking any of them if you are allowed to after the court case as one of your wild cards?**

LUKE DONALD: Well, of course, again, it's hard to answer that because it's all hypotheticals and to be honest I haven't really been spending any kind of my energy on it because there's so many unknowns right now.

Once this legal situation passes and then I'll have a better understanding. I think after that, I'll be able to answer your question a little bit better.

**Q. What's it like in the changing room? How would you describe it? Are you aware of tensions? Are there difficulties? How do you feel, yourself, when you see people who have gone to LIV?**

LUKE DONALD: Yeah, I haven't seen any tension. Obviously friendly with those guys and continue to be friendly and nothing's really changed there, so no worries.

**Q. Just talking about that LIV situation and obviously sort of a hypothetical because it's got to go through the courts, but how much of a burden is it as a captain knowing that that situation might not be resolved for several months and most likely it won't be until deep into the year of the Cup itself?**

LUKE DONALD: Again, all I can control is right now and the decisions in front of me. That's something totally out of my control. It's going to be down the road. I'll deal with it when it comes. There have been many challenges from different Ryder Cups in the past. Sam Torrance had to have a team that a year later, some of the players weren't

playing nearly as well when they were picks. Monty had an issue with the weather and had to completely change the format. There are always be challenges and I'll try ask deal with them the best I can when it happens.

**Q. Obviously The Hero Cup falls within the time frame before any settlement to the thing. Is it going to put new an awkward position, particularly someone like Sergio, a particularly close friend of yours, where you have to decide whether those guys should be involved when maybe they won't be involved in The Ryder Cup?**

LUKE DONALD: Again, I'll get with the team captains when they are announced and trying to find really the best fit for that event. And going forward and I think that's all I can do right now.

**Q. You haven't ruled them out?**

LUKE DONALD: (Shaking head).

**Q. Talking about lawyers and court cases resolving, how much do you think this should be resolved by lawyers or how much should be resolved by European Tour members and players?**

LUKE DONALD: I'm not a lawyer. Again, I don't really know the legal situation and how that works. I don't really know how to answer that, sorry.

**Q. Given you've got to pick a team and develop camaraderie, how much should the decision come down to lawyers in a courtroom or to how the guys feel?**

LUKE DONALD: As far as I'm aware, that's the only way it's going to get resolved just because that's the legal process.

NEIL AHERN: Thank you, have a great week.

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