

DP World Tour Championship

Wednesday, 17 November, 2021

Dubai, UAE

Jumeirah Golf Estates

Paul Casey

Quick Quotes

Q. Still in with a chance to win the magnificent Vardon Trophy, how much is it in your thoughts, especially now that you're here?

PAUL CASEY: Yes, I think it's all about playing good golf this week, isn't it, getting off to a good start. Look, I'd love to win it. I try not to project too far ahead, simple as that. To me the focus is on Thursday, and after that it's Friday and try to put myself in a position to win it come Sunday.

Q. Coming close to win it in the past, what would you say it takes from the player to come out as European No. 1 at the end of the season?

PAUL CASEY: It's consistent, solid play all season. I enjoy the fact that it's not done and dusted until we get here. Nobody can run away with it. You've got to perform right up to the final week, the final putt. You know, I've had a solid, consistent season. It's not maybe been as spectacular as some of the guys who are here and the guys who are leading The Race to Dubai, but I still need to do something spectacular. I have to win this week, which is I think why it makes this format so exciting.

Q. There are some magnificent names on the trophy behind you, most of the legends on The European Tour, what would it mean to add yours?

PAUL CASEY: That's what it's all about, is it. I don't remember the year I was close. It was like in 2006, 2009, something like that, '06. I think it came down to the final hole but I wasn't the one in control. Sergio made a par on the last; I might have won and he made a bogey and Pádraig won.

But adding my name so that list, I mean, that's what it's all about, and it has been for me for a long, long time, when I won some of the titles I've won in Europe, and you hold those trophy aloft and you start to see those names; and I've not been one to study who has won various trophies or even the Order of Merit, The Race to Dubai, sorry, for that matters, it was Order of Merit when I was a kid. But you certainly do once you've won it, and you do the older you



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get, and then when you stop playing, you'll probably do an awful lot more looking at who has won what, and where is where your name fits on that list. This is an important week.

Q. You're no stranger to success in this part of the world. You won at the beginning of the year in Dubai. What does the Earth Course require from you?

PAUL CASEY: I think this Earth Course, it's interesting. If you look at the roster of guys who have won here, you can't pinpoint any one specific thing. We've got somebody like Fitzpatrick, brilliant putter; yes, he's a great ball-striker, but he's not as good a ball-striker as Jon Rahm. You would argue that Jon Rahm has probably got better short game skills than Lee Westwood and he's got something different. I think it highlights that it requires everything. Probably the thing it requires the most is the thing that is the unmeasurable is the heart and the bravery and the mind. It's a tricky golf course. It's one you don't see the bottom of the flag on very many holes and when you come down to some of those closing holes with danger, holes like 17 and 18, bravery, guts, courage, great shots from like Rory into the last. That is what springs to mind for me.

All the physical skills we could ever imagine, but it's what's in there.

Q. Rule changes on the horizon, length of driver being restricted and it looks like green books are going to go on both sides of the pond. What are your thoughts on those subjects?

PAUL CASEY: Driver length, I get it. The length debate, I probably would have gone with maybe driver head size rather than length. I don't think it's going to really move the needle that much. It's not something I've really spent much time thinking about.

Greens books on the other hand, I think that's going to be a difficult one. I think the use of the technology in terms of how we've been sort of mapping greens, it got interesting. I'm a guy who buys the books and uses the books. But I think it's one where yes it's taken away for certain guys the art of using all your senses to read greens. The rule that's been written, I don't like it. It's not perfect. It seems like there's restrictions on guys even practising with measuring devices and things like that.

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Rules are very, very difficult to write. But that one, at least I think that one is going in the right direction. Not perfect yet. Needs some tweaking. We'll see what the future holds.

Q. Your faithful caddie, John McLaren is going to take a break from the game after 30-odd years out here, partly brought on but the extra stresses of COVID restrictions and travelling, etc. How much more are mental wealth and general well-being become part of your thinking in recent times?

PAUL CASEY: Yeah, I think, you know, maybe before we entered the pandemic, it was already in our minds a little bit. I mean, John has got a young family. I've got a young family. And we were always discussing, you know, the calendar and the flights and where we're going and trying to make life as easy as possible, but that becomes a real sort of forefront of our decision-making right now in terms of what toll is this taken on all of us.

So it's interesting. I applaud John for saying that, you know, he just wants a break. Plain and simple. He's not retiring. He's not having a total mental breakdown. He just needs a bit of rest. We are going to call it a sabbatical. He just needs to step away from six months and get some energy back and he wants to spend some time with the family.

Look, mental health has never been talked about enough. As athletes, we spend so much time working on the mental side of things, don't we. It's like, you know, trying to block out the water down the right or overcome the bogey we just made. But probably you know, we would be guilty of, again, not spending enough time working on ourselves or helping others and being aware of it and discussing it and it being out there in the open.

The really healthy thing to come out of John's announcement of taking a break in February, because that's all it is, has actually raised this discussion again. And literally hundreds of text messages that he and I have received, wishing him well and things like this which have brought a slight smile, but also people who have said thank you for mentioning it and can we have a word, and that's the really healthy thing that's come out of it.

Q. Your thoughts on announcement of The European Tour that next year will be the DP World Tour.

PAUL CASEY: I think it's a great announcement. I mean, congratulations to DP World. About time it's called the World Tour, isn't, it really. For 20-plus years when I've been a part of this tour, I've always thought that the

European part was sort of underselling it. I mean, the under of places we play around the world, and the membership; this is a fantastic announcement.

The elevated sort of status that it will receive will trickle down to everybody who supports us out here. I mean, this isn't just about players playing for more money. You have to remember this trickles down into the caddies and support staff and media everyone and else, and the golf family in general wins on this front, so DP World Tour is going to be a fantastic thing.

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