

# The Ryder Cup

Monday, 13 September, 2021

## Ian Poulter

Media Conference



**Q. Ian, a lot of people in the media always seemed to think you were an automatic choice you and were going to get a pick. Did you think that way or could you afford to think that way? How did you think about it?**

IAN POULTER: It's never easy being on the outside. I would have loved to have gone out this week, made my way on the team and obviously taken that out of Paddy's hands.

So the permutations were big. You know, so many points at play this week and so many different outcomes that could have presented itself. You know, I think I've been in the position to play some good golf this year and I think I've done a pretty good job of that.

You know, confident but not confident until the phone rings and you actually get the full nod to say, listen,

I'd love for you to be part of Team Europe and you bring a lot to the table, that was a lovely call to have. It's very motivating to stand here with a week's time to go over to Whistling Straits with a great team. Yeah, get the full vibe from now until next Monday and obviously pitch up in Whistling Straits and really bond with the team and go out and enjoy it.

**Q. Just wondering, there was talk if you watched the Solheim Cup that there was hardly any sort of European crowds sort of worked in the European Team's favour. Do you sort of see that in some way taking place at Whistling Straits given the fact that not many Europeans or Brits will be able to cross the pond to The Ryder Cup?**

IAN POULTER: Yeah, this is going to be very new for us to experience that, especially on away soil, to have smaller numbers. I still think we are going to have a decent number of people, expats that are going to be out there, that have even travelled to be in a position to spend ten or 14 days out of the country to make sure that they are there at The Ryder Cup, it's going to be different. I think we are going to have to use that energy.

And you know, it's pretty self-motivating when you can hear a lot of that energy, which is being used against you in a way to motivate their team. But I think it's a very -- it's a different scenario that we are going to have all experience and hopefully we can put all of the energy from that that we need. You saw it at the Solheim Cup that we say, and the girls did a simply incredible job to be in that position. It would have been quiet, it would have been lonely. Pretty hostile position to go and play golf but the girls managed to deliver and did an amazing job. So hopefully we can do just exactly what the girls did.

**Q. You know Shane quite well and Bernd well and you probably got to know Viktor on the PGA TOUR this year, and you being around The Ryder Cup for so many times, what simple advice could you give to the three of them?**

IAN POULTER: Embrace every piece of it. When you look at Viktor, Viktor is Top-10 in the world. He plays mainly on U.S. soil, but what he brings to the team is a lot of firepower. He will bring passion. Somebody that at such a young age has done an incredible job.

Bernd Wiesberger has been close to the team a number of times but look at what he's done in the last few months to push his way on the team. He nearly won in Switzerland a couple weeks ago. Obviously he'd have been disappointed to have finished way he did, but to play the way he played this week, under the pressure he was under, shows what mettle he's got; and obviously Shane, Open Championship winner, WGC winner, somebody who gets on amazing with everybody on the team, all of the guys bringing a lot and they add a lot of value to this team.

I think Paddy is in a great position as he said moments ago that he's got lots of options in foursomes and fourballs, and it's a good, solid team.

**Q. What do you think of the impetus of Paddy picking you? Is it your past record or your current play?**

IAN POULTER: I think it's a mixture of all of that. Statistically this year, I think I'm fourth in putting for the year. You have to hole putts at the right time. Ryder Cup

lends itself to that. The Match Play, I played well at the Match Play this year. I finished high up at the WGC. I finished fourth in Scotland a few weeks ago.

So not only do I bring obviously a bit of current form but you know, that extra bit that Paddy wants me there in the team room to inspire some of the players and kind of be an adaptable player to play with many people throughout the team. Hopefully I can do the job I've done in previous Ryder Cups and that is deliver quite a few points, and my percentage conversion of that has been pretty good.

Very happy to get that nod from Paddy today.

**Q. You've made the team on your own. You've been a captain's pick. Is there a difference at all in terms of how a captain's pick feels in terms of needing perhaps to deliver more to justify his pick and do the other players not look at the captain's pick as a pick or part of the 12? Could you speak to that?**

IAN POULTER: Yeah, obviously playing your way on the team is a great position to be in because it takes a lot of pressure off of you in the coming weeks leading in. Being on the outside looking in, it makes you feel nervous right up until the moment you actually get the telephone call.

Being asked to join a team and to go out and do the job you've been asked to go and do, definitely adds a little bit of extra pressure. And it's not easy. We've had three picks this year, and obviously the U.S. Team have got six picks.

So you know, from that aspect, three of our players are going to feel under pressure and obviously six of their players are going to feel under pressure, too. It's not easy. It's not easy to be given that opportunity. The player has to embrace it. He has to be comfortable with that, and he has to go out and enjoy the week at the same time. These Ryder Cup pressures can be pretty intense.