

The Ryder Cup

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Rome, Italy

Marco Simone

Team Europe

Ludvig Åberg

Press Conference

STEVE TODD: Welcome back, everyone. I'm very pleased to be joined by Ludvig Åberg from Team Europe.

Ludvig, it's been an incredible few months for you, but now we're actually here and the Ryder Cup is real. Tell us how your experience has been so far.

LUDVIG ÅBERG: It's been cool. It's been a lot of fun. Kind of getting to know the guys a little bit more, spending some more time with them. Obviously today we got to play 18 holes, and the course looks a little bit different from when we were here the last time, but it's really good. It's challenging, and it will be good for match play.

Q. Luke said he first started keeping tabs on you in January when you played in the Middle East and you played with Edoardo and he got a good report. When did you start to believe that it was a legitimate possibility for you to make this team?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: It wasn't when I was in school, but it was probably toward the late part of the summer when I started to play well. Got to play with Luke myself over the summer, so kind of got to start a relationship with him.

For me, all I tried to do was play good golf. If someone would have told me a couple months ago that I would be here playing a Ryder Cup, probably wouldn't believe them. It's really cool and it's a dream come true for me to be here, and looking forward to the next couple days.

Q. How important was the PGA TOUR Youth Programme to you in this journey over the last couple months?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Oh, I don't think without the PGA TOUR I would be here. For me I owe a lot to the PGA TOUR Youth Programme and what they have done and what they are continuing to do. They are continuing to develop the programme, and I know it's going to make college golf better. It's going to make amateur golf better and



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eventually it's going to make pro golf better, too. It's very cool, and I'm lucky to be the first guy to take advantage of this.

Q. We all love your country, Sweden, but there are not too many famous Swedes, Abba, Henrik Stenson, Ibrahimovic, Björn Borg. How does it feel for you to be as famous as them in such a short time, and could you go on to actually eclipse those guys and become Sweden's most famous person?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: I would not put myself in the same sentence as Abba. All I try to do is play golf and I try to hit as few shots as I can every tournament I play in. Yeah, I guess so.

Q. We spoke about this briefly at Wentworth, and you were quite modest about your nickname, the Stud. You were quite keen to get to the bottom of why you were called that. I wonder if you have, and are you used to it yet, and this sexy golf image you've got?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: I mean, it's very flattering for sure. To be fair, I haven't thought about it much since we spoke the last time (laughter).

But yeah, I'll be very proud if someone calls me that. So it's pretty cool. Thank you.

Q. People who speak highly of you mention your patience as a player. So two questions, if I can. One, do you know why, where that comes from? I know your parents or upbringing or whatever. And connected, what is it, if anything, that makes you really cross?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: That makes me what?

Q. Really angry. When do you lose your patience?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Well, I do think one of the things that I do quite well is that I have -- whenever I'm playing golf, I have a pretty high level of acceptance. So whenever I'm on the golf course, obviously you know, when I'm practising, I try to be as good as I can but when you're on

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the golf course, it is what it is, whatever happened before and all you can do is try to react to it.

So that's the way I try to view every golf round and luckily it's been quite successful for me.

And the one thing that makes me angry, I'm not quite sure to be honest. I'm a pretty calm guy. I don't get too high. So hopefully I won't get too angry this week, either.

Q. Can you describe how big it is for you to be here considering turning pro only in June and not as yet entered a major tournament?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, for sure. I think kind of like I touched on before, where if someone would have told me a couple months ago that I would be here playing a Ryder Cup, probably wouldn't believe them. But I would believe them if I said that I could do it, probably yeah.

But it's really cool the way that these last couple of months has panned out for me. It's been quite intense and you know, I'm trying to embrace it. I try to enjoy it. But it's really cool to be here, yeah.

Q. Everyone says that you never get nervous. What will it be like on the first tee?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: I wish I never got nervous. I think obviously anyone that plays golf, you know, feels the nerves sometimes. So do I, obviously. And I'm going to feel those same things on Friday, Saturday and Sunday of this week.

But you know, it's very much an excitement. It's very much an anticipation of what's to come and I try to view it as something good. It doesn't necessarily need to, you know, affect my behavior in a poor way. It's more of something that, you know, it shows that I care. So I'm looking forward to having those feelings again.

Q. Another question about college, the system there, and how it's prepared you for this stage. What does it say about the state of the college system playing already on this stage, what did Texas do for you, and Coach Greg Sands?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, if I owe a lot to the PGA TOUR Youth Programme, I owe a lot more to Texas Tech University. I feel like they gave me the opportunities to come over to the States, play, practise. We play a really good schedule. We play good preparing golf courses. So I do feel like whenever you get to the PGA TOUR, wherever you play, you've already experienced those golf courses, which is a pretty good thing for me. Especially it kind of

teaches you what shots you might need, kind of what to expect whenever you get there.

So I felt like I had a pretty good idea of what to expect whenever I did turn pro. Then I feel like the level of competition in college is really good, too. So I feel like there's a lot of guys that, you know, play very well. Obviously there's a few things to improve on as a player as there always is but I do feel like in general, the levels are really well -- very preparing, so I would recommend anyone who is considering going to college to do so.

Q. You have double pressure, Ryder Cup; and second, everybody is talking about you be the future, future star, whatever, compliments. How do you deal with this situation? Is it more pressure to show up how good you are and the main quality for a golf player, which must it be?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: First off, it's very flattering and nice to hear the things that other players say. I can't really do anything about it. Obviously it's very nice but you know, it's a part of the game. I feel like all I try to do is like I said before, prepare for every tournament the best I can and do good practise and whenever a tournament starts, show up ready and have fun playing.

That's all I try to do and it doesn't really change this week. It's just a different environment and you know, I feel like a lot of these things that I'm doing these days are the first time I'm doing them, so I'm trying to embrace it and I try to have fun with it, and you know, especially this week, too, is going to be a lot of fun.

I think in terms of a good thing that every player has is, you know, they control their emotions very well. Whether you get angry, you let it out really quickly or whether you get sad, you let it go very quickly, too.

It's all about staying in the moment. I feel like if you get too stuck in the past, it's going to affect you. If you get too stuck in the future, it's also going to affect you. I do feel like a lot of the good players, they have a tendency to stay in the moment quite well.

Q. Everybody talks about you being an incredible driver of the ball. I'm just wondering, how did you over the years develop that skill? What kind of stuff did you do in practise in order to get your skills up?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: I tried to hit it as hard as I could and tried to narrow it down a little bit after that. But obviously, the driver is the most fun club to hit. It goes the furthest.

I felt that way since I was probably 10, and I still feel that

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way. I like hitting my driver, and luckily it's one of the better clubs in the bag, too.

Q. And in terms of you hit it hard and try to narrow it down, is that ball swing stuff that you did in order to do that or were you just trying to focus on the target the rest of the time?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: I like to keep it a pretty neutral flight. I don't like to curve it too much. Sometimes you get too stuck on one side where you draw it too much or fade it too much. When I grow up, I try to hit it as straight as I could and take it from there.

Hitting the center of the face was a big thing for me. Hit it hard but keep it in the center of the face, and then yeah, take it from there.

Q. In terms of previous Ryder Cups that you've watched, who has particularly inspired you? Whose footsteps would you like to follow in The European Team?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: I feel like the one that sticks out in my memory is the 2012. I've gotten to know Peter Hanson quite well and Nicholas over there, they have been telling me stories about that day in Medinah, just to understand how much it means to them and how much it means to the whole European side has been pretty cool.

Hopefully we'll be able to do something similar this week and hopefully we'll be able to inspire other kids growing up and other people coming after us. It's a really cool environment to be in.

Like we said before, we are trying to write our own chapter.

Q. Ian Poulter had a big Ryder Cup in 2012 and played a massive part, and the way he embraced the Ryder Cup. Could you see yourself, maybe not necessarily in your first Ryder Cup but trying to take on that sort of role?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, at the end of the day all we are trying to do is win points, and however, what that looks like, we don't really especially for me, I don't know what that's going to look like. But I will say that I will try to play my game and trust that it's good enough, and then, you know, see where that takes me.

Q. You said earlier how calm you are. Is there anything you do? Do you meditate? Does it come from your parents?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: I've tried meditating. But I get too bored

to do it to be fair, so I don't do that anymore.

I don't do necessarily anything special. I just try to be myself and not try to be anyone else.

Q. And second question, the course setup, do you think it favours the Europeans or the Americans, all the talk about the rough, etc.?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, I do feel like in general as a team, we are good with the drivers. The fairways are going to be important to be on. It's going to be a lot easier to win points if you're in the fairway. I feel like in general as a group we do that quite well, and then take it from there. I do feel like it's in favour of us, yeah.

Q. How have you found the team room experience? Who are the big characters in there and have you felt able to be yourself?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, it's been really cool for me to be in those team environments. I do feel like it's a bit different from a college team environment. The level of golf is a bit better but it's still very, very similar. The foundations are very similar. So you know, I try to have fun. Obviously everyone has been very respectful to me and been treating me in a really good way, so I feel really welcome.

But it's a bit different for me and all I try to do is be myself and see where that takes me.

STEVE TODD: Thanks for joining us. We wish you well this week.

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