

Betfred British Masters hosted by Sir Nick Faldo

Wednesday, August 28, 2024

Sutton, Coldfield, England

The Belfry Hotel & Resort

Nick Faldo

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Delighted to be joined by Sir Nick Faldo. Let's address the rather cute element. Tell us who this is and why he's here.

SIR NICK FALDO: He's called Faldo. And I can only call him Nick. This was actually Lindsay's idea. She's been part of the Humane Society in America for 15 years, and said, "Can we do something?"

We have five of them back in Montana. I've been a president of the Blind Golfers Society for moons, as I call it. That's our charity this week.

So this young puppy is only 14 weeks, and he's called Faldo. So he's off to training, take us a couple years, and by the time he's two; and I'm quite shocked so see there's 2 million blind, people who struggle. So these puppies are an enormous help to them.

Lindsay is right now with the wives and girlfriends. They have gone to the training centre to see the puppies and lunch. That's our charity this year.

THE MODERATOR: Also, this morning, you were with some other young golfers.

SIR NICK FALDO: Yeah, it's already been a great morning. As you know we've had Finals here, or we've had events, rather, over the Easter holiday and the half-term break with our Faldo Futures Tour. The excitement down on the tee was on par with the Oasis announcement yesterday. So yeah, I'm very proud of that.

So there's a new initiative we have this year. I think after COVID, huge influx of young golfers wanting to play. We have boys and girls out there playing today. I'll go down to the prize giving this afternoon.

THE MODERATOR: Your second year hosting this event. How much are you looking forward to it and growing from last year?



SIR NICK FALDO: Yeah, that's the plan, growing all the time, isn't it. Great exposure. We have a very good field this week. Got 16 of my Series alumni as well, a couple of Englishmen, Harry Hall in America, I helped him a little bit last year in Montana. Course looks great. Looks like it had a nice drop of rain -- I thought it might be burnt in August after a baking summer, but we didn't have that.

Course looks good. I think we'll have good excitement with the fans and should be a fun week.

Q. You mentioned obviously plans to try and grow the tournament. This time last year, there were eight of the top world in the field and this year only five. Different date. Slightly disappointing?

SIR NICK FALDO: Yeah, going opposite the players' championship (Tour Championship) this week, I've been talking to Guy, I think -- I was hoping, which I think we have to talk to the players -- in the future, I don't mind that.

Some will miss, and I think once we get a little bit more established and obviously this Back Nine gets more established. Players like Rose, for example, missed. I contacted and said, he's got time for a week off and then come and play. So it would be nice.

So I think when guys get that on their schedule, they can do that. They miss -- then they can enter, and the Tour does have extra invites for that purpose and that sort of thing.

So as I said, I think once the Back Nine gets more established, we will pick up a few players like that.

But the cool thing, as we know, it's week one of Ryder Cup points, and I know with me, I would have been out there, well, why not. Great chance of somebody, I'm leaning towards -- I hope a European guy wins this week, and he's like, good start. Get in there early. Get your points.

I'm sure this is a goal, especially after Rome, a big goal of all the players that want to make the next team.

Q. You talk about the back nine. Is that in relation to the renovations you were telling us about last year?

SIR NICK FALDO: I'm talking about the "Back Nine Swing." This is the first time they have done this, and I think it's going to grow. America has already set their schedule for next year. Get talking to Guy Kinnings, I think same thing. I think this will get more established. End of the season, come to Europe and rest of the world, come play.

Q. Top-ranked player in the field this week is Tyrrell Hatton, a LIV player. How do you feel about him being here?

SIR NICK FALDO: Well, they know the rules. I'm delighted. Wants to come play a proper tournament. I'm delighted -- he had such a significant part of the last Ryder Cup, I think he wants it -- there is a path for them to do it.

It's not for me to really be involved. If a guy wants to make the Ryder Cup Team, good luck to him. Find a way to get on it.

Q. Tyrrell will add something extra to the field this week, and an additional element, that's not a bad thing for the tournament.

SIR NICK FALDO: Yeah, it will add a bit of them and us, which people will enjoy. He's obviously a fine player. Great ball-striker. Always been impressed with his ball-striking.

Yeah, hope he has a good week.

Q. Over the last few years, there have been various mentions of possible Ryder Cup venues in England. If it ever came back to England, hopefully it will do, do you think it should be here?

SIR NICK FALDO: I think they have done really well. They were the whole turning point of the Ryder Cup for Europe. No, I would prefer it to go somewhere else. I think somewhere else deserves the right to stage it.

Q. Keegan Bradley could be a playing captain, first since Arnold Palmer. Do you think that's possible in the modern era?

SIR NICK FALDO: I would say, it's a tough one. It's very tough. I think it was a shock choice in him as we all know. I haven't thought of that. I haven't thought of that -- comes out and wins last week. They made that decision -- that's a tough one. If you thought he genuinely qualified, that is something. We all know the task of what it entails, how much you have to be around every morning. Through the mornings is the part where you then have to select the team and that sort of thing. You have to believe that's a

tough one, to be able to do both roles.

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