

Betfred British Masters hosted by Sir Nick Faldo

Tuesday, August 19, 2025

Sutton, Coldfield, England

The Belfry Hotel & Resort

Sir Nick Faldo

Sandy Lyle

Sam Torrance

Ian Woosnam

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Welcome to the 2025 Betfred British Masters. I'm delighted to be joined by four true European greats of golf: Sir Nick Faldo, Sandy Lyle, Sam Torrance, and Ian Woosnam.

Let's kick off with the extra guest that we've got. Tell us a bit about who this is and why she's here.

SIR NICK FALDO: Well, this is Ryder, and she's going to go off for training to be a guide dog for the blind. This is our charity, again, choice for the week. As you know, last year I brought you in Faldo. He's doing all right. He's done a year's training. Apparently he's coming tomorrow.

So this is a quick introduction to this one, and then you can exit stage right very quickly.

THE MODERATOR: And Ryder is very cute, but guide dogs do a great job, don't they, for a lot of people.

SIR NICK FALDO: Yeah. There you go. Right. Well done. Good job.

THE MODERATOR: They do a great job.

SIR NICK FALDO: Sorry?

THE MODERATOR: They do a great job.

SIR NICK FALDO: Well, it's fantastic, yeah. I mean, it's so important. As you know, the numbers are quite astonishing, how many people need them, and the amount of work that goes into preparing a puppy to become a guide dog, a seeing dog.

So, yeah, we love our dogs. Lindsay and I, we've got five

back in Montana. So we're probably getting more. We need some security ones outside.

And so, yeah, everybody loves puppies, so it went down very well last year. So that's why they're back.

THE MODERATOR: And you're, of course, our host yet again this year, aren't you, for this week?

SIR NICK FALDO: Yeah, I am. Obviously, yeah, very excited. Everything is shaping up. We've got a lot of youngsters out there playing. A few guys got some serious roles to play this week or finishes to make the team or whatever.

So, yeah, it's going to be -- it should be a great week.

THE MODERATOR: And to kick things off, we're going to start with Sandy. You also obviously played in 1985 Ryder Cup. What are some of the memories that come back when you come back to The Belfry?

SANDY LYLE: Memories are very straightforward. They were just unbelievable. For the team to win for the first time, that was something that we've cherished for a long, long time.

And we wanted to win. And this all came about in The Belfry, and what a best -- best place for it to happen.

THE MODERATOR: Yeah, that was the first time that Europe won for quite a while. What was the catalyst for that year, do you think?

SANDY LYLE: I would say the team spirit and Jacklin. And the previous Ryder Cups we were very close, and I kind of knew with involvement with Europe, with Seve and many of the Spanish players, that we were going to be a lot better team, a much stronger team, especially at the lower end of the team.

And it all came together sweetly. And great memories of Sam on the 18th. Everybody's in tears, really, and it was a great moment.

THE MODERATOR: Sam, there's not many people more synonymous with the Ryder Cup and The Belfry than

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yourself. What are some of the memories for you that you holed that winning putt and then also came back to captain in '02 as well?

SAM TORRANCE: Extraordinary. Since holing the winning putt for the team, I bought a drink for the staff. It sort of changed my fan base, if you want to call it like that. I guess they'll remember about me till the day I die.

With the captaincy, we all know it was about the greatest week of my life, golfing life. That was very special. It's a great honour just to be given the captaincy. It was just -- I actually found it easier than playing because I didn't have to play, just showed them to the first tee.

THE MODERATOR: Going back to the current day, this afternoon you guys are going to go head to head in the five-four match. How much are you looking forward to getting back out there on the grounds?

IAN WOOSNAM: Yeah, it's going to be a great little match. I think it's me and Nick, is it, against these two. I'm still recovering from when Sam holed that putt, he hit me with the golf club just before he -- after he hit it on the green.

So great memories. It's going to be great playing these five holes and look back and have a bit of fun just reminiscing some of them great memories that we've had these last 40 years.

So hope the public is going to enjoy it. Hope everybody who's watching is going to enjoy it, and we certainly will be.

SAM TORRANCE: It's actually also fantastic to watch the growth of The Belfry from what it was in '85. We played '76 here when it first opened, the Hennessy trophy. Hennessy Cup was played here.

But to watch the development of this majestic, beautiful golf course and facility is really special.

THE MODERATOR: What would you say some of the biggest changes are from all those years ago?

SAM TORRANCE: Trees.

SIR NICK FALDO: Yeah, the trees.

IAN WOOSNAM: The water is still there.

SAM TORRANCE: And I would say the trophy, I was playing Seve in the singles, and I won the 17th to get all-square, and I rushed to the last day really excited.

And I teed it up, and I heard (indiscernible), I'm looking,

and I can't see any feet. And I look up, there's nobody there. I was on the 9th tee.

SIR NICK FALDO: You went to the wrong tee.

SAM TORRANCE: I was on the 9th tee, which in those days was (indiscernible). It was just that I had the right direction, went straight past the 18th.

IAN WOOSNAM: Don't worry, I'll look after you today, Sam. He'll be lost by then.

THE MODERATOR: Well, we're all very much looking forward to it. Let's get some questions from the floor.

Q Hello, Sam. Hello, gents. Look, obviously a lot of great memories, but for me personally I really enjoyed you guys lifting the roof off and celebrating on the roof here many moons ago, champagne flowing, out there with the crowd. Can you tell me how did you guys celebrate winning the Ryder Cup back in those days? I'm sure it was a lot of fun.

SAM TORRANCE: We're not going to go into detail, put it that way.

IAN WOOSNAM: Quite interesting that (indiscernible) the last time we won the Ryder Cup or tied, that's the champagne. It was 1947, and we opened it. Can you remember it?

(Laughter.)

SIR NICK FALDO: He doesn't look at the year.

IAN WOOSNAM: It was really interesting. So, yeah, as we were standing on the balcony.

SAM TORRANCE: You were pouring (indiscernible).

IAN WOOSNAM: Exactly. That was a good friend of mine as well. John Williams, that was, yeah. So, yeah, it was some great memories and great fun. But we won't be doing that tomorrow, we will, or today (indiscernible).

SANDY LYLE: I believe it will be water, won't it, Sam?

SAM TORRANCE: I'll drink water.

Q So what is on the line today? Let's be honest, this is a key one. Let's cut the rubbish. There's got to be some sort of hustle going on between the four of you.

SAM TORRANCE: Well, so Nick here and Woosie probably have one of the greatest partnerships in Ryder Cup history and European Village. So we've got a tough



task ahead of us.

Q And how much golf have you all been planning leading into this? Is this your major over the past few months?

NICK FALDO: This is it. Yeah, the preparation has been off the charts. I can't remember the last time I hit balls on the golf course.

SAM TORRANCE: I saw you last week hitting balls in Montana.

SIR NICK FALDO: Oh, there you go. There you go, yeah. I snuck out on the range --

SAM TORRANCE: (Indiscernible.)

SIR NICK FALDO: Oh, I do. I still got it on the range.

SAM TORRANCE: Yeah.

SIR NICK FALDO: Got it on the range. I've still got it on the range, yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Other questions, please.

Q I just want to ask you all what you think of Europe's chances of going into Bethpage and if you're confident they can get over there and win it?

SIR NICK FALDO: I think very good. I honestly do. Not just because, you know, it's this side. I think the team is good. It's more than likely going to be the same or very, very similar to Rome. I thought Rome was amazing.

I think even then they were kind of muttering that the greatest achievement is to win away. You know, I was fortunate on was on the '87, '95.

So that's probably the next level up on achievement in the Ryder Cup from winning there. Actually been on a winning team, been on the winning over in America.

So I got a sense from the guys, even talking in Rome, that they're thinking about that. So I believe they've got a great chance. They really do.

Bethpage is a tough golf course. It's really going to be like a head down, blinkers on kind of week. I don't think it'll be a birdie fest. I think it's the best team, best players tee-to-green more than likely are going to win.

So I think we've got a great chance.

SAM TORRANCE: I concur.

SIR NICK FALDO: Concur is the easy way out.

IAN WOOSNAM: It's always 50/50 for me. You can be playing away or at home. Whoever gets off to the best start I think is going to win the tournament, going to win the Ryder Cup.

So hopefully our team will get off to a good start and we can push the Americans to put them under pressure and then to win again.

Q There's obviously a lot of captaincy experience there. I wondered what you thought (indiscernible). When you guys were captains, would you have been able to been playing and to --

SIR NICK FALDO: Yeah, I think we all kind of agree that it's probably an impossible job to do both. There's so much attention needed. The captain is the only one who can talk to the players. Even assistants can't talk to your players.

So that can be beneficial at times to pass that information on when needed. Obviously the teams have to go in while you're playing. Friday and Saturday in the mornings, you've got to put your team in by lunchtime. So you've really got to see or hear.

While you're playing golf, you're going to have to have all that information coming back from your assistant captains, whether you're going to stick with what you've --

(Audio interruption.)

SIR NICK FALDO: That was our Steely Dan moment. Too much static, wasn't that? Wow. Gee, thanks for that.

IAN WOOSNAM: It's going to be pretty well impossible to be a player and to captain the team because, as you say, you've got to get your teams in, you got to get your team in before 1:00 o'clock or whatever, 12:00 o'clock, the second match. If he's in the middle of the golf course and he's still playing, how's he going to be able to do that?

SIR NICK FALDO: Well, he can do it, but it's just another distraction. You don't -- you got enough going on trying to win your match. So we hope he does. So we hope he does two roles.

SAM TORRANCE: It's an extremely difficult job to do both. It's virtually impossible to do it at the best of your ability, to give it your best.

He seems like a really knowledgeable guy on the game. A true captain would play because he thinks he should be on

the team. I hear the captain say it to Jim Furyk, whoever.

IAN WOOSNAM: He can always do it again. Why not? That's what I would do. (Indiscernible) the Ryder Cup team for next year.

Q Just a question on Tony Jacklin. Obviously, he's the only European captain to have won back to back. That's something that Luke Donald is trying to do next month. Just speak to him about the qualities that you brought as a captain (indiscernible).

SAM TORRANCE: Tony transformed it for us. He made it very special. He was a huge influence on my captaincy, what he did. He made me feel extremely special in every aspect.

I think Luke Donald did an incredible job two years ago. And for every player on that team to ask him to come back is a huge compliment to the captain.

IAN WOOSNAM: Yeah, I think he's the right man for the job, especially the golf club, New York.

Q Just a question on the crowds. Much has been talked about how vociferous they might be. How have you, as players, gone about combating that element in previous U.S. editions?

SAM TORRANCE: We have huge camaraderie in our team and control and use of the crowds. Muirfield Village, for example, we would go outside, high-fiving, photos, signing stuff. And then the Saturday morning, Nicklaus himself, the captain, said in the press: Where is our support? Everyone supports the Europeans.

We always treated the supporters with as much respect as possible and given them as much time as possible. But not just to try and get on their side, but to actually do what you should be doing in that scenario.

Q That 1985 European team was full of star players. I was wondering if you could pinpoint anything sort of systematic that happened in the years leading up to 1985 that allowed your generation to beat the Americans regularly in majors --

SAM TORRANCE: (Indiscernible) Europeans. That's how it started. '81, we got hammered. Then '83, we lost by a point. We lost four (indiscernible) come back and win. And we believed in ourselves, and we did. And then (indiscernible) comes next, and the rest is history.

SIR NICK FALDO: The backbone, we had half a dozen, I believe, in '83. And the other half a dozen, to be fair to

say, weren't so sure. And I think that getting so close, and there was a magical moment. I was sitting here. Jacklin was there. Seve came in the doorway and famously said: We must celebrate. This is a victory for us.

Because we sensed -- we were all gutted that we lost rather than -- it's guaranteed, isn't it? How close, but no. So I think that loss hurt, which then brought everybody here thinking, well, let's turn it around.

And obviously you've got the passion of Seve. And, you know, the big half a dozen guys who've got to do the heavy lifting. You've got to have that in everyone.

At least four have got to do it. If you can have six guys, which is what happened to us in Muirfield Village, wasn't it? We had Seve and Ollie did their bits. Sandy did his bit with Langer. Me and Woosie did our bit. So there was the six of us doing our bit.

You know, when you rack up most of the points through the first, you know, two days, then it gives you a chance on Sunday. That's the real bottom line to it.

Q Gents, just one follow-up. What was your relationship like with the American players when you were playing in the Ryder Cup, particularly in the '80s? I guess the current players, they play with them every week on the PGA Tour. They're kind of friends with everybody. How did you interact with the Americans and view them when you were playing?

SAM TORRANCE: It's kind of like two boxers come into a fight. You know, we were friends before we went into the fight, and we were trying to get them out of the fight, and then kick the (expletive) out of each other.

SIR NICK FALDO: In the middle.

SAM TORRANCE: I mean, a lot -- some of our best friends are from American teams.

SIR NICK FALDO: But when you teed it up against them, it didn't matter if you knew the guy, liked the guy or not. I loved that because it was you and your partner.

You know, I remember saying that to Lee Westwood. You know, I was kind of the wingman to him, and I said, Look, just you relax, you enjoy it. Just remember, it's you and me against them two and the two caddies. Forget everything outside the ropes. It's just us.

And that's the beauty of the event. You give it that amount of passion and you give it 100 percent. You try your absolute best to win a point. That's all you're trying to



do.

And I was saying, the other great thing, when you've got that atmosphere in the team room, when we were sending Seve and Ollie out the door, and look at their record, what were they 12 and one half, wasn't it? One lost, one half, and out of 14, 12 wins, you know, you knew that was a point, and you were just trying to get to two and a half to win your session, aren't you.

So if you got one, we would deem it as a lock because he -- just kicking him out the door. So when you've got that kind of passion in the team room, that was just a great moment, wasn't it?

SANDY LYLE: Yeah, and then you've got Seve kind of up front leading, winning his match, it really helped the rest of the team.

SIR NICK FALDO: Oh, yeah, everybody.

SANDY LYLE: It just helped, you know, as the front runners. And Colin Montgomerie was always very good on the front line.

SIR NICK FALDO: Monty and I were good, yeah --

SANDY LYLE: Putting points on the board, it's really nice to see. When you see the first two teams losing or, you know, pass, it's a little bit disappointing, a here we go again scenario.

But you get the top guys that are putting points on the board, it really -- it really pulls you along nicely. It gives you confidence.

Q After the Ryder Cup next month, I think the conversation will soon turn to who might captain Europe next. I just wondered who you see as the contenders --

SAM TORRANCE: Justin Rose.

Q Why?

SIR NICK FALDO: Perfect age.

SAM TORRANCE: I think he'd be the perfect age.

SIR NICK FALDO: Yeah, perfect age.

SAM TORRANCE: He ticks all the boxes. I mean, that's who it would be. And he'd be a wonderful man to play for.

SIR NICK FALDO: Yeah, job done. Next question.

(Laughter.)

SIR NICK FALDO: Decisions-makers. You see? That's what you want. Decision-makers.

IAN WOOSNAM: Yeah. Obviously, he's what, 47 now? How old is he?

SIR NICK FALDO: No, 45. Would be perfect.

IAN WOOSNAM: If he's not in the same scenario as what you imagine, he's running the team, Justin Rose would be a perfect choice to be the captain, yeah. No doubt about it.

SANDY LYLE: I would have said the same thing. Yeah, he's right there. I think that's the name that comes to mind. You know, he's at the age of 40, whatever it is now, he's just beyond that now, I think he's just about right now.

He's had lots of experience, from majors to Masters. He's played in America for many years, and he's still doing well. And now he's moved back to London, so he's right in the headquarters of everything buzzing around.

So I think he would be a good asset to the Ryder Cup.

Q A second question as well, just about first team nerves in the Ryder Cup. Just wondering if you have any stories that come to mind --

IAN WOOSNAM: Never. Never. No nerves.

SAM TORRANCE: I can tell you a good one. Sir Nick Faldo here, when we were out here at The Belfry, I can't remember which one it was, but you were --

SIR NICK FALDO: With Monty.

SAM TORRANCE: Yeah. You were told when you were first out on Friday morning, the foursomes, all week Monty said to Nick (indiscernible), and Nick had agreed with it, and that was it. So all week long just thinking about the opening tee shot.

So they walked up to the tee Friday morning, and Nick comes up and says, I'm drawing it up here.

SIR NICK FALDO: No, it was the other way around. I was going first. No, all week I said I've got the first, because I was drawing it, and we worked out I needed a draw on whatever holes, you know, it fitted the golf course.

And I go to the range on Friday morning, and, poof, my drawing's going this way. So on the way to the tee, I said, Monty, by the way, you've got the first tee shot. You know.

And Monty is like, oh, oh, oh.

(Laughter.)

SIR NICK FALDO: You know? And that was it. We were fine. That was it. That was, again, decision-making back in the day.

THE MODERATOR: Well, I think that's a great way to finish. Gents, it's been an honour to sit alongside you. And enjoy this afternoon and this evening's celebrations.

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