

The 153rd Open

Mixed Zone

Thursday, 17 July 2025

Padraig Harrington



Q. The swishes on the 1st tee and you got the tee shot out of the way, which you were nervous about. How would you reflect on what was an interesting day on the links?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I hyped up the tee shot as much as I could so when I got there today, it wasn't too bad. I was decently comfortable when I got on the tee. Obviously didn't try for too much, hit a nice smooth 3-iron down there, held the post a little bit.

I got a little emotional when I was clapped on, and then I calmed down, and I was kind of fine when I was hitting it. Obviously after that, I don't know through the start maybe there was a little bit of hype in it, the three-putting 3 and 4, I just struggled. Three three-putts in the first seven holes, it just kills you when you're always thinking about your pace as you're standing over the ball, you're always questioning your lines.

Yeah, it was a tough day on the greens, and it just ate into my game. Might have been a little bit of the fact that I was hyped up for the 1st tee box. Who knows? Certainly felt like I played better, could have played better, should have played better, scored better.

I don't feel like there's anything wrong with my putting, and I had a horrible day on the greens. It's one of those things that's the nature of the game, links golf. I'd love to be -- yeah, I'd love to be a bit better, but it wasn't for a lack of trying.

Q. At 10 to 7:00 this morning, you got a cheer with your birdie on the first. You hit a great approach shot, holed a 15-footer there. Walking off that green, it was magical, the whole atmosphere.

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I came off the range about 20 minutes before my tee time, and I could see the grandstand, and it was empty. I was like, I thought this was going to be full. Obviously we have to walk up and over, and as I came up and over, I could see people queueing for a long line to get into it. They hadn't let anybody in.

By the time we got there, the grandstand was full, the first fairway was full, the first green was full.

Hitting that second 3-iron into 15, 18 feet, holing the putt was a

serious buzz. It was very exciting, and the crowds were, as I said -- those crowds were spectacular at that hour of the morning. It was really great.

I think it was a nice partnership, as I said, myself and Tom, obviously Tom bringing in the locals as well. It was a good group to start off the day.

Q. Obviously the middle part of the round didn't go so well. You had the double bogey on 10, but you held it together well in what aren't perfect conditions out there in the last eight holes. Where do you think you are with 75 in terms of making the weekend at the very least?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Look, I don't know. As I said, I played better than that. The three three-putts and then the innocuous -- I just thought I hit it in the right rough with the tee shot on 10, and it was a lost ball. Never even crossed my mind that it was a lost ball. Yeah, that was kind of hard to take.

The problem after that was I still didn't hole the putt. I just couldn't get -- you know, I had a short putt on that hole for bogey after losing the ball. Yeah, I just couldn't read the green -- you're second-guessing yourself with your day, especially second-guessing the pace as well. I was never really -- I didn't hit a bad putt today, putted like that, and yet I didn't hit a good one either, did I? (Laughter.)

Q. When was the last time you had an emotional reaction like that on the golf course or felt maybe a tear welling up a little bit?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Usually when I'm watching a movie on an airplane. Does everybody not well up on airplanes? I think airplanes do that to me. Could be a comedy or something like that. It doesn't have to be that serious. (Laughter).

Q. But on the golf course?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I wouldn't say I get too emotional, not like that, no. It was definitely -- it felt like they were there for me, giving me a clap, yeah. I expected the nerves; I didn't expect that. So I did have to adjust myself for that.

Q. It was special.



PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, it was very special, I've got to say. It's a great honour to do it, as I said. I really hate the idea of being ceremonial, but I was prepared to take that to do it because it was here. I'm glad I did.

Q. No second thoughts about maybe the driver --

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: There was plenty of second thoughts, why did I say yes? Because of the tee shot. There's got to be easier ones. Yeah, it was a lot easier yesterday downwind. I probably hit -- in my warmup, I probably hit 30 3-irons, 40 3-irons in my warmup. Every time I came up and hit a 3-iron, okay, the wind is there, kept practising the shot. I hit that shot a lot before I had to do it in the actual tournament.

Q. I know you're 55 now or 54 next month.

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I'm 53 right now. (Laughter).

Q. Do you look at the other lads, younger lads like that with a bit of envy sometimes, just the way --

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: No, not a bit. No envy of any of the good players, the young guys, the way the game has gone, the money in the game, nothing like that. I did exceptionally well, and the guys before me would have had -- I've done better than them. It's just the natural way it goes.

I still try and fight it. I still try and play hard, work hard. My good shots are every bit as good as everybody else's good shots.

I know I didn't have a good day on the greens, but I was very calm and putted nicely -- just no tension there. Yeah, I don't see why I can't play great golf, and I enjoy doing it. That's the beauty of it. I wouldn't have it any other way.

Q. Put it up there one of your top Open moments, that 1st hole today?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Absolutely. I don't think you can -- you certainly wouldn't start your career off expecting anything like that. It's not something you think, oh, this is something I'd like to do in my career. It's certainly something -- yeah, it was -- it wasn't out of the blue. It was out of the blue when I was asked this year, but it's not out of the blue if you were thinking about it.

Yeah, I wouldn't -- I'm glad I did it now, put it like this. Maybe I might get to do it again.

Q. With it being so special, did you have family here for it?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Just my son was here. He was the only one who managed -- I had a few other friends with me,

things like that, and just one son. One is enough, I suppose. It was just a nice special moment.

Q. I know you talked about your family after winning the Senior Open --

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Different son was at the U.S. Open.

Q. Did you take him for a burger during the week there?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: No, I've been trying to -- he's been going out to the whatever is on at night, and I've been going to bed at 9:00 at night or 9:30 at night trying to get acclimatised. I don't know what I'm going to do tomorrow. I even shaved last night to save myself the extra five minutes this morning.

Q. What time did the alarm go off?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: 4:00.

Q. (Question on social media.)

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: He doesn't follow me on social media. (Laughter).

Q. Just give a quick word on the crowds out there.

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: They're fantastic, they really are. They're just fabulous, and lots of kids. Lots of kids, I've got to say. It really is -- there's a great atmosphere out there. To be honest, lots of people I know. Any time you look up, you see a face -- oh, yeah. Most of the time Ronan says, that's so-and-so. Okay, so there's a lot of people.

That's the beauty of playing at home here. It's been great. As I said, I think everybody seems to be enjoying it.

Q. At one stage Lee Westwood and Phil Mickelson were on top of the leaderboard.

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Are they not still?

Q. Lee is still up there. You must have thought, is this 2025?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I think -- it is an interesting one because obviously the age limit has changed to 55, but we are getting younger at that stage. The older golfers are much more capable now.

When I started off -- I started off, I had a trainer and a physio from '98. Once the money came into the game, what happens is you get a bigger team around you. I think I've been training with a physio full-time for close to 27 years now or something like that. That's why players are extending their careers. It's



not just that they're more professional, it's that they have more of an opportunity.

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You only have to go into -- not that you will get to, but go in and have a look at the player facilities this week. There's ice baths and saunas and all sorts of things. I was in the ice bath yesterday. This is what -- so the game you can extend longer. It's just the mental side of it, the ability to not burn out, the ability to -- if you go to the Champions Tour, it's amazing. You can see loads of good golfers, but every single person is carrying some affliction. (Laughter). There's something going on with everybody.

So if you can battle through that -- and I think what happens sometimes is people on a given week can do. Yeah, all the players are definitely more capable than they would have been. And we don't -- I think all the players as well don't have as much of -- I certainly remember watching Christy Sr., and he was very capable, but I'm sure he thought he wasn't meant to do it, whereas I don't think we think like that anymore.

Q. Is the mental side of the game for you now becoming the big aspect of it all?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, you would have to think so. It always was, but as I said, there's no physical barrier for me hitting shots and competing. If I don't play as well now as I played back in the day, it has to be a mental thing, a confidence game.

The game has changed very slightly. The game, from back in my day to now, the game has moved very much towards how many fairways and greens you can hit. Can you hit it in the middle of the green to 20 feet? Probably my worse skills have always been trying to play safe and 20-footers have never been my forte. I've always been the guy chipping and putting. The pins are so tight, you're just not chipping and putting anything from the wrong place.

I think the game's style may have changed a bit. At least I'm holding out hope that's why I'm not winning every week. It's just moved on. Outside of that, it's probably a mental thing and a competitor. We're all pretty competitive. You get up for these weeks. So maybe not that.

Q. You had the ball on the 1st tee sitting there about three minutes. Is that by design? It's a long time to tee it up?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I teed my ball up early, yeah. I always tee it up, just going to take a couple swishes and hit it. So you tee it up. I think that would be a regular occurrence on the 1st. Unless it was raining. Then I tee it up without the ball and put the ball down. Yeah, do the exact opposite. But the tee goes in early.