

# NBC Sports Group Media Conference

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**Dan Hicks**

**Paul Azinger**

**Curt Byrum**

**Jim Gallagher Jr.**

**John Wood**

Press Conference



business, it's clearer and clearer that the Ryder Cups stand alone for the energy, the spectacle, the visuals, highlight reel, the sheer power of it all.

I think the overriding theme, no doubt, to this one, and it is usually at every one at least that's talked about, can the Americans win on the European soil. I think that's the big story line that's going to pervade throughout the week and the three days of competition.

30 years it's been since '93. Very first Ryder Cup I did was on the ground chasing around the captains Tom Watson and European captain Bernard Gallagher, that was 1993, Belfry, crazy. Zinger played on that team. Jim Gallagher played on that team. Raymond Floyd was on that team, I think he was 51 years old, he's now 81, and he hasn't seen a U.S. team win overseas since then.

The captain's picks are a great pre-Ryder Cup theme. Did they get it right, always talked about. Another big story line I believe this time around is Justin Thomas. Heart and soul of the team the past couple of times. His record speaks for itself. I think he's six, two, and one in those two appearances.

As everybody knows, he didn't make the Playoffs. He was picked over several other higher-ranked players. I really believe that he faces the most pressure of any captain's pick I can think of in recent memory.

He's been playing better as of late. He proved that. But it will be something I think very closely watched, and we'll be watching it as well. It's just another reason why these Ryder Cups are so much fun.

Being in Rome, the Coliseum is 10 miles away, the gladiator feel to it on the first tee. That's appropriate.

I cannot wait to get this one started, as I always am.

THE MODERATOR: We'll happened it over to the captain. Go ahead.

PAUL AZINGER: Hey, Dan, that was a great synopsis of what we are looking forward to. I am appreciative of the broadcast team that we've put together here to cover this golf tournament, especially having Jim Gallagher on the press call is really fun for me, having been in the locker

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everybody. Thank you for joining our NBC Sports Ryder Cup conference call. In a moment we'll be joined by members of our Ryder Cup broadcast team, including Dan Hicks, who has called every Ryder Cup for NBC Sports since 1993; Paul Azinger, whose immense Ryder Cup accomplishments include his captaincy of the winning U.S. side in '08, playing as a member of the winning U.S. side in 1993 at The Belfry; Jim Gallagher Jr., who was also a member of that 1993 U.S. team; Curt Byrum, who has arguably called more live golf than anybody this year; and, of course, our on course reporter, John Wood, who has caddied in a number of Ryder Cups and international competition.

NBC Sports is going to have comprehensive live coverage of the 44th Ryder Cup at Marco Simone Golf Club across NBC, USA Network, and Peacock beginning next Friday starting at 1:30 a.m. Eastern. We'll surround the event with our critically acclaimed Golf Central Live from the Ryder Cup on Golf Channel and Peacock beginning September 25th at 9 a.m. Eastern.

We'll start with some brief opening remarks from each of our speakers, starting with our lead play-by-play commentator, Dan Hicks.

DAN HICKS: Thank you very much. These things are always incredible. 15th Ryder Cup for me. Hard to believe. I've covered Zinger as a player, as captain, and now get a chance to sit with him as a broadcaster. Doesn't get any better than that. I think he's at his best for these for obvious reasons.

These things don't get any better. They haven't lost any juice throughout all the years. The longer I'm in this



room with him at the Ryder Cup.

This is an emotional event for the players. It means the world to them. I think for Europe it's immeasurable what it means for them to win the Ryder Cup. I think it's more measurable for the Americans. I always feel that Europe should be the favorite in these events.

I just can't wait to go to Rome. I've never been to Italy in my life. My wife and I are happy to spend a couple weeks over there.

Turn it over to Jim Gallagher.

JIM GALLAGHER JR.: Thanks, Zing. As you said, there's nothing like the opening ceremonies when they start playing the national anthem and you get to represent your country.

I think for me, it hit me that I realize what have I gotten myself into. Just the whole week was magical. I think when you look at our team in '93, you mentioned Raymond Floyd, 81 now, we had a great mix of veterans, guys like yourself, then the rookies, Lee Janzen won a U.S. Open, you have Davis Love, these were rookies but they really weren't.

I think the biggest thing I took from that week was the Raymond Floyds, the Tom Kites, Payne Stewarts, the Lanny Wadkins. They put us all on an equal level, at least myself. That's what was so magical bit.

I remember a couple things Tom Watson said. Always expect the unexpected. Your opponent might make a shot. Always expect them to do the unexpected things.

He said something to us Sunday, and I remember going out and playing Seve, which to me was the pinnacle of my golf. I remember coming home and seeing my daughter Mary Langdon with a T-shirt saying "My daddy beat Seve." It took my confidence to a whole new level. It's an experience I'll always remember.

I don't know if Zinger remembers, before we landed on the Concord, he said they may have created the game over here, but we perfected it. I was ready to parachute off the plane, ready to go.

For both sides, it's always a week they'll always remember. It's going to be so much fun going over there. My wife is going over to Rome. I'm looking forward to being on the call. 30 years is a long time, four kids and five grandkids since they've won over there in Europe for the U.S.

It's going to be a magical week, and I'm looking forward to

being on the call.

THE MODERATOR: We'll hand it over next to Curt Byrum.

CURT BYRUM: Thanks. Along with these guys, I can't wait to get over to Rome. It will be the fifth Ryder Cup for me. There's nothing like it in golf. I think for me, anyway, it's the best event to cover that you can from a TV side. There's just so much energy.

I love the match play. I think it's going to be another close match this time around. I don't expect a blowout.

I think one of the factors that I'm looking at is whether playing your way into the Ryder Cup week, like most of the Europeans are doing right now, 7 out of the 10 that played last week at the BMW PGA finished inside the top 10. A couple of those guys are playing again this week in France. They've been playing events leading up to it, whereas most of the Americans have taken time off since THE TOUR Championship. A lot of rest for them. Only a couple guys played last week. I think Brooks is playing this week on LIV.

Will it be better to have the rest coming into the Ryder Cup or will it be better to play your way into form like the Europeans are doing right now? Considering how hilly the golf course is, how much it's going to take stamina-wise, I think it's going to be really interesting to see how that part of it plays out.

If somebody plays all five matches, I think it's going to be tough on 'em. I think there's going to be a lot up to the captains to make decisions on players.

THE MODERATOR: We'll hand it over now to our on course reporter, John Wood.

JOHN WOOD: Thanks. Anyone who knows me knows this is my favorite event ever. You make one Ryder Cup team, you never want to miss another one. It kills you when you're not there after you know what it's like.

The relationships you get to form those weeks, the time you spend with people, you just don't get to do it the other 51 weeks of the year. It's such a unique event in that aspect.

The only tournament I am ever nervous on a Tuesday. I mean, Tuesday, you get out there on Tuesday or Wednesday to play your first practice round, and it's 10 deep on the 1st hole. You're going, What is going on? Similar to what Jim said, What have I gotten myself into?

There's some unique challenges as a caddie that you don't



experience at any other event than at the Ryder Cup. Even The Presidents Cup, you don't face these things. The Ryder Cup is so special, so much pressure, and it's so much fun pressure that it's so unique.

When I'm all done with golf, retired completely, those are the weeks I will remember more than any others.

THE MODERATOR: I believe we're ready to start with taking some questions from members of the media.

**Q. Jim and Paul, playing on that '93 team, thinking there hasn't been a U.S. victory on European soil since, what is the best explanation for that?**

JIM GALLAGHER JR.: If we had the explanation...

PAUL AZINGER: I don't think there is a true explanation for it. However, I do believe that there is something magical about being on your home soil that Europe has really been able to take advantage of through the years, a lot of it by course setup.

This particular course can be manipulated quite a bit. I feel like the chance for Europe to increase their home-field advantage is pretty great.

I, apparently, according to Kerry Haigh, was the first American captain to every ask to control the course, and that was 2008. I just read today where Europe has been doing it since the '50s. I know Tony has been doing it, did it in the beginning.

Maybe the home-field advantage, part of it could be that the home-field captain does now take control of the course. That's a big part of it.

I think that's a big part of the reason really. Pretty simple, that Europe has been able to have a little bit of an edge.

JIM GALLAGHER JR.: Like any other sport, when you're playing at home, you have the home crowd behind you. It's unnerving when you hit a good shot, you hole out of the shot, you're the visiting team or visiting player, and they cheer only for bad shots. They don't cheer for the good shots. That gets a little unnerving, especially for someone that's a rookie.

Like Paul said, I think the course setup has been a big key to their success. The U.S. has gotten better, they weren't the tightest knit team. I think the pressure for the U.S. knowing it's been that long. That starts to seep in eventually, and you have to somehow go out there and you have to make the putts. It gets down to making the putts at the right time. They get the momentum going on their side

for the European time, they make the putts at the right time.

**Q. Paul and Jim, a little bit deeper there. You talk about home-field advantage, the course setup. What are some of the other challenges that the American team faces when they go on European soil?**

PAUL AZINGER: Time zone change is a part of it. Just getting acclimated is something of a factor. The Europeans, I don't think they have quite as much of an issue getting acclimated over here.

Let's face it, they've played great, too. You can't dispute the clutch plays that they make at the right time. You can never take away.

But I always looked at the Ryder Cup, in my generation, my era, as being razor thin. I would compare it to being in Vegas. There's only a 1% advantage in blackjack, but they're building some pretty nice hotels on it. A 1% edge, you can give Europe that 1% edge, you can give them a one and a half percent advantage before we tee it up for a multitude of reasons. They're bonded by nationality over there. The Englishmen play together, the Irishmen, the Spaniards. I think it's immeasurable what it means to them.

I think Americans, we can quantify it. I think for them they can't even quantify it. It's a big deal to us, too, don't get me wrong. It gives them a 1% advantage, I think, all that. Woody?

JOHN WOOD: This is probably not going to be the most popular opinion in the world. But in my experience, the Europeans outwork us on the putting greens during the practice rounds. They play extremely slowly. We've been behind them. We played behind them before. It's just extremely slow.

If you watch them, it's a very, very disciplined approach. They work hole locations together with their partners during the practice rounds. The two caddies, the two players, they'll all work it together. Once they get into the tournament, they've got all those putts read. We're sitting there surprised they make everything.

I think there's something to do with their preparation. I just think it goes deeper. I think they have a routine that is better for figuring out putts. When you watch the Ryder Cup sometimes, the Americans, when they call their partner in or a partner's caddie in, it looks a little awkward at times. It's not very succinct, streamlined. They don't read putts with somebody all year long and all of a sudden they're doing it.

I think the Europeans, I don't know what it is, I'm not saying I know exactly what the thing is, but I think they have a better way to figure out how to putt. I also think they have a theory on the greens, even around the green. Everyone, to a man, I think tells each other the next one doesn't matter. I don't care, it's going to matter probably. I think they go into those putts and those chips thinking the next one doesn't matter. If you leave your partner with a tough one, so be it.

You watch guys like Colin Montgomerie, Sergio, guys over the years who have been good putters, but in Ryder Cups they become great putters.

Those are just something that I thought of for a while. I don't know if it's right, just my opinion, a theory that I go with.

JIM GALLAGHER JR.: I'd have to agree with that, too. I think they also took the underdog role whether they were or not. In match play if -- the only thing that really matters in everything is that you believe you can beat the other person or the other team. As soon as that other team thinks that you can beat them or they can beat you, that helps.

I think they've taken that to heart, too. They've convinced themselves that they are as good. It's like Zinger said, they're playing great. I think their teams over the years have really changed. World Golf, you look at the way the game has changed. These guys have prepared just as much as the Americans. I think both sides it want it equally as much. I think it comes down to they've taken a little bit different approach.

I've never thought about that with preparation with putting. Maybe that's it. It gets down to making the putt at the right time, and they've been able to do that over there.

**Q. Jim, which daughter was wearing the "My dad Seve" T-shirt?**

JIM GALLAGHER JR.: That was my oldest, Mary Langdon. Cissy was actually pregnant with Thomas when she went over there. When I won THE TOUR Championship about a month or so later, she had the T-shirt, "My daddy beat 'em all." It was really kind of a cool thing.

I remember when I first made that team, it was announced, we had a Skins Game back in Indiana, they announced me as a member of the '93 Ryder Cup team. A couple things I'll always remember.

It was always cool to see my little girl with the T-shirt "My dad beat Seve." That's when it hit me.

**Q. What club was that you were playing there?**

JIM GALLAGHER JR.: It was Meshingomesia in Marion, Indiana. My dad was a pro there for 45 years. We had the Skins Game there.

When I got home after we won, I saw Mary Langdon in that same little shirt, it was priceless. It's one of those moments you always cherish. Your families sacrifice so much with us being gone. For them to be part of that, even though she wasn't there, now she's 30, 31 years old, it's something I'll always remember.

**Q. You're going over there next week, as well?**

JIM GALLAGHER JR.: I am. I'm going to be calling holes and walking in the afternoon as well. It's going to be fun to be part of that, both as a player, then you get to be on-site, there's nothing like it. It takes it to a whole 'nother level. It's gotten bigger and bigger since we played in '93.

**Q. Dan, I'm curious if you have any reaction to Stacy Lewis's comments about the lack of collaboration right now between the Ryder Cup and Solheim Cup, which is beginning tomorrow?**

DAN HICKS: You know, I don't. I just saw that briefly. What did she say exactly?

**Q. She felt like there could be more marketing done together between the Ryder Cup and the Solheim Cup, especially with both being played weeks apart in Europe.**

DAN HICKS: Yeah, I don't know specifically what she had in mind. I think the Solheim Cup has gotten so big in its own right. I don't know what kind of help is needs from Ryder Cup.

I absolutely love the Solheim Cup. It's a lot of Cups in two weeks, back to back. Maybe there should be, just reading between the lines, some sort of scheduling situation where maybe the Solheim Cup gets a little bit more of a spotlight rather than being right before the Ryder Cup.

I don't know. If I'm a fan and I've got two weekends in a row of Solheim Cup and Ryder Cup, there's pretty good golf there, even it's amidst the football season and something both Cups fight.

I think the Solheim Cup is so big it stands on its own. I'm not sure exactly the details of what Stacy is talking about.



I'd love to hear 'em. But that's my initial reaction to that.

**Q. Paul, do you think there should be any concern for the future operations of the Ryder Cup, the European operations, I should say, given what could happen with this pending deal between the PGA TOUR, European Tour and Saudis?**

PAUL AZINGER: That is miles above my pay grade. I appreciate the question, but I just have to abstain from that one. I wouldn't know how to answer it.

**Q. Zing, if you didn't like that last question, you're going to hate this one. Do you ever see Phil Mickelson becoming a Ryder Cup captain?**

PAUL AZINGER: Well, that's another question I would just rather not answer. I'm going to stay away from it. I'm hired to call live golf and I love calling live golf. When it comes to opinion about what we're about to see, that's my job, and I'm going to stick to it.

I appreciate you trying.

**Q. How much do you think it hurts the European side that they won't have Sergio, Ian Poulter and some of those guys involved in the team as team members or in the team room?**

PAUL AZINGER: First of all, I think that the team dynamic and the team environment in the European room will be unfazed. Just like when Jack wasn't there anymore or when Arnold wasn't there anymore, some of us guys aren't there anymore, I think that team atmosphere in that locker room will be every bit as good if not better. It will be ripe and ready to go.

Those guys, they're on a mission. Luke Donald has a controversial pick on his plate, as well. We'll see what happens. Both captains took a risk in the way they picked their teams. That is compelling. That's it.

CURT BYRUM: I think Paul is right. I think all they're going to be talking about in the team rooms is about the players that are there, and rallying around everybody that's in that team room. They're not going to be even talking about who's not there. I think both sides will carry it on like that.

PAUL AZINGER: I'm going to say both teams are going to kind of rally around their captains and the guys that were the risky picks. But the European locker room will be totally unfazed.

**Q. Which team do you think faces more pressure?**

**The Euros kind of got blown out last time. They're trying to bring in some youth and different players now. Americans haven't won in so long on European soil.**

DAN HICKS: I think the U.S. has more pressure because they haven't won over there in 30 years. They apparently have the superior team, even though, Zing, you'll agree, from the top half of the European team is as good or certainly better, higher ranked than the U.S. team.

I think the overriding theme to the whole thing is the U.S. hasn't won over there in 30 years. I think Jim Gallagher alluded to it earlier. That's become a pressure thing.

I think getting it done on foreign soil is tough anyway, as Zing said. The more this streak compiles decade after decade after decade, I think the Americans know that they're expected to win, but they haven't done it in 30 years. I think that is definitely a tougher situation to be in than Europe, even though Europe has some new players and the U.S. has some new players. I think they kind of offset each other in that regard as a wash.

I think it becomes you haven't done something in 30 years, you've got the better players in the world, you've proven that through the years, you haven't gotten it done over there.

PAUL AZINGER: I totally agree with that. I agree with Curt Byrum as well, about the American team, the European team, one team coming in fresh, another team coming in having played. It's going to be close, I believe. Very, very close. Hopefully it will be one of the closest ones we've seen in a long, long time.

**Q. Dan, you're stuck with me on this one. It's probably going to be a little bit convoluted so bear with me. You get ready to have a winner at the U.S. Open, at the British Open, you kind of have time to prepare your calls. How difficult is it in the Ryder Cup when things can be moving so quickly from a broadcasting standpoint? Secondly, we've had a couple matches where it's a little bit kind of confusing who actually gets the clinching point. I think we had it at Oakland Hills with Monty back in '04, definitely with Sergio and Francesco in France. It almost looks like we get the point depending on what gets shown on TV. How do you keep track of that in real-time?**

DAN HICKS: I'll address the latest question because it's easier to remember.

We've got not only Tommy Roy in the truck, but we've got a guy by the name of Tom Randolph who is unbelievable in



there. I'll tell you what, covering golf is hard enough in a regular stroke play event week to week, keeping track of where you need to be, try to be live the most you can possibly be.

Match play is a different animal because it's happening all over the course. In this case, just four matches at the most, but in singles matches it's 12. Being at the right place, being there live. Our goal obviously is to every time be there when the Ryder Cup is clinched, be there in a live situation.

Now, there's been some conversations through the years as to, Okay, a match is tied, so it guarantees a half point, but it's never official until the match is over. You can kind of get hung up in the technicality as long as there's no other things outside of the match that's going to turn it around or give another guy a point on a hole or something that hasn't been told in the match yet as far as the outcome of it. In other words, it's never official till it's over.

Sometimes we have to be careful of that. But we qualify that I think through the years. I think it's pretty clear, if you just kind of -- having said all that, if you get to a match and you know a tie guarantees a half point, that gets you to, in this case the Americans, a 14-point total, then you can say it.

I don't know if that answers the question, but it might be part of that technicality that I was talking about.

The first part of the question. Yeah, it's a totally different kind of tournament, stroke play, major open, U.S. Open, whatever, versus a Ryder Cup. The thing about a Ryder Cup, you don't have to do too much outside of just doing what I described: be there at the right time, let it breathe. The images and the video at a Ryder Cup tell it all. You say less at a Ryder Cup than you do at any other stroke play event.

The pictures speak for themselves. The only thing I would say is if you have a chance to know that if a certain individual is going to clinch the Ryder Cup, what it might mean to him and his career, you can kind of tell the story of that said individual, if you can.

A lot of times it's happening so quickly down the stretch that all you have time to do, the biggest thing, my biggest responsibility, our truck's biggest responsibility, is to be there when the Cup is clinched. It's tricky. It's the toughest thing in golf to do. We've done a pretty good job with it through the years, I would think.

**Q. Are you going to say tied or halves?**

DAN HICKS: Tied. That's the lingo and the vernacular now. After a hundred years the other way, that's the way we do it now. That's the way we do it, yep, tied.

**Q. Dan and Paul, I'm not sure how much golf is shown on your monitors when you are in commercial normally and how much you watch it. When you're in a break, how much are you just sitting there looking at what's transpiring? Separately for John Wood, when a session seems to be going one way, how do you keep your player on track to make sure they do their job to get that point?**

DAN HICKS: Yeah, there's a lot to keep track of, especially when it gets down to Sunday singles as I just described. You have to be at the right place at the right time. I'm constantly figuring out, along with the rest of our team during commercial breaks, there's not a lot of time to talk, we brainstorm and we say, All right, let's just take a look at the board here. What has to happen here.

That's the most important thing that I can do, is to give everybody a sense of who is really leading here and who is really got the advantage. That's why from time to time you'll see us go to the big board and say, Let's take a breath and let's take a look at we've got the U.S. leading in four matches, Europe is leading in three, the rest are tied. You have to go through some scenarios to give the audience a chance to kind of anticipate what's going to happen.

That needs to be spoken as clearly as you possibly can. It's not easy to do. That's pretty much my responsibilities. I'll be looking at the matches. We'll have some of the matches up during a break where we can kind of get a feel for how they're going. The guys in the truck are constantly relaying to us, Matt Fitzpatrick is up on Scottie Scheffler, whatever. He has a putt here. He missed it. This is maybe during a break. They're constantly reminding us of scenarios and things out there that are ongoing to add to the big picture of it all.

It's a lot of fun because it's fun kind of trying to keep track of it all, then trying to relay it in as concise and clear manner as you possibly can.

PAUL AZINGER: That is so good. I'll add to that that what we try to do is as many shots live as possible that we've never seen before. What Dan might get in his ear, I won't get much of that. I almost never know what's happened on the course.

All those numbers and that sort of thing, that's not really my job. As a captain, I can see that, we can read into it pretty quickly. Dan's job is to articulate to the viewer. My job is



to be on the live golf, the emotion of what's going on there.

The key here at NBC is we're going to show more live shots than anybody. There are times when you have to wrap it up, catch up, I mean, but I don't have a monitor so I don't see any shots. I never have. I've seen one shot in my career that I can recall sitting in the 18th tower. But generally my monitors don't show much unless we're playing through, then we sit there and watch it.

We're trying to do it live as much as I can from my perspective. It's hot. It's a hot take that's live. We're not calling shots on tape.

JOHN WOOD: In terms of individual sessions as a caddie, when you see your team going down, each one of those sessions, it feels like waves of momentum. The first five holes go one way, then the next four holes go a separate way.

You always watch the board, you always do in a Ryder Cup, it's natural, but if it's getting away from you, if it feels like all of a sudden you have four blue numbers up there that are American. What I would try to do is remind my player there's a lot of holes left. It's a lot closer than it looks.

You look up at the scoreboard, when you see one color, it looks like a blowout. They might all be one up. It's not like they're huge leads. You just remind them of that. If you're well down, you get into a space and tell them. He knows it's important, but it might be more important now that everybody else is losing.

At the same time if everybody's winning, it kind of takes a little pressure off you. You play freer, everybody is winning, I'm going to go too and win this thing.

A lot of it is the colors on the scoreboard. They just tell a huge story. It's amazing how often, if let's say the European team gets off to a great start on Friday, there's four blue numbers up there early on through five holes, if all of a sudden seven holes later they're all tied, all matches are tied, but it feels like as an American all of a sudden you've got the momentum because you tied everything up, you were down in all of them.

It's always waves of momentum. You just really have to make sure your player stays focused on what he's trying to do, and that's just playing golf. It certainly influences your mood out there.

**Q. Paul, you've touched on the U.S. coming in probably not playing as much. I'm curious, in your experience at the Ryder Cup, would you use practice**

**rounds to actually have guys play matches and to try to sharpen up that way, or is it an event where you just kind of really want to get comfortable with the course and ease into the week? Seems like it's kind of an important situation for the U.S. this year. Any thoughts on that would be great.**

PAUL AZINGER: Curt brought up the fact that the U.S. players hadn't really been playing a whole lot and Europe is coming in playing, that the golf course was hilly. It might be a bit of an endurance test.

When it comes to preparation, it depends. If you're just getting there and you haven't seen it, maybe just a handful of our guys or less, they're going to be cramming for finals. They've got to know the course.

The key to winning Ryder Cup always, I don't ever believe there's been a shortcut to it, you have to get the right players there, but you have to out-prepare the other team. Knowing the course is the key to that.

Who you're going to play with is very important ahead of time. That's what I believe. I got stuck about three times in my Ryder Cup experience playing with a guy that I never even played a practice round with. I wanted to put an end to that with my team, for sure.

Practice rounds are critical. If you know the course, you can kick back a little. If you don't, man, it's a panic mode to understand the course. You have to feel like you out-prepared the other guy, maybe even if you haven't. That's the key to that whole thing.

Anyone can follow up on that, if they want.

JOHN WOOD: The only thing I would add to that is I think it is important to play some matches, especially alternate shot, for two reasons. If you're just playing a practice round, you don't really notice the fine details. If you're playing for a dollar, all of a sudden you might notice something that you didn't know was going to happen. You don't want to get out there on Friday and not have your routine down.

Am I going to call this guy in to read putts with me? Am I going to stick on my own unless I want his opinion? What does he want for this shot, this approach shot on this hole? In my mind, I see driver all day long, I'm going to bust it down there. He might say, I like it back here and here's why.

I think it's important to play those games so you're really trying to play for something. You always realize one or two things that are going to help you during the matches.



**Q. John, do you remember any examples seeing that or experiencing that?**

JOHN WOOD: Certainly. We played with Steve Stricker once, Hunter was playing with Steve Stricker. We were of a mind on par 5s especially if you couldn't get there, let's try and leave ourselves a number, whether it was 85, lob wedge, or you wanted to hit something with a little less spin, leave it back a little bit.

We called them over on one of the par 5s in a practice round, What do you like here? He looked completely confused, like, What are you talking about? He said, Just get it as close to the hole as you can, I don't care where it is, if it's in the rough or the bunker or the fairway or behind the tree, get it as close as you can to the hole, I'll figure it out from there.

It wouldn't have been Hunter's style at all to play that way. Playing a practice round with Steve, that was the way he wanted it. When we had to make the decision in the tournament, it made it a lot easier to make.

**Q. I want to ask Jim and Paul if you could both, in your opinion, how does the Ryder Cup feel now, whether it's from fans, grandstands, media interest, the gravitas of the event? How does it feel now compared to when you were both playing?**

JIM GALLAGHER JR.: I think for me as a player, my wife was telling me, I was telling her when we went to Glen Eagle, I did the live from there, and I hadn't been to one for years. She said it was just as big, you just didn't pay attention to it because you were so focused on playing.

I think it's even bigger. The grandstands are bigger. Just the whole atmosphere has changed. It was there obviously, being over there, they were pulling for the European side. I think everything is bigger from that part.

I think the pressure is amped up now, especially as we mentioned the U.S. not winning for 30 years. I think the atmosphere is amped up to a whole 'nother level. There's music, more things going on. I just think to me it's gotten bigger and bigger.

Even the non-golf fan watches the Ryder Cup now probably even more. I think from that point, all these guys have mentioned, it's the greatest thing we get to be part of playing. Now calling the shots, everyone talks about it whether they're a true golf fan or non-golf fan, even though we're in the middle of football season. It's a whole new level on my perspective.

PAUL AZINGER: I would agree. I think it's 10 times what it was. In '91, there weren't even grandstands behind the bleachers. Actually in '91, the president of NBC was wondering why it was on his TV with some of the stories. If you dug deep, you could find out how that whole thing evolved, how Kiawah was positioned, and all of a sudden TV had to have it. I'm not going to get into the details, I don't know them all.

Since then, oh my gosh, even since '08, our grandstands were enormous. By the standard they are now, it's not even close. That was just 15 years ago. It is just a massive event. It's one of those things the players target. It's not an exhibition any more. We'll just say that. It hasn't been really since about probably '83.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, everybody, for joining.

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