

# World Golf Hall of Fame Media Conference

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

## Padraig Harrington

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. I know we spoke a little bit earlier, and we saw you just did a Golf Channel interview, but a really big day for you, and if you can just open up with some comments about your exciting news that you received today.

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, it's very exciting. It's very humbling to be honest. I wasn't quite sure -- you're just not quite sure how you're going to feel. Very humbled to be included with the people who have gone before me, a lot of the people in the Hall of Fame I would have put up on a pedestal, and now I'm there included with them. That takes a little bit to get my head around.

I have to understand that, believe that, be part of that. Some of them I would have competed against, and it took a while to get used to that on the golf course. But now that I'm in the Hall of Fame, there's many I would have put up on a pedestal that I never competed against. If we're looking at Trevino or Snead or Hogan, Nicklaus, all these people, like now I'm in the Hall of Fame with these. It's phenomenal.

Very nice to be the people I'm included with, very happy to see I'm in there. Disappointed for the people who didn't get in. When you look at the ballot, everybody deserves it. The Hall of Fame is one of the strangest things. I wish everybody could be in it. You feel for anybody who misses out, and hopefully their turn will come, but very happy to be included.

Great to see Tom Weiskopf get in there. I think from the players, the respect of most of us felt that Tom should be in there and it's nice to see him getting in there, so that was nice.

From my own perspective, I wouldn't have as good an understanding of some of the ladies, and it's nice to see Sandra and Beverly being included, and to learn more about their careers.

Yeah, just lots going through my head, to be honest, and it's a very nice -- from a personal presentation, it's a very nice validation, a good sense of satisfaction that it ties my

career together, brings it all together.

I've often said in my career I've done nice things in a very good progression. Each stage I kind of progressed. But this definitely pulls it all together. Maybe at that time in my life when you are looking back, it gives a sense of satisfaction and validation to what I've done in golf.

**Q. As a three-time major champion and Ryder Cup captain, where would you rank this in your list of achievements?**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I think this pulls it all together. I think each achievement came along at a time that was a new level for me, whether that's winning a Walker Cup, getting a TOUR card, winning a tournament, then making a Ryder Cup, then setting my sights on winning a major, then winning a number of majors. Probably once you've won one major, then you start thinking, Hang on a second, where do I stand in the game of golf, where am I going to stand in the game of golf, and certainly the Hall of Fame becomes looming at that stage; can I make it into the Hall of Fame, will I be included in the Hall of Fame, have I had a career for the Hall of Fame. It wouldn't be something I've would have grown up with in Ireland. We don't have Hall of Fames in Ireland, at least didn't have them when I was growing up. But it's definitely something when you're out there on the golf course, it's a measure of your success.

What I've done at the golf course is really nice, but this pulls it together and says, Yeah, you did well.

**Q. Looking at the list of people who have been inducted into the Hall of Fame, you start at the beginning, you've got Hagen, Hogan, Jones, Nelson, Nicklaus, but you're also there with, being a bit parochial about this, Joe Carr and Christy O'Connor Sr. Just talk about those two men, you would have known both of them, and what that means to you.**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, I suppose it is a little parochial when we're talking with this, but in Ireland they were the two biggest names in golf growing up. Luckily I spent time with both of them. Spent a good bit of time learning from Christy Sr. Would have played the Links Golf



Society quite a bit with him. Didn't spend as much time learning from Joe, and I should have. I didn't really know enough about Joe, and sometimes we miss out -- maybe I was too young to ask the questions.

But certainly to be included with them, they are the greats of Irish golf, and I suppose I haven't really thought about this, but as a kid, I looked up to them so much, I put them so much up there on a pedestal, in some ways now I'm there, as well. I don't quite understand that, but as a kid, I certainly can remember going out to Royal Dublin and seeing Christy's 10 golf bags, and I remember being around Joe quite a bit at Mount Juliet where I was attached for a while.

Yeah, these are people that you never thought that you would have -- as I said, they were so far away from me in many ways that I never aspired to be like them, and it really has happened step by step that I've got to where I have in golf. It will take a bit of time for me to -- it took a bit of time for me as a player to play with some of the guys I would have watched on TV, some of the greats, whether you're talking Bernhard Langer, Ernie Els, Retief Goosen. These are the guys I would have started out playing against in Europe. It took a while to get used to playing with them and feeling like you're as good as them on golf course. Certainly it's going to take a little while to get my head around being included with the icons of the game of golf that are in the Hall of Fame.

**Q. You mentioned in your TV interview that apart from your wins, obviously, which are the reason you're in there, you'd hoped that it was your love of the game, your love of the etiquette and the rules. Does that sort of bring you back to your upbringing, your mother and father and what your father probably would think of this?**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, absolutely. It has to be how we were brought up and what was important in the house, in my household and the golf club. Yeah, it has to be all part of it for sure.

You know, that's my personality, but it is very nice that -- well, you don't get voted into the Hall of Fame based on how you play the game and your etiquette. It is based on your results. But it certainly is -- I'm happy that I feel like I've done it the right way over the years.

There's lots of things that I do on the golf course that I'm proud of, and it's nice to be in the Hall of Fame, but as I said, fixing your pitch marks properly isn't what gets you into the Hall of Fame, but there is a sense of satisfaction in doing a good job.

**Q. As a Hall of Famer, would you like to win a major and be a Hall of Famer? Of course you'd like to. What are the chances of an existing Hall of Famer winning a major?**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, I'm going to be trying to play good golf no matter what. I get up every day, and the joy of trying to find the secret is what keeps me going. There's no doubt about it.

But that's completely separate to the Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame is 100 percent satisfaction, validation. It's a little bit, like I said, about the Champions Tour. I'm on the Champions Tour, and whether I hit a good shot or win a tournament, it's all about remembering the good days, the things you've done in the past, and being in the Hall of Fame is very much about collating and pulling it all together and saying, You know what, this lad did well.

There's a great sense of satisfaction to that. Deep down, yeah, it makes me feel like I could retire, but I don't intend to retire, if that's the answer you want.

**Q. What I really mean is most people who enter the Hall of Fame are past their prime. I know perhaps your very, very best years are behind you, but it doesn't mean that another random peak might not happen.**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: You know, yes, a betting man would say that my best years are behind me, but I don't get up in the morning thinking that. I think I push on. I love the game of golf. There's no doubt you could say I was burnt out five or six years ago, but I kind of stepped back and looked at it and said, You know what, I really, really enjoy playing golf. If I wasn't playing professionally I'd be playing socially and casually.

So yeah, I'm going to keep at it and keep playing and keep trying to be competitive wherever that may be. Yeah, I feel good about my game. I enjoy it. I think I know more about my game than ever.

But yeah, today is more about remembering what I've done, and in some ways, accepting what I've done, and not always be -- being in the Hall of Fame says you've done well, you did it. I want to make sure that I enjoy that moment. That I do walk around with my chest out and say, Hey, look, I've done it, and I'll always be the competitive player out there with your head down trying to battle away.

I can't keep up that pace that I would have had 10 years ago anyway, and I certainly don't want to be that player I've seen hanging on too long.

I enjoy my golf. I go out there and play. I'm going to try

and play wherever I think I can win.

I feel like things are getting better, but I ain't going to beat myself up trying to be a competitive player. If it happens, it happens.

**Q. The Hall of Fame will be moving into its new old home in Pinehurst soon. Have you thought about what you think will tell the Padraig Harrington story in that new facility?**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Well, yeah. They do a pretty good job with where I grew up and my home golf course, Stackstown Golf Club. We have a little museum there that tells quite a bit of my story. I hope it will be along those lines. A lot of family support is really what it is, a lot of determination, quite a bit of mental fortitude.

I think, yeah, that's kind of it. As I said, if they took that room and put it in the Hall of Fame, I think it would do me justice. As I said, the little memorabilia museum room in Stackstown, I'm happy with it and I think everybody else is, so something along those lines, but very much family based on how I got here. Hopefully they can show, as I say, the genuine love I have for the traditions of the game.

**Q. Brian mentioned earlier on about Joe Carr and Christy O'Connor. You're now the third Irishman into the Hall of Fame. It's a small, select group, very limited number of people in the Hall of Fame. What is it about Ireland that they're punching above our weight so much to have three members in such a select group?**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I think we punch above our weight in everything in Ireland. When you travel the world, there's Irish people at the top of -- like Irish-born people at the top of businesses all around the world and people of Irish heritage all the way through business and politics, all around the world. We're pretty good at not knowing -- how to put this nicely? Not feeling like we have any limits.

Certainly I think that's the greatest thing about my own personality that's helped me in my career. I've never felt like I couldn't do it.

Now, what I mean by that is I didn't think there was a rule that says an Irish player can't go and win a major. I never looked at it like just because somebody else hadn't done it before me, I never felt that there was anything stopping me, that I could go out and do it.

In some ways you could say I played with blinkers. I didn't overthink it. I didn't think too much about what other people hadn't done. I just purely, and I think Irish have a good outlook like that, that we get on and do it rather than

thinking about why we can't do it or why we're not allowed to do it. That's definitely it, why we're not allowed to do it; that's definitely not in the Irish language. If somebody says we're not allowed to do it, we're more likely to go do and do it.

I think Irish people, when it comes to what we've done and our influence on the world, it's far greater than the size of our country for sure.

As a golfer, as a person, I don't know, maybe it was just the way I was brought up in my family, but I never thought there was anything that could stop me or hold me back.

That doesn't mean I thought I could do it, I just didn't question that -- there was no reason why I couldn't do it. There was no rule to say I couldn't do it. I certainly didn't overthink it in that sense, just because nobody had won majors. I didn't think that was any reason why I couldn't win them. We're pretty good that way, I think, in Ireland, that we certainly punch above our weight.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you so much for joining us today, and congratulations again.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports