

LIV Golf Hong Kong

Friday, 6 March, 2026

Fanling, Hong Kong

Hong Kong Golf Club at Fanling

Smash GC

Graeme McDowell

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Let's welcome to the media center Graeme McDowell, Smash GC. G-Mac, 7-under for the day, 63. Take us through the round. I know it was a pretty smooth one.

GRAEME McDOWELL: (On Westwood playing well). Sometimes you've just got to hitch the wagon to a guy like that and try and hang in there. The back nine is obviously very gettable here. Managed to play some very solid golf, made a few nice putts and made the turn, birdied 1, birdied 3, and then holed it out on 5 for a 1, which was quite nice. What do you think, Carlos? On 5, not bad for me.

Then I followed that up on the old Post Hole with bogey, which was always nice.

No, listen, good round of golf. This is one of those events on the schedule that I look at and I feel like this is a course where I can compete. Nice to be in there with -- the great thing is it's 72 holes. We've got a lot of golf to play.

Q. When you know the scores are low and then you do have a hole-in-one, what does that do for extra momentum or confidence knowing that you still have two more rounds to go, as well?

GRAEME McDOWELL: Yeah, for sure. I think that definitely crossed my mind out there when you get 4-, 5-, 6-under par. You look at the leaderboard and you see everyone is going low. You have to remind yourself to keep the foot on the gas. This is a golf course where if you can keep the ball in play off the tee, you get a lot of short irons and stuff in your hand. Greens are very puttable. It's a golf course I feel comfortable on. Probably been here 15 times over the years. I love coming back here. Nice to put myself there or thereabouts heading into the weekend, and hopefully we can have some fun.

Q. G-Mac, how many aces do you have?

GRAEME McDOWELL: I think that's about 15. They're all kind of becoming a bit of a blur over the years. It's been

about 30 years of them. They're all fun. They're all special. Nice to do it with a card in your pocket in a tournament. I think that's probably half a dozen maybe in tournament play.

No. 5, there's a couple of wedge par-3s here that you're kind of licking your chops. No. 5, you don't really stand on that tee licking the chops too much. My caddie was trying to steer me a little left of the flag, and I said to him, I think we enough club in our hands to kind of go after it a little bit. I didn't really listen to him. It was one -- I think Wade Ormsby was in the group and he kind of early called it. It looked pretty nice in the air. Obviously always a bonus when they go in.

Q. You and Wade and Westwood, that's quite a trio for this course.

GRAEME McDOWELL: Yeah, we were counting it up; we think we were probably the oldest threesome on the course by easily 20 years. Westwood got off to a really hot start, birdied 8, 9, 10, 11, and like I say, just tried to get in his slipstream a little bit and go with him. He played very nicely today. I was happy to try and hang in there and stay with him.

Q. You go into the weekend on the team leaderboard five shots ahead of these guys. Obviously you have a new captain. What's it been like? How motivated are you to get that first win, not only for the team but obviously for Talor?

GRAEME McDOWELL: Yeah, for sure. Again, 36 holes left times four, what's that, 144 holes? So there's a lot of golf. That's two tournaments' worth. Four scores to count every day. It's very volatile. Smash are up there. Riyadh and Australia we didn't really finish the job. Gooch is a great player. This is a good golf course for him, as well.

Like I say, I lot of work to do this weekend, but one of the great things about LIV, it's not just about yourself. Golf is an incredibly individual sport, but when you're going for that sort of team victory, as well, it's a lot of fun, and really that

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little extra motivation.

Q. Historically you've been a great putter. The last few years maybe the putter has let you down once in a while, but this year so far you've gained a bunch of strokes on the green. First two events and now, I think you're in the top 5 in putting through two rounds. Is that something you expected based on your practice or is it just the highs and lows of the putting?

GRAEME McDOWELL: No doubt. I had a bad putting season last year, and it wasn't lost on me. I feel like I've gone back to some feel. In the off-season I looked at some of the technical stuff around my stroke, decided I didn't like the technical stuff, and I tried to just get back to being a bit more of a feel putter. Did some work on my green reading, and I feel the confidence starting to come back.

Like you said, it's been one of the strengths of my game. Throughout the good years of my career I putted well. I'm the type of player, I don't hit it 350, unfortunately, so I have to be great with my wedges and be great with the putter.

Certainly put a little bit more emphasis, a little bit more focus on that in my preparation and my buildup and changed a couple of my preparation things on the greens, as well, trying to be a little bit more deliberate, a little bit more prepared on the greens in practice.

Q. Talk about the club you used on the 5th and the shot shaping.

GRAEME McDOWELL: 7-iron, pretty much a straight ball. It was 182-ish I think it was, a little helping wind. It was just a pretty stocky 7. Blind squirrel.

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