

LIV Golf Andalucía

Wednesday, 10 July, 2024

Sotogrande, Spain

Real Club Valderrama

Bryson DeChambeau

Crushers GC

Phil Mickelson

HyFlyers GC

Henrik Stenson

Majesticks GC

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We are joined today by the Captain of HyFlyers GC, Phil Mickelson, Captain of Crushers GC Bryson DeChambeau, and Captain of Majesticks GC Henrik Stenson.

Going to start off by welcoming you back to Andalucía. Valderrama is ranked as one of the top golf courses in the world. Get your initial thoughts on being here.

PHIL MICKELSON: It's really fun for us to come to such a world-class golf course that has held WGC events, Ryder Cups, European Tour events and LIV events, and it really is a unique, special golf course that's been created here amongst these trees. It's real treat to play.

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: It's a fantastic venue obviously. I watched the Ryder Cup back in the day, albeit I was only four, five, six years old, something like that. No, I've seen highlights and whatnot, and the golf course always intrigued me whenever they played a DP World Tour event here.

Certainly coming back here last year and playing for the first time and experiencing the golf course, I can see why this golf course is extremely loved here in Spain, and certainly a golf course that albeit most people think it's not fitting for me, I think it's a great golf course. It's a strategy golf course. You've got to have your irons dialed in and you've got to putt really well, and it was a lot of fun last year.

Hopefully we can create some good memories this year for LIV.

PHIL MICKELSON: The recovery shot from 17 you hit was pretty special, too.



BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: You know what's funny, I actually played it right off one of the tree limbs perfectly just to slow it down enough to keep it over the grown on the bunk he is. That's something I've learned from you.

PHIL MICKELSON: That's been an effective shot for me throughout the years. Hard to teach. Well-played.

HENRIK STENSON: I like to play from the fairway and that's something I think you need to do here at Valderrama. It's a fantastic venue. I've seen it in some pretty harsh conditions when we played here in the past when it's on October time and so on.

So it's a nice change to come here and sunbathe and just enjoy Spain in the summer. It's a challenging golf course. You know, it could be a couple of revolutions, never mind looking out over the 10th hole here, the second shot, you come up with a couple of revolutions too much spin and you're 60 yards down the hill, and it's really difficult to get up-and-down. You hit a good shot in, you might leave yourself six feet up the hill for birdie.

The difference between a great score and a bad score on a hole could be very, very thin. So you've got to step carefully around this place, and it is a strategy golf course, and I think everyone is looking forward to the test.

THE MODERATOR: If I recall, you came in second last year. You were only one shot off from Talor Gooch. You're obviously in the greatest form of your life right now playing golf. Do you feel confident heading into this week? Because like you said this, course actually does seem to suit your game, despite what others may say.

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: No matter what I do on any golf course, you're going to have hit fairways, greens and make putts. That's the basic nature of it, and some are more favorable towards others sort of games.

For me I can play long irons out here, hit the fairway, hit good irons and good wedges in, and if my putting is on I'll have a good chance. But there's certainly at love the other great golfers out here that will give themselves a chance this week. It's about who can stand the test of this golf course and persevere through adversity.



There's going to be shots you hit between trees and go into weird places. The people that can handle that adversity and move through it and persevere on is going to be probably the eventual champion.

THE MODERATOR: Last time we saw you, you were on this incredible high, this wild couple of weeks. Have you had a moment to stop and reflect and really let it all settle in?

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: Yeah. I've had a couple days to let it settle in, being right next to some major champions. They know how that feels and it's really cool to be able to experience that and just share that experience with others out here and others around the world and even get to share it out here. It's pretty cool.

It's exciting but barely got a little bit of rest. Fourth of July was fun. And yeah, I'm looking forward to a great week. It was a lot of fun the past couple weeks just resting.

THE MODERATOR: You mentioned these other two amazing champions sitting next to you. I would be remiss if I didn't ask you guys, we are heading back to Royal Troon next week, which was the scene of the crime of the 2016 duel between the two of you. Can you guys each reflect on that day and your memories from it and the feeling of going back there?

HENRIK STENSON: I'm really looking forward to it. There's been a few are Opens since but it's going to be special coming back to the great venue with Phil. We were talking about it -- I'm sure you want to do it some more.

Yeah, great memories. It was a fantastic week of golf for both of us. Luckily for me, I was the one to draw the longer straw and come out with a win. But yeah, I'm really looking forward to the week ahead and hope to bring some birdies to match those memories.

PHIL MICKELSON: Yeah, thanks for giving me the opportunity to talk about losing (laughter). It was really one of the fun events. Only time I can remember in my career where I played my absolute best golf and it wasn't enough to win.

As I look back, I've always tried to put it in my hands. Like if I play my game, if I play well, it will be good enough, and it always has been until that week when I played my best and it wasn't enough. But yet, I still really enjoyed that week. I look back on it fondly even though I didn't win. I loved the 36 holes over the weekend that we played, competed against head-to-head. We really had a great time because that's what it's about. It's not about the

trophy as much as it is the process. That's what I remember, and my life experiences, you know, being in the middle of it. That's why we work so hard.

I also want to compliment Bryson because last year when he finished second, this golf course is not a course you can just stand up and wait on it and hit it as far as you can. You have to be precise. You have to hit it certain distances to leave yourself a shot in around the trees and so forth.

For Bryson who has so much speed, to win a U.S. Open or to win like he has using his length, but to play well here, and just miss the playoff had Talor Gooch not made a 30-footer on the last hole, using precision, using shot-making, using his other skills, I think is a real compliment to what a complete player he is, and this course identified that.

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: Thanks, Phil.

PHIL MICKELSON: I thought that was a really cool showing.

HENRIK STENSON: I wouldn't take it quite as far.

THE MODERATOR: Last question from me.

Obviously all three of you heading to royal Troon next week. How will this course prepare you if at all.

PHIL MICKELSON: We are going to have a very windy day on Friday. So the ability to control the ball in the wind is going to be enhanced. The greens are very small here and although the greens are larger, Troon in the wind is so strong that you have to be just as precise.

So the iron play into these greens is going to be very similar to what we have next week where it's precision. You've got to really strike it with a certain flight and shape and come into the green where it's receptive.

So I think that's going to be very similar to what we have next week at Troon. Also off the tee, it's a lot of different options, a lot of different club selections at Troon where you put it in a certain spot very much like Valderrama. So you have distance off the tee as well as shape shots to hit the fairways. So the precision game is going to be showcased this next week as well as next.

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: I completely second that. He said everything I think we could ever say.

HENRIK STENSON: For me, I normally carry three fairway woods, or driver, 3-wood, 4-wood. But this week,

my driving iron and my 2-iron is in the bag instead of my 4-wood. That's really the one thing, with similarity, I'm going to hitting that one quite a lot off the tee here. That's a good chance to kind of get that club going because it's going to be useful next week.

Q. You guys have been close to Keegan and have been Ryder Cup partners. Your thoughts about him being captain and what he said about you yesterday in terms of he thinks you'll be captain one day?

PHIL MICKELSON: I was surprised at the pick, and I think it's a great pick the more I think about it. He played a lot of golf at Bethpage when he went to St. Johns. His passion for the Ryder Cup is greater than just about any player I've ever seen. His love for the Ryder Cup is more than anybody I know. I think he's going to lead with that type of passion.

I think he's incredible. I'm really, really happy for him. I think we all are really happy for him knowing how gut-wrenching it was to not be part of the team last year, but to now have the opportunity to lead and go forward I think is great.

Q. He said, also, he wants the 12 best players regardless of where they play. Obviously that must have been something nice to hear from your perspective.

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: Yeah, look, I'm excited for him. I think it's a great opportunity for him, especially as it relates to younger players. He's going to see that younger threshold, and obviously relate to them a lot more, I would say, because of his age. I mean, what he is he, 38 or something like that?

So yeah, he's seeing the younger generation game. He's out there still playing, and competing and it's great to have some relate ability. As far as picking the best players, that's the right approach and I couldn't be more happy for him as captain.

Q. We are approaching our 100th competition day here at LIV. Curious for each of you, what's your take away or maybe the most important development that's happened in these kind of first 100 days in the office, so to speak?

PHIL MICKELSON: I'm sorry, I zoned out. What was the question?

HENRIK STENSON: He was waiting for somebody else to get that question.

PHIL MICKELSON: Mike, would you ask that one more time?

Q. So we are about to hit our 100th competition day at LIV. Curious as you look back in these, you've been here for everyone round, basically. Just what your most important take away is from the first 100 office days, if you think about it?

PHIL MICKELSON: I think the progress, how far we've come is what I like to focus on. We are not where we want to be but sometimes you have to identify progress.

Like if you are improving your game, even if you're not winning, you need to identify the progress and say look, I've come a long way in the last time period. We've come a long ways the last two years, and we're building momentum. We are not where we want to be. But we are on our way and we've come a long way. I think it's important to identify the progress we've made.

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: I'd say that moving an inch and ideating a mile is a lot better. If we are just barely moving, even if it's moving in the right direction, even though it's slowly moving, not where we want to be, we have come a long way and we continue to more progressively the small incremental amounts.

It's just going to domino at some point. I couldn't be more excited, these 100 days or 99 or whatever they have been so far have been incredible. The journey has been awesome and I'm excited to continue this progress and see what we can provide for the world of golf.

HENRIK STENSON: I think that's what always strikes me when we talk about LIV. It's only been out there for two years, just about, and everyone you talk to about that, you feel like it's been a lot longer. A lot of things have happened in a short period of time.

Yeah, excited to be part that have journey and see where we end up.

Q. Can I take you back to Troon?

PHIL MICKELSON: Sure, I love talking about my losses. Go ahead.

Q. You might want to zone out again.

PHIL MICKELSON: Yeah.

Q. On that Sunday morning, if somebody told you you were going to get a 65 and not win, what would you have thought?

PHIL MICKELSON: I wouldn't have thought it was right. I thought I played a great final round, well enough to win, and it just wasn't. Like I said, I played some of my best golf and it wasn't enough to win, which is the first time I can remember that being the case.

And I thought 65 for sure would be enough.

Q. Is it your proudest defeat, if that sounds right?

PHIL MICKELSON: I mean we keep framing my losses in different ways. It's not making me feel any better either way.

Like I said, it's more the process, and having that opportunity to play great golf. To go head-to-head with somebody I have so much respect for; even though I still came up short I have this great life experience and this great memory and this great competition to look back on.

I mean, I loved the week. I loved playing like that. I want it play like that again. That's why I'm working hard. I love competing and having a chance to win like that. Even though I came up short, I thought it was a lot of fun to be a part of that.

Q. Henrik, to win a major, first major any time must be an incredible feeling but to do it in that way against a great like Phil Mickelson, that must have just taken it to a new realm.

HENRIK STENSON: Yeah, no question. I was 40 at the time and I never knew how many chances I'm going to get to win a major championship.

So yeah, starting that week and starting that weekend, I was quite determined, as you could see, and yeah, going up against Phil, I knew I was in for a real challenge. He was never going to back down. He had an incredible short game and at that time already had four majors in the bag, right. I knew what I was up against and I think that helped me to just let go and really go after it and bring my absolute best and lucky for me, I managed to do that. As they say, the rest is history.

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