

# TGL Golf Presented By SoFi

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## Billy Horschel

Media Day Press Conference



### Q. What do you think people don't get about this yet?

BILLY HORSCHTEL: I think the most honest answer I can give, when someone hears about us being simulator golf is maybe a little gimmicky, and it's not that. We're hitting off real grass, we're hitting real shots. We're playing on some artificial surface, but there's a lot of technology that's gone into this.

This isn't just some put-it-together and let's do this. This is a lot of high-tech stuff, courses created, the surfaces, the way we created the competition with six -- nine person all hit a shot and we each play two holes of individual. There's a lot of stuff that's gone into this.

The thing behind this is we want to make it different than what people are seeing on the golf course. This is supposed to be different. It's supposed to be new, it's supposed to be fast, engaging, in a two-hour window when you're going to be able to see every golf shot. You're going to be able to see guys more engaging than they would be out on a PGA TOUR event.

From the very beginning when this came to be in 2022 I was excited about it, but me, I love the game of golf, I think it's the greatest sport in the world, and my entire thing about golf is I want to get more people engaged. I want to get more people playing the same of golf because it can open up so many doors. It can do so many things for your life.

I felt like this is another way to bring golf to people that have never played golf, that haven't really watched golf. We're seeing it around the world now where brick and mortar stars, simulators and teaching is being done, so it's another way for people to feel more comfortable maybe going into that space instead of an actual golf course that can be intimidating if you've never been to one and you've never played golf before.

### Q. What do you want it to be like in here? Do you want it to be like a country club? Do you want it to be

like an NBA game, a football game? What do you want it to be like in here?

BILLY HORSCHTEL: If it's a country club in here, we have failed. Let me just tell you that. I want this to be like it would be in a Mercedes-Benz Stadium. I want it to be exciting. I want the fans to be involved. I want them to be pulling for one team or another. We're going to have music, so listen, I want it to be what you would experience in Mercedes-Benz Stadium with the Atlanta Falcons, the Florida Gators stadium, an NBA arena, an NHL arena. You want it to be where you can feel that energy, you can feel the excitement from the crowd. You can feel sort of the tension inside here a little bit.

Listen, last thing we want to do is make ourselves look like idiots on live TV in primetime, duffing a chip or skulling something, which is going to happen. Someone is going to skull a bunker shot into the crowd and it's going to be awesome, but you don't want to be that guy that does it the first time.

### Q. How much of an adjustment is that going to take for you and the players getting used to playing in an environment like that?

BILLY HORSCHTEL: I think we'll get used to it very quickly. We play in front of fans already, but it's in an open space. There's no confines to it. Here we're in a confined area with the stadium, so it feels -- murmurs can ricochet off walls, so even though they may not be right on top of us, it's going to feel smaller than out on a PGA TOUR event.

### Q. What kind of adjustments do you think need to be made for playing on a screen playing indoors?

BILLY HORSCHTEL: Listen, not much. The ball reacts the same way distance-wise. You saw wind ham and Rickie hit some shots. The ball travels the same. I think obviously chipping on the greens is going to be a little different. There's ways to get the ball stop a little quicker. Reading the greens is going to be a little different. Yes, the green moves around and everything, but because of the light it's going to be a little bit tougher, but when you add in the 40-second shot clock you don't have a lot of time to



make sure you have every little detail figured out, so having your teammates there to help you sort of dissect a shot or anything is going to be vital because last thing you want to do is get a shot clock penalty.

**Q. (Indiscernible).**

BILLY HORSCHTEL: Yeah, so I hit that 7-iron, and when I played that par-3 it was 178. I hit a 7-iron 185 yards. I tried to hit a three-quarter 7-iron. I missed it, caught it a little bit off the toe and it came up five, six yards short. So it wasn't like that ball went 175, 178 or 180 yards. That ball went exactly where I thought it would have gone if I was playing down the street at PGA National. It went 171, 172 yards. Yes, the ball reacts the exact same in terms of how far it's carrying.

I've played here and we had some wind. The ball reacts to the wind. That may be a little bit different because when they put the wind in the system, it could act a little bit differently than what we're used to, how much a five-mile-per-hour wind, 10-mile-per-hour wind actually moves the ball or affects the golf ball may be a little different. But it's still different on the golf course, too, because sometimes a 10-mile-per-hour wind on the ocean is different than a 10-mile-per-hour wind in Palm Springs.

**Q. You talked about the stadium (indiscernible) I was wondering how much responsibility is it for the players to make sure that the (indiscernible)?**

BILLY HORSCHTEL: I think it all falls on the players. Listen, SoFi, other companies that have stepped up, everyone who's put in the hours to make this something special, if the players are not entertaining and the players are not engaging, if they're not talking and dissecting stuff, we're not going to -- it's not going to be successful.

We have to be entertainers. We have to take ourselves away a little bit from what we are at PGA TOUR tournaments inside the ropes and we have to be different. We have to show more of ourselves in here than we would out on the PGA TOUR course or a tournament, but we're still going to be competitive, because like I said, the last thing you want to do is give Tiger any more bragging rights or you give Wyndham Clark any more bragging rights. He's going to let you know. Whether at some point down the road something comes up and they mention where they got the better of you.

Listen, it's going to be really competitive. Listen, we're competitors. We want to win. But we also have to be entertainers at the same time. I think everyone who has signed up to be a part of this is aware of that, and they're going to do their part to make sure this is successful.

**Q. Is it hard to be trying to be entertaining in this setting?**

BILLY HORSCHTEL: For me, it's not that hard. I'm pretty much what you see is what you get. What I say is what I think, and sometimes it's got me in trouble in the past, and I'm sure it's going to get me in trouble here during the season. Certain words may come out that shouldn't come out.

But listen, I think for me it's not that hard. I know who I am off the golf course, on the golf course. I always have been. I think pretty much everyone here is going to be authentic, too.

Now, you may get to see a Patrick Cantlay show a little bit more openness than he shows at PGA TOUR events and that's okay because we know who he is inside the clubhouse. Same thing with Cam Young. Who you see Cam Young is on the golf course is a little bit different guy than in the locker room where he's a little bit more engaging and a little bit more talkative.

But listen, I think everyone is going to be who they are. They just have to show more of themselves than what they would, like I said, at a regular TOUR event.

**Q. As a golf historian and purist, how did this setup enhance the game and bring it to life?**

BILLY HORSCHTEL: Well, for me, this got brought to me in early '22, like I said. The first thing I thought about was this could open up a lot of doors to people who haven't gotten involved in the game of golf or thought about getting involved in the game of golf because listen, going to the golf course and trying to hit a golf ball for the first time can be intimidating, especially when you've got good players around or good club members, everything. It's an intimidating aspect.

You're seeing it around the country, places where it's indoor, where they've got simulators and coaches and that, that just makes it a little bit more comfortable space for people to learn. I think people seeing this, seeing that golf doesn't have to necessarily be played out on a golf course to enjoy it, you can go to your local -- they have them at bars and other designated facilities or restaurants that they've sort of built with simulators where that was the main goal, you're going to see more people involved actually go out to the golf course.

I think it helps both the golfer that isn't involved in the game of golf or starting to get involved in the game of game or doesn't know much about the game of golf, this is another

way to show them a way to be involved in it, and I think for your hard-core golfers, your regular golf fans, yes, this is going to be different than what they see, but I think they're going to see it's going to be fun and exciting, and for those guys and women, it's going to be one of those things where, hey, it's raining, I can't go play at my local club today, let's go find a local area shop or bar or restaurant that has some simulators and let's go play golf in there.

I think it's really the best of both worlds that's been created here with Tiger, Rory and Michael Dunn. It's fabulous.

**Q. Do you foresee any issues in terms of time management and PGA TOUR scheduling and being successful in both?**

BILLY HORSCHEL: You know, that's one thing that was talked about for a while is how to make this marry with the PGA TOUR schedule, and that's why certain teams are playing certain nights. The players had to talk about what events they were going to play, what events they weren't going to play. So we worked hard trying to make a schedule work for everyone. Some may have it a little bit tougher, but also, SoFi has done a great job with stepping up as the main sponsor here, going to provide transportation for players that need it.

Listen, I don't think it's going to be an issue. I think we're used to traveling. We're used to doing multiple things at once. I don't think the adjustment period is going to be much of a factor.

**Q. Do you also see it as you would be sitting shots anyway on a Monday and Tuesday so you're just doing the same thing at a different venue?**

BILLY HORSCHEL: Correct. Listen, we play at night, so everything is -- if I play on Tuesday night, I can practice around the area. I can go practice and play. Then I come in here, I'm hitting really the same kind of golf shots that I would at any other golf course. I'm just doing it into a five-story golf screen that I've never done before, but I'm still trying to hit my little cut that I would if I was playing PGA National down the street.

**Q. (Indiscernible).**

BILLY HORSCHEL: I think on the TOUR side, it's more competition. There is a little bit of entertainment value and maybe it's more so hitting unbelievable golf shots underneath trees and everything, or shots that the golfer at home can try to replicate themselves.

Yeah, on the TOUR side it's a lot more competitive, and the entertainment aspect is the golf itself. It's Rory McIlroy

and Bryson DeChambeau going up against each other the last couple holes of the U.S. Open. They're trying to win a golf tournament and that's the entertainment there.

This is a little bit different. Competitor-wise, you still want to win, but because we're in a confined space, in an arena, in a stadium, we're going to have to be entertaining because we're sitting into a five-story screen. Obviously fans can see that and see the hole and everything, but we have to be entertainers. We have to entertain the spectators with something they haven't seen or gotten before.

**Q. (Indiscernible).**

BILLY HORSCHEL: I think so. I think when you look at the holes the way they're designed, they're pretty cool, so you may take on some shots that you may not try at a PGA TOUR event because to be honest with you, yes, we're trying to win, but out there it could have a bigger effect, where here the effect can be small. You've got a teammate that can pick you up and everything. You can still hit big hooks, big slices, low, high.

There's sort of a little running joke that there's a camera right up there at the top of the screen and the joke is like the first guy that hits that and breaks it gets something.

Listen, there's some little hidden things in there that's going to make this thing really fun. Guys are going to try some different stuff. I think you're going to see some cool shots around the green. Because of the way the green is, you can see some balls -- if you hit it high with some spin, it's going to bounce up and come straight back with some spin.

Yeah, I think you may see some stuff different that you may not see at PGA TOUR events.

**Q. Talking on the entertainment aspect, how much will we see joking and trash talking versus (indiscernible)?**

BILLY HORSCHEL: I'm going to be nerdy because there's going to be a regular -- once the number is on the screen. Like hey, you're going to miss that. Okay, that ball should have went to an apex of 104 when it was at 98, and that's why that ball went five yards short instead of five yards long like it should have, so there's your nerdy stuff that fans at home are going to see and they're going to love.

You've got to have your trash talk. Listen, we've seen enough of this where there's some acting that is shown on TV. There's not enough of that in my opinion.

It can be done in a way that no one gets offended, and no

one is going to get offended by it. But I think I'm not the best trash talker. I will say that right away. But I can have my little needles here and there. J.T. is unbelievable, and J.T. will be great at it. You're going to have some other guys that are naturals at it.

Listen, there's something about a six-footer and I want to say, hey, don't -- a six-footer, I think it's breaking a little right to left. Just throw something else out there. Just try to get in their head a little bit.

Like I played a hole yesterday with Austin Greaser and Jackson Suber and Michael Thorbjornsen. Listen, I'm trying to get in their head when they have a couple putts. Austin Greaser had a couple four-footers early in the round, and I said, pick it up, and he was sort of dumbfounded. I said, don't worry, when you have to make a putt on the back nine and it's a four-footer, I just want you to remember I gave you all these so you'll miss that four-footer late in the round. So stuff like that.

It may be cheesy, but it's cool. It's different. You don't hear that when you play PGA TOUR golf because we're not going to say that unless we're amongst friends and may give a little needle on a shot they hit but nothing like that.

**Q. It might be too early, but what can you take from this (indiscernible)?**

BILLY HORSCHTEL: I think anytime, it doesn't matter what environment or what arena you're in, anytime you can hit great golf shots, just do it with confidence. Yesterday playing at home with those boys, just some of the shots I hit come back when we were sort of down in the match, being able to hit quality golf shots when I needed to, that goes in the memory bank. So when I have a shot at a PGA TOUR event and I've got to remember a good golf shot that sort of reminds me, hey, this is a shot I had at Pablo. I hit a great little 8-iron, had a yard or two drop to the right and I hit it to 10 feet on the 18th hole. That stuff I remember. It's no different than here, when I'm able to make a big putt, get up-and-down, or hit a great golf shot from one of the hitting areas, you remember that. It just puts that confidence that you can sort of store in the memory bank for another time.

**Q. I'm wondering about the green surrounds, how the ball reacts. How realistic does it feel? Can you tell the difference in the grain?**

BILLY HORSCHTEL: You can. Into the grain is really different because if you're just a little bit off with a strike like I was, it comes out like a duffed shot. You can be a little bit more aggressive and get a little bit more spin on it because

the ball sits up and you can guarantee you're going to get spin and a good strike on it.

Yeah, listen, this isn't real grass, but it's the closest thing we can get to it, and I think it reacts very similar in the sense of the shots you can hit. You can still hit the high spinning one. You can hit the low one that runs up the green. If I were to hit shots here for you like Rickie and I were talking about, if you hit it higher, it comes down, and depending on how much spin, it will kickback wards.

You may not see that on the PGA TOUR, but obviously it's a little bit different. You use that slope in the way you can bounce it back off the slope a little bit in the hole.

Yeah, it's a little bit different. It's really tough to replicate what we have outside in here, but I think the team has done an unbelievable job of getting as done a course as they possibly can.

**Q. (Indiscernible).**

BILLY HORSCHTEL: (Indiscernible) grass is exactly the same. It's to the tee what we would expect out on the golf course.

**Q. Is there like a specific tournament you can compare it to on TOUR, how the turf reacts?**

BILLY HORSCHTEL: I would say because obviously rough is longer -- to me they've overseeded it -- overseed is what it looks like to me. It's like playing at TPC Sawgrass because the way we overseed. It's not Bermuda but it's overseeded a little bit. The way the grass goes through because it's a little bit softer, it's not firm over there but softer so the club can dig a little bit, and you hit one a little heavy it's going to be really heavy, the way the ball sits in that little bit of rough we have. Very similar to what I expect at home right now practicing at TPC Sawgrass.

**Q. I feel like Rickie has been getting his game face on with the mullet. Could we maybe see a little length grown out in the back from you?**

BILLY HORSCHTEL: Listen, my hair, when it grows, it gets thick, it doesn't get long. No, but I think we've got the Atlanta drive. You're from Atlanta. Atlanta is notorious for the Falcons and the Dirty Birds, so we may have some Dirty Bird chains that come out as we walk out and everything. Who knows, maybe we can start a little team thing if someone hits a great golf shot. All the football teams have -- they've got the wrestling belt, and whenever you get a turnover they do some cool things like that. Maybe we hit a good shot or something, maybe we've got a big ol' Dirty Bird diamond chain back there that we rock

after a shot.

**Q. It's sort of one of those you need to tune in to find out sort of a situation?**

BILLY HORSCHEL: Listen, there's going to be a lot of cool things. I think as we go into the season a little bit more, I think you're going to see guys get more comfortable. They're going to learn more about everything that's going on, feel more comfortable with the production and everything, and I think guys are going to open up more and there's going to be more fun things, but there are things that we can do to sort of get the crowd more involved and make it more entertaining for the viewers at home watching on TV.

**Q. What is the difference between being mic'd up and this environment?**

BILLY HORSCHEL: I don't think there's much. Maybe just it radiates in here a little bit more. You can hear yourself talk, which I don't like hearing myself talk. It sounds bad. I don't like to hear myself after I've done something. But it's very similar. I don't think there's going to be much of a difference.

I think the big thing is that you're going to have six players out here talking. You're going to have Matt Barrie, you're going to have Roger. We're going to have an earpiece in with Scott Van Pelt and have a whole bunch of people in our ears. So that's sort of the adjusting thing that goes on a little bit. But for the most part, I think the cue sticks and everything else, it's is not going to be that much of a factor.

**Q. Are you going to (indiscernible).**

BILLY HORSCHEL: I don't know exactly when that will happen and everything, but I know that stuff will be muted at some point. They're not going to be talking in our ear on a 165-yard golf shot. I've got Jeff, like, hey, Matt, after Billy hits the golf shot, make sure you go here. I'm not going to hear that.

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