

# TGL Golf Presented By SoFi

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## Mike McCarley

### Media Day Press Conference



MATT BARRIE: I think the one thing that we get when the players come in here for rehearsals is wow, look at this place. We welcome in Mike McCarley, CEO and founder of TMRW Sports and the brains behind TGL. You see the media; you've been doing this for so long; how did we get to this point today?

MIKE MCCARLEY: Yeah, I would say a very small brain, and we have some very big brains that everyone will meet later.

Look, for me, this is kind of a career-long journey to get to this point, so I was at NBC for 20 years. The first half of it not focused on golf at all, mostly focused on Olympics and Sunday Night Football and trying to take some of the biggest events in the world and make them bigger, and a lot of that was working with some relatively obscure Olympic sports to try to make them better for television but stay rooted in the traditions of each one of those sports but try to improve it so when they get on the big stage every four years they'll show off better, and hopefully that means more and more people who pick up those sports over time.

Fast forward, I was fortunate enough to work in the golf business of NBC, including Golf Channel, for 10 plus, a dozen years or so, and you try to apply some of the same thinking to golf.

So what you see is every few years when the U.S. Open goes to the West Coast, it's in primetime on the East Coast, ratings spike. You see what happens in the Ryder Cup when the guys are in a team environment and they're really playing off of each other in a way that you don't see week in and week out on TOUR. Same thing with the Solheim Cup.

We saw it in the NCAA championships. You would see it when you had the team element, and then you also kind of see the down side of it. You say, there's weather, you're beholden to sunrise and sunset. The sport, much like a lot of other sports but maybe more so than any, was really getting a lot of data and technology that was starting to

drive not just the way the athletes in the sport were practicing and preparing but also the way the fans were engaging with it from a television standpoint, digital, social, et cetera.

So you kind of put all that together, and ultimately it becomes this, but it was not do this, the technology, for technology's sake. It was how do we accomplish primetime television, how do we make every shot be seen live, how do we get a lot of data on every shot, and how do we do it in a way that's complementary and additive to the best players in the world's schedules, not making them kind of pick and choose and figure out what they want to do.

Obviously you have to do it in South Florida where the vast majority of the best players in the world live, and it ends up looking something like this.

MATT BARRIE: Again, you're talking about a sport that is by and large individual. The team concept is great. We'll get into the rules, the 40-second shot clock, the hammer and all of that throughout the afternoon. We've done a bunch of these together. We just coincidentally dress alike.

What does this day represent?

MIKE MCCARLEY: Yeah, look, this is a lot of hard work by a lot of people. We started focusing on the technology and what this would look like with the help of a lot of really smart people, technology companies, Full Swing, Toptracer, the PGA TOUR and all their ShotLink data, some really good golf course designers who helped us build this out. You really start to kind of get into talking to the players and what this means for them, and when we've had them come out and experience this and practice and play some test matches and things like that, all of the work that led up to really in the technology for the competition, and then behind that was dialing in the technology for the broadcast, because you have 1,500 fans who will watch this live, and it will be a truly unique experience for those fans who can see it live and in person. You see some of the best players in the world. You see every single shot of theirs without having to leave your seat. Just like for the



fans at home, you'll see this camera that moves around here is the rail cam just like you have at Olympic track and field. There's bunker cams that are buried in all three bunkers. The same cameras are in the tee boxes. There's a camera above the green that gives you the same view that you would get if the blimp at a golf course was in perfect position all the time, goes straight down on the green, and then there's a sky cam or a spider cam that goes over the field of play just like at a football stadium.

So the idea is to really try to create the best experience for the fans that you possibly can, and for the players, the feedback that we've gotten is it is a little bit of a primetime stage. They step into this arena, and it is -- you're trying to create a little bit of the gladiators in the arena. The shot clock adds a little bit of a pressure cooker for them, as well, which we're trying to create.

So look, all of the focus, time, energy, resource, investment, really focused on getting this dialed in from a technology standpoint, and then I've been involved in 10 different Olympics, and I would tell you that in a few of them, I'd walk into the opening ceremony and they were still painting and landscaping. Luckily we started our painting and landscaping a couple of weeks ago, but we wanted to make sure we got this part right.

We've had 25 tests and rehearsals in the last 30 days. We'll have 25 more in the next 20 days. Then the rest of the venue is coming together, really finishing touches over the next three weeks.

MATT BARRIE: As we count down to January 7, first broadcast, 9:00 p.m. eastern on ESPN, you kind of touched on it a minute ago, the 1,500 seats here, there's going to be a different experience for those that are in the arena relative to the broadcast audience who's going to see a completely different element of what TGL is. What can the fans expect?

MIKE McCARLEY: Yeah, from a fan standpoint, you really think about sitting courtside or near the field of play at an NBA game, an NHL game, a football game, what is that like, seeing the best players in the world. One of the things that we hear from people quite a bit, they don't understand how big -- they didn't comprehend how big this actually was going to be, but at the same time how intimate it can be. I'm sitting here and they're playing right there, for those people that are sitting in those seats.

I think the idea for a fan at home, the mics that all of the players are wearing, you have the ability to talk to them, they have the ability to talk to each other. Because they're in close proximity to each other, because they're all focused on the same shot, there's only one shot at a time,

every shot is live, they can talk to each other about that. They can hear what each other is saying.

Sometimes what's happened in golf, you're spread out over a 200-acre golf course, you don't necessarily know what's happening, and even guys that are on the same hole may not know what's happening with the other guy that they're in the same group with or they're playing with.

So the idea of in a way demystifying the sport, not just because the technology and the cameras but hearing directly from the players about here is what I am trying to do and here's why, and now watch me do it, and sometimes they do it and sometimes they don't, as you well know.

MATT BARRIE: I would say some of the feedback we've gotten from the players is it moves quick. It's a quick-paced, quick-moving style of golf here at TGL.

Finally, Mike, what are the keys to success?

MIKE McCARLEY: Well, I won't say a lot. It starts with good people. We have 80 or so full-time employees that we hired. You're going to meet some of them later. The technology side, competition, and then we've brought on great partners. ESPN came on board. In the first meeting I had, it was like a lot of these first meetings where people either get it or they don't. With ESPN and Burke Magnus it was I get this, I want to find a way to make it work.

Same thing with Anthony Noto, who's the CEO of SoFi. We got on a Zoom call, and he very quickly understood it. He understands the technology, has been a great partner. You want a good business partner, he actually came in and tested with one of our test groups yesterday and hit a lot of shots, had some good feedback. They played. I think he'll be back, probably play some more. So it was great.

You can see there's a lot of partners that have come on board and are helping us in different areas of the business and have been important in their own ways to help continue to build this, and I think we talk about a team sport, we have six team ownership groups that are representing six different locations, Atlanta, Jupiter, Boston, New York, LA and the Bay, and they're doing their part in building community. Most of them have millions of fans that they reach because they've got portfolios of sports teams that they own in their communities and operate in their communities and they're talking to those fans every day, so us building a fan base for what is a group of golfers who are used to playing an individual sport, now they start to play in a team element. The team ownership groups, really strong team ownership groups is a big part of that.



I mentioned the TOUR earlier, but Jay Monahan and I had a conversation very early in all of this about where the line is, and from an entertainment aspect and a way to try to help educate and create new fans for the game and how we do that.

Then lastly I would say where we are right now is the Palm Beach Gardens campus of Palm Beach State College, Dr. Ava Parker, the president of the college is here today, as well. You'll meet her later. This is our partner. This is the home of where we'll bring this to. We obviously were looking for a place that was in close proximity to most of the top players in the world. It happened to be close proximity to your winter home, as well, Matt, and with all of that, we have, over the course of the last five years, built this, and now we're getting ready to launch in three weeks.

MATT BARRIE: Yeah, all due respect to Bristol, being down here instead of Bristol, Connecticut, this time of year is a win. You mentioned Palm Beach State College, and you walk in here today, and you see it, and you're like, wow. Take a look at how the SoFi Center came to be.

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