

Hero Dubai Desert Classic

Wednesday, 25 January, 2023

Dubai, UAE

Majlis Course at Emirates Golf Club

Padraig Harrington

Quick Quotes

Q. How are you feeling after an incredible week in Abu Dhabi?

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, I feel good. I've I felt good about my game at the end of the year, so nice to start off maybe a little quicker than I expected. Normally I wouldn't be that good the first weekend. Always good to be in contention again. You want a chance, and certainly I'll look back at last week and have a few regrets.

Q. A week like that often takes a lot out of players, especially when they are right there on the cusp in contention. How did you feel on the course? I know you played 18 holes earlier today.

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: You know, some of the good stuff I'm playing on the Champions Tour and being in contention, it doesn't stress me as much, so I wasn't as mentally drained. I wasn't as mentally drained after last week.

The other side to that, you get to my age, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesdays are not very exciting. It's hard to get up for it on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday. I wouldn't be full of energy at this moment. This is a big, big golf course, and with this rain coming in, it's going to get even longer. The rough now, it's actually quite easy. It is long but it has substance.

But obviously if it's wet, it's going to be quite a difficult test. Preparing myself for today and tomorrow.

Q. We are forecast for rain the next two days, and it's come early. How much more difficult is this course going to play?

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: As I said, this is one of those golf courses that seems really difficult in practise. When you get into it and play it in the tournament, the tees get moved around a little bit. The scoring is generally better than expected.

When it's raining, it could actually go the other way, go



substantially the other way. It's a big, long golf course. Wet rough, that would make it very awkward. So I think -- I don't know what to expect but I'm preparing myself for a long day tomorrow, even if that means sitting in the clubhouse, but out on the golf course, it's going to be a grind.

Q. We're seeing pictures of you on social media in cryo chambers, how is the body and how is the knee?

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: You know, I'm pushing it tomorrow limits, my body. I always have. But you know, at this age in particular, I need a knee replacement. That's just it. I need three months, six months of that, and so that's not going to happen for a few years and at the moment I'm going to take my chances and put up with what I've got.

The rest of the body, I've had a full-time physio for years. So I probably push it a little bit too far, but I bring it back, or the physio brings it back, I should say. Trying to keep myself somewhat okay. It's always been a balance, and when I get older, the rest side is winning out.

Q. I have to ask you about the 8th hole, the most iconic in the Middle East. What were your first impressions the first time you teed it up?

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: There was nothing there when I teed it up first. The only thing on the horizon was the Hard Rock Cafe. That was it. The hole wasn't as difficult. We played the tee further forward, and you could carry the right side and there wasn't as many bushes up there. Yeah, it's turned into the most iconic hole.

For me, I would still say the second shot on 18 is the one for me. That has the player under pressure. So everybody thinks it's a beautiful hole, the 18th, and what a beautiful shot, but the players are sweating it a bit, especially if you're in contention. So yeah, the second shot on 18 is the one that does it for me.

Q. Lastly, we've got a new title sponsor in Hero this year. How important is it to have people like them here at the Dubai Desert Classic?



PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: There's no doubt here over are a great supporter of golf in general. It's brilliant that they are moving in now and supporting the Dubai Desert Classic. This is one of our marquis events now for 25 years on tour. It's an event that it's just one of our best events. This is a championship golf course. It truly is a big test. For Hero to take title sponsorship and sort of guarantee its place in golf here, that's very important.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

