

# Hero Dubai Desert Classic

Sunday, 25 January, 2026

Dubai, UAE

Majlis Course at Emirates Golf Club

## Patrick Reed

### Press Conference



CLARE BODEL: Patrick, welcome to the Media Centre here at the Hero Dubai Desert Classic. It's an event you've come close to winning before, and you finally got your hands on that giant trophy. Can you sum up how it feels to be here?

PATRICK REED: It feels amazing. You know, just kind of one of these things that any time I came to this event, obviously feel like kind of shows how the off-season was, like if the things we were working on were successful and working.

To be able to come so close in '23, and to have an opportunity today to have a chance to win the golf tournament at the start and see the lead dwindle, it kind of went away; and once I got to the back nine and to be able to play some solid golf on the back to get a very comfortable lead out there for the last couple, it was nice.

It was nice to enjoy the last couple holes. Not only just the hard work from my coaches and my team but also with what Kess and I have done golf-wise, and really kind of think our way around the golf course, really paid off this week.

I think it's the first time I felt comfortable saying there weren't really many mental mistakes being done this week, which for a guy that's very aggressive likes to go for everything, it was nice to see. Hopefully we continue that this year, play more strategically because it pays off when it works, especially around a golf course like this.

**Q. At a time when you can't play on the PGA TOUR, does winning a Rolex Series Event on the DP World Tour mean a little bit more, a little bit more special?**

PATRICK REED: Oh, for sure. I think the biggest thing this week that was so special is I've won on every tour except this one. Even though online it says I have three wins, one was a major and two were WGC events. So they are all co-sanctioned events.

It's something that's always kind of been eating at me,

sitting there not actually having a win over here. And to come to a place where we had a chance in '23 and allowed that one to kind of slip by, it was very important for me to come out here and play well and to have that opportunity; and to close it off means a lot to me, especially doing it here in Dubai, which I love coming to, makes it even more special.

**Q. Next week, are you still going to fulfill that commitment as well?**

PATRICK REED: Sure. I'm going to fly 8.30 in the morning. Get over there, celebrate a little bit tonight, but tomorrow get, back to work.

**Q. This takes care of quite a bit for you. Like obviously looks like you'll get into the PGA, U.S. Open and The Open Championship. Is that a nice by-product of this victory?**

PATRICK REED: It's always nice to lock up the majors.

But yeah, I mean, any time you go ahead and get a win, it's special. It means a lot.

But to do it earlier in the year like this, to be able to take the momentum going into the year, and I don't know where it will put me in the World Ranking after this week.

**Q. 29.**

PATRICK REED: 29? Yeah, to be a guy that earned my World Ranking points out here in the majors, to sit there and have as little amount of events that I've played to be in the Top 30 is something that it shows that my golf game still where I want it to be.

Hopefully this springboards me this year to have a really solid year. Because I felt like last year was a close year. Just, you know, took me a while to get the win. But now knocking it off in January, hopefully can carry that on throughout the year and make some noise.

**Q. A couple of things. First of all, after you missed the par putt on 11 you looked like you were steaming. Did**



**you have the sense then that it might be in danger of slipping away?**

PATRICK REED: I was obviously really upset I missed that putt. I mean, I felt like I hit a good putt. Just the greens this week, they seemed to kind of -- especially the short ones, the balls don't really break. They kind of go through because they got so glassy that the ball skids through most of the way, and of course, it breaks.

But that's what you kind of expect on Sundays. You expect it to be hard. You expect it to not be easy, and you know, I felt like when David hit such an amazing shot on 9 and made birdie on 9 and got it to 2 is when I could actually now start playing golf.

Even though I wanted to go in and say, I'm sticking to my game plan, same thing I did the first three days, I could sense a little bit while I was out there of trying to protect that lead, that four-shot lead, rather than just going out and playing. Because of that, I was hitting it to 50 feet on every hole on the front nine. The two decent opportunities I had, I didn't capitalise and make those putts, and because of that, it was just kind of a really stagnant front nine.

And with him birdieing 8 and 9 and getting to a two-shot lead, I knew that, all right, basically, your lead has basically done away. You have to go out and play golf. To hit those two quality shots there on 10, the little hiccup on 11, but then it didn't really cost me because he did the same.

You know, to kind of play 13, the par 5, exactly how I wanted to to make birdie there; and he kind of gave me a gift on 13 at that point, then I was able to enjoy the round coming in. 'But no, we definitely learned a lot. We learned a lot today, especially the game, it was more mental today. You still have to stay hungry out there even when you have a big lead to try to make it even bigger rather than try to protect it.

I feel like that's just natural. I mean, most human beings, when you have a comfortable lead to start the day, you're going to try to protect it early on rather than just go out and play normal golf. Because of that, it became a lot more interesting starting on 10 than I wanted it to be.

**Q. Can I just clear up something that you said to us the other day, and this might be me reading too much into it. But twice you used the phrase, you're "supposed to be" teeing it up in Riyadh for the first LIV event. The phrase "supposed to," does that suggest that you still have some negotiation to do? Are you out of contract now?**

PATRICK REED: We're still finalising the contract. We're

not complete on that yet.

**Q. For this year or future years?**

PATRICK REED: For this year.

**Q. So you're a free agent?**

PATRICK REED: At the moment, yes, sir.

It's one of those things that I don't like to talk business and stuff while I'm playing, and so it's like Monday through Wednesday is the only time to really talk about it.

And so, it's just kind of one of those things that, you know, getting here this week, I knew that once Thursday got here, just focus on golf and golf only. You know, starting tonight and tomorrow, we'll get back to talking and things like that.

But really, the biggest thing for me right now is just go out and play well this week. Obviously got the win. Then hopefully carry that momentum into next week and hopefully compete late Sunday again.

**Q. It's not a bad bargaining tool, is it?**

PATRICK REED: It's an amazing win. That trophy is a lot heavier than I thought (smiling.)

You know, it's one of these things that you always want to get across the line at places that you've been close to. I feel like I let it slip away in '23. And to be back in this situation, having that lead, coming in today, I was like, all right, we have to go ahead and close the deal.

Making some changes there during the off-season with swing and things like that, and to come out and see it kind of pay off, I felt like I hit the ball a lot better this week than I have in previous years, especially last year just throughout the season. Hopefully we can continue doing that because we knew the short game would be there.

**Q. The crowd, the reception you've had all week, do you appreciate that your value has gone up? You're more popular now than you've ever been. Do you feel that?**

PATRICK REED: The fans over here have been amazing. I always love coming over here and people are great. Yeah, I mean, just seems like every time I come over, more and more support from the fans, which makes golf very enjoyable. A lot of fun. It's fun because when they are out there cheering for you and stuff, you are trying to give them something to cheer for. And to go out and play some solid golf, and when you get yourself in trouble in

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

certain areas, to be able to show off with your short game and get them still behind you, it's always fun.

That's one thing I've always loved about coming over and playing on the DP World Tour, is the fans have been absolutely amazing. You know, during Ryder Cup years, we play off of that. So there's friendly banter going back and forth because of Ryder Cups. And non-Ryder Cup years, we're still just kind of having a good time, and the fans are very respectful and very supportive. They love watching good golf.

Yeah, it's awesome. The fans have been amazing this week, and we look forward to next week.

**Q. Are you simultaneously talking to the PGA TOUR?**

PATRICK REED: Not right now.

**Q. So just to clarify what David was asking previously about your LIV contract, is there a chance that you won't play in Saudi Arabia and you might have played your last event for LIV?**

PATRICK REED: Not that I know of. Not right now. Really just all kind of depends on everything. I mean, I haven't talked to the team back home or anything like that. But at the moment, I plan on teeing it up there in Riyadh, and I'd be surprised if we're not.

**Q. Can I also ask, in terms of the World Rankings, 29, where do you estimate your truer ranking to be, all things being even between tours?**

PATRICK REED: I mean, that's such a hypothetical. It's a hard one to answer. I definitely I feel like any time I'm playing any event I play in, I have a chance to win the golf tournament.

Now, where does that put me in the World Ranking system? Who really knows. I feel like no matter who is in the field, if I'm just playing how I'm supposed to, I have a chance to win on Sundays, and I think that's the most important.

The World Ranking system will always take care of itself. I feel like with the LIV guys not really getting World Ranking points at all, unless they come out and play out here, majors, and then things like that, it just seems like the system is a little broken. I mean, rightfully so, right, all the sufficient going on in golf.

Really, for me, it's just a number on the World Ranking system. When you go out there and you're playing golf, you're playing against the rest of the field and trying to win

that week, and coming in late Sundays, if you have a chance to win more golf tournaments than not, everything else takes care of itself.

**Q. You've said previously that you've got a sense of pride of being one of the guys who comes out from the U.S. and supports this tour, supports the events. Would you like to see more of the top guys from over there doing a similar thing in terms of a schedule?**

PATRICK REED: I would. I feel like the only way you're going to actually grow the game of golf and showcase golf is by having the best players in the world travel and play.

You know, let's be honest, as an American, it's easy to kind of stay at home, play on the PGA TOUR. I mean, you're not having to travel much. But to actually grow the game worldwide, you have to travel worldwide. I've taken that to heart. I've talked to enough people growing up and stuff about being a world player, just not a guy that stays at home and plays.

I feel like as a player, as a Major Champion and as a Ryder Cup player, that kind of it's our duty to kind of travel and play around the world to showcase the game. It's only going to help. It's only going to help grow the game, and the easiest way to do that is by having superstars play everywhere.

That means not just back in the States. That means everywhere around the world. For me, I'm always going to stay true to my heart on that. I'm always going to travel and play and that's why I love coming over and playing on this tour.

**Q. Just trying to understand, what do you consider to be your options if you don't do LIV?**

PATRICK REED: Continue to play out here and be in the Top 10 and be on the PGA TOUR next year. I mean...

**Q. Do you see that as a pathway?**

PATRICK REED: I mean, good golf takes care of itself, right. It's always kind of been that way from day one.

You know, if you're college, even before college, you play well in high school, that's what got you college scholarships. You play really well in college, that got you sponsors to hopefully playing on tour. And then you play well at Q-School and on tour and that gets you a card on the PGA TOUR and so forth and so forth.

Yeah, I mean, if I ended up not playing on LIV this year, obviously it would be one of those things that I would be



out here playing more on this tour and trying to secure one of those spots in the Top 10, and allow myself to get back on the PGA TOUR.

**Q. Is it strictly money, or is it how you feel about the direction of the Tour?**

PATRICK REED: No, I mean, it's just -- I mean, it's just one of those things with contracts and stuff. There's a lot of language and wording in contracts and everything, and really, at this point, I mean, I don't know where everything stands. I mean, everything could have been done and complete. I mean, I haven't talked to my team these past couple days. It's been an odd time, obviously, back home compared to me being here.

My team's always very good about allowing me to focus on golf, especially during the tournament, once the tournament starts. Yeah, I mean, it all just kind of depends. I'm pretty sure I'll talk to them either tonight or tomorrow morning and see where everything stands and everything.

But yeah, at the moment right now, it's just kind of enjoy this win and kind of get ready for next week.

**Q. Just talk about this being a springboard this season. What can you achieve? What would you like to achieve this year?**

PATRICK REED: I would like to hoist up a lot more of these trophies, that's for sure.

I feel like just getting a win off early like this, especially after an off-season where I was making some changes in the golf swing, and to make some changes and then come out and have success right off the bat, it gives me as a player that confidence that what I worked on in the off-season, those changes actually helped and were the right things.

That just gave me the could have had going forward throughout the year. You know, hopefully with that confidence, it allows me to play a little freer, play a little more aggressive, and hopefully have a lot more chances late Sundays to win, and really just kind of get ready for Augusta and hopefully put on another green jacket and secure all the majors for five years rather than always having to be year by year.

CLARE BODEL: Thank you and congratulations again to our Hero Dubai Desert Classic Champion.

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