

LIV Golf Jeddah

Wednesday, 28 February, 2024

KAEC, Saudi Arabia

Royal Greens Golf Club

Fireballs GC

Sergio Garcia

David Puig

Abraham Ancer

Eugenio Chacarra

Press Conference



JEDDAH 2024

October. It's really, really hot. So you have to really be careful with your -- you've got to be drinking a lot of electrolytes and staying on top of that and just keeping that in check. The golf course is in great shape. I feel like it gives us a better chance to be really healthy.

But the wind is always up. It's a golf course that you have to be really accurate. I'm always a big fan of the golf course. I think you have to be a good ball striker, and you've got to hit it good off the tee, as well.

I love it. Like I said, we have some success here as a team and individually, and I feel like we're all starting to playing some really good golf as a group, and hopefully we can click, all four of us, and be on the podium on Sunday.

Q. David, are you hoping to get your first Fireballs GC win here this week?

DAVID PUIG: Yeah, for sure. We didn't have probably the best two weeks as a team in those last two tournaments, but as they said, I think we're playing better individually, and obviously getting to know each other more and more every single day. Hopefully we can be on that podium on Sunday and just celebrating our first team victory.

Q. Sergio, individually you've played really well here. I think a couple of T3s. What is it about this course do you think suits your game? And secondly, obviously you've knocked on the door a couple of times with LIV. Do you feel like this is going to be a good opportunity for you this week?

SERGIO GARCIA: Well, like you said, yeah, I've been fortunate to play fairly well here, pretty much every time I've played. Obviously there's some things about the course that I enjoy and I like.

I'm usually a fairly good wind player, and it always blows here, so that kind of helps.

I've had probably about four or five really good chances at winning at LIV in the last couple of years, and unfortunately a couple of seconds, a couple playoff losses, and some top 3s and stuff. I've just got to keep giving myself chances. I think if my game is on, I always have a chance here because I've done well in the past.

THE MODERATOR: Welcome to our second press conference of the day. We are welcomed by Fireballs GC. We have Abraham Ancer, David Puig, our captain Sergio Garcia, and Eugenio Chacarra. Welcome, guys. In October you were back here lifting the trophy as the team champions of LIV Golf Jeddah 2023. Is it positive memories coming back for you?

SERGIO GARCIA: Yeah. Obviously it was a good week. I remember we all played solid that week. It was our second win for the year, so it was nice to finish the year strong.

We want to come back and kind of do a little bit more of the same. Hopefully all four of us will play solid and give ourselves a solid chance at defending our title here.

EUGENIO CHACARRA: Yeah, winning is always fun for sure. I think it's one of my favorite courses that we play all year. I've played pretty good in the past, so I think the course is in the best shape I've ever seen it, so yeah, I'm excited to compete. I think my game is trending in the right direction. Definitely didn't have the best start I wanted, but I think I'm not that far away.

I'm getting better feelings every day, working really hard to try and help the team, and hopefully we can get another win like last year we did.

Q. Abe, you also won the Saudi International here in February last year, so two wins for you around here. Is there anything different to expect playing in February rather than October like LIV was played last year?

ABRAHAM ANCER: Well, I think just weather-wise, it's not as hot, so it's going to be a little more pleasant than



Hopefully we can do well as a team, and if we all do well individually, then we'll be doing well as a team. That's the goal.

Q. Abe, do you feel like as a team this course really suits your team throughout the entire lineup?

ABRAHAM ANCER: I think so. I think we're all good ball strikers, and it always blows here. I feel like everybody in this group is extremely good in the wind. I feel like everybody feels comfortable with it.

Puig has been playing very solid golf. Sergio is always extremely solid. Me and Chacarra have been a little bit off there, but we're both trending in the right direction. Game is starting to feel a lot better, getting more confidence on the greens, and ball-striking, as well.

I think it's definitely a golf course that suits us. We've just got to play good golf and just got to go do it.

Q. Geno, when you come to a course like this and the team has had success, how much does that factor into having confidence going into the tournament?

EUGENIO CHACARRA: Yeah, I mean, like I said, I think we know Sergio and David have been playing great, and like Abe said, I think we're both playing good again. We love this place. It's windy every time; it makes it a good course for ball strikers, like they all said. I think it's exciting. It gives us some extra confidence to know that we've had success here, but at the end of the day, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, it's a new tournament, so we need to try to perform, try to win. The league is getting better and better.

Q. David, obviously you come in with terrific form. We talked a little bit about it yesterday. Off the win, coming to a course like this, do you feel like your form right now is going to really pay off on a course like this?

DAVID PUIG: Yeah, hopefully. I obviously had two good weeks these last two weeks, and I think a course like this one suits my game pretty good. It can get a little longer with the wind, and I have some advantage on that with my distance, I think. Again, been playing pretty good and like the conditions. I like the type of grass. I'm not a big fan of Bermuda, so I really enjoy this grass here.

I think it's going to be a good week for me personally, hopefully, and I think us as a team, we're ready to start performing better.

Q. This is your fifth week in a row, right?

DAVID PUIG: Yeah.

Q. So is that a challenge or does it matter? You're young...

SERGIO GARCIA: When you're 22, it doesn't matter.

DAVID PUIG: No, I was actually telling Sergio and my caddie 20 minutes ago that last week I felt pretty tired, but I don't know why this week I feel great. I don't feel as tired, which is a good sign, obviously, and yeah -- fifth week, I've been playing good the last two weeks, so I think I have a little bit of advantage in there, and hopefully that stretch pays off good, and hopefully we can get a win soon.

Q. David, what's your plans to get yourself ready for the Open?

DAVID PUIG: Yeah, I didn't speak with Sergio yet. I'm still hoping that these three guys make it through qualifying so we can all play a practice round together. That would be the best scenario.

I still have time to talk to him and learn from him, how to play these courses properly, and I'm going to ask a lot of questions to him. I don't know if it's going to be this week or in the upcoming weeks, but I'll need his help for sure.

Q. The course is playing longer. Last time when you played here in October it was after the summer, and it was firmed up. Now it's not been the same weather, so the course is playing longer and they've overseeded the rough. Do you see the course playing differently this time?

SERGIO GARCIA: Totally. No, it plays totally different than in October. The grass -- like the course is lush. It's in better shape.

I personally think the rough is a little bit easier this time of the year with the overseed than with that zoysia, that long zoysia that we have in October because it kind of tramples down a little bit and then it makes it very tricky.

Overall I think that the course is meant to be played this time of the year, and it shows. It should be a good test for all of us.

Q. You've recently done obviously the One-Club Challenge with Bryson and you went on with Rick Shields, and Rick didn't have his best moment. Did you pass any advice on to Rick?

SERGIO GARCIA: Yeah, it was a tough day. It was windy. It was a little bit cold. Obviously he didn't start great, and he lost a little bit of confidence. I was trying to help him as much as I could to have as much fun as possible. We decided that we'll make it a rematch, give him another shot, and see how it goes. But it was fun. Both little matches were a lot of fun, with Bryson and with Rick, and I'm sure we'll do some more coming up.

Q. We've got Abe who's good friends with Mark Wahlberg. Certainly we're going to see a Mark Wahlberg four-hole, five-hole challenge. What's the idea?

ABRAHAM ANCER: That's a good idea. Now that you mention it, we should definitely make it happen. The only thing is Mark plays extremely fast, so we've got to be almost sprinting to our balls. It's a little bit crazy the way he plays golf.

Q. He plays 18 holes in like 90 minutes, doesn't he?

ABRAHAM ANCER: Yeah, it's pretty wild.

Q. In your opinion what is the secret about this team? What is the one special thing about this team?

SERGIO GARCIA: I think there's hopefully many good things about it. I think that we have a lot of passion, a lot of charisma. When we play, you can see it out on the course. We play with a lot of energy. That's always fun.

At the end of the day, it's just really good players. That's always the kind of team that you want to have when you're a captain.

We're excited to hopefully play very well again this week here in Jeddah, and it would be nice to get that trophy again.

ABRAHAM ANCER: I feel like we're extremely competitive, which I feel like all four of us, even on practice rounds, it gets pretty intense, which is good. It's what you want. Replicate those moments when you're playing in the actual tournament.

I think that little thing is what kind of maybe sets us apart, just the way we think and how bad we want it. I think that's a major component to this team.

DAVID PUIG: Yeah, same here. I think we have a good team chemistry for sure, and all of us, we play to win. Sometimes winning is not winning, but we try to score the best way we can.

I feel we never give up, none of us, and as Abe said, we want it so bad, which makes us a good team.

I think we know and everyone knows that when we have a good week with spirit and fighting that we have, we can get dangerous, and when we don't have our best stuff, we're still there because we still care, 100 percent.

EUGENIO CHACARRA: It's hard to put anything else. I think they all said everything. We just try our best. I think we never quit.

Sergio, to David and me, we're younger, so we don't have that much experience, so he's always trying to help us and give us his thoughts and stuff. That's why David is getting way better every single tournament, and I'm trying, too.

I think we're in a good spot. We have a lot of talent. We have a lot of depth. Hopefully we can start performing a little better, and as soon as we play good as a team, we're going to be up there every single week.

Q. David, this team already won here in Jeddah; in your opinion, what are you going to add in order for them to win it again and secure the second win and to do something special?

DAVID PUIG: Well, I hope I'll add better scores so we win by extra shots as a team. I don't know. I'm trying to have the best preparation I can on the course and trying just to keep learning the course, and hopefully I can put three good scores and just help the team the best way I can.

Q. What would be the deciding factor in your opinion in terms of you guys performing well here in Jeddah again, and what is the one element that is special that is going to give you an edge over the other team in your opinion, as well?

SERGIO GARCIA: I think it's consistency pretty much. I think at the end of the day, if we're consistent, if we believe in our ability, I think that we have so much quality that that will rise to the top.

I think if we can manage to do that -- with this wind, this course is not that easy. So if you keep it in play well and you're consistent throughout the week, then I'm sure that we'll be up there with a good solid chance.

ABRAHAM ANCER: For me I think just keeping it simple, just playing stress-free golf as much as possible as a team. I feel like we can definitely do that. Just everything has to click this week, obviously, but just eliminate dumb mistakes, try to hit a lot of fairways and a lot of greens and have good speed.

obviously here this week it's very important.

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Like I said, keeping it simple and staying out of trouble and just be consistent as a group.

DAVID PUIG: Yeah, in my case, something I want to get better this year is the greens in regulation thing. It's probably the most important aspect for me because sometimes I get too aggressive.

I think it's very important, as well, if you can hit as many greens in regulation as possible. That means you're just putting for birdie pretty much every time, obviously, and it's a super important factor here if you want to score well.

EUGENIO CHACARRA: Yeah, I mean, for me, I think a lot of my performance comes with my putting. I think it just gets a little mental and I get a little frustrated, and that affects all of my game and my attitudes.

This week I went back to my putter that I used in college in the first year as a pro that worked pretty well, and I think that's obviously going to help me. If I can stay patient even if I miss a couple on the first holes and at the start, just stay patient and not overthink stuff, that's going to help me stay there.

Like Sergio said, consistency, and hopefully I can have another good week ball-striking-wise and my putter works a little better and I can help the team with good scores, and at the end of the day on Sunday lift the trophy with them.

Q. Sergio, in terms of the sport of golf, for those who are new to the sport, what will it take in order for the sport to grow in such places like Saudi, for example, where it's picking up and a lot of fans are starting to watch it more?

SERGIO GARCIA: Well, I think there's a few different things. Obviously more courses are being built, so that's more chances for kids to be able to get into the game. That's obviously important as the years go by.

If you make the game as reachable as possible to kids, it's one of the most important things to be able to grow the game anywhere in the world. Here in Saudi, it's no different.

Weather obviously in the summer is a bit warmer but it's nice, so you have a lot of playability there.

Just promoting the game as much as possible. I think obviously having tournaments like this one helps, helps the kids get involved and become fans, and then wanting to go to the course. That's what we try to do, grow the game as much as possible, as we can everywhere in the world, and

