

KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship

PGA Frisco

Frisco, Texas, USA

Tuesday, May 23, 2023

Padraig Harrington

Press Conference



Q. Padraig Harrington is joining us at the 83th KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship. Welcome to Fields Ranch at PGA Frisco. How do you feel about your game coming into this week?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Ooh. There's some good things in my game. Some good and bad. Like all weeks, you're trying to maybe improve a few of the bad things and keep the good stuff.

Yeah, like I'm not that happy, but I'm not too unhappy with my game at the moment.

Q. What, if anything, can you pull out of a tough test last week, and what do you see out there, see in this golf course as being the biggest challenge?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: It was a lot of work last week for a miserable tied 50th. That's for sure. I need to prepare better. I keep coming into these tournaments and wishing I had another week, another week or two of good preparation.

Yeah, I could see that last week. It's always a good reminder when you go to places like that, you just go, you know what, I'm just not doing the things I want to do in preparation.

It's not enough that you have to keep going to play tournaments to prepare. I need to do a bet better job when I'm on, off my weeks off. That's what I see from a week like last week. Obviously I shoot 8-over par for nine of the holes at that stage, and without that nine, I would have been reasonably in the tournament.

9-under par was a long way away. I've got to say, Brooks played great, very convincing win, but I didn't feel in any way out of it or anything like that. The physicality I was well able to deal with, and just need to be a little bit sharper mentally.

Q. What's the biggest ask of this golf course?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Same really any golf course. It's quite a bit of a mental challenge. I think there's a few -- a lot of temptations out there. So that will be interesting to see during the week. There's tempting lines to take off tee shots.

I just finished up there at No. 3 and I took it across the left-hand corner, and it's going up the left side, it's a driver and a 4-iron, but it's tight, there's a hazard left. Same on 18; I took it down the left, I hit driver, 6-iron in there, but I don't see myself doing that in the tournament. There's a lot of temptation out there.

It will come down to picking your moments, taking your chances.

I think there's some variation on the golf course, so the same hole with a different pin position will go from being an opportunity to actually I've got to play safe here and I'll be happy to make my par. It will all depend on the setup on the day and the pin positions and a little bit of the wind.

But from what I saw out there, there was a lot of, yeah, nice tee shots. If you take them on, you get a lot of advantage, and most of the holes seem to have a hazard down one side, but not necessarily hazard and long rough, so it's a hazard but you're not stung that you might go in there and find your ball and get a decent lie.

There's a lot of -- again, it will be a mental test of trying to be patient and not really be tempted into the -- I think that's what Gil likes to do: Tempt you.

Q. Darren Clarke said earlier that he could easily picture Ryder Cups being played here. I wonder if you've even seen enough -- I think he was talking about from a competitive standpoint, maybe being able to set up some of the holes for match play purposes.

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, that's what I'm saying. There's risk-reward out there. There's drama out there. There's some -- like again, the two par-5s, the 1st and 18, for example, they're both very reachable, no problem, but



like if you even miss the first in the bunker left, it's a tough shot to keep it on the green.

18, the tee shot is -- like it's so tight in terms of hit it down the left, you're re-teeing maybe and you hit it straight, you're in the hazard on the right.

That's perfect for match play because you will take it on in match play, and as I said, in stroke play, you have to manage that and figure out when is the right time to take a chance.

Some of that will depend on how you're playing and how you feel about your game. Yeah, it's good variation on the golf course, which would lend itself very much to a Ryder Cup match play style.

For us this week, a lot of that variation will come down to the pin positions. There are a few narrow spots out there on the greens, and it will be interesting.

I assume that they're trying to get a feel for how different pin positions will play when it comes to 2027. So yeah, I expect to see a few of those tougher pin positions in there for the tournament. It'll be interesting to see how aggressive we are and how those holes are going to be played.

Q. Have you seen enough of the campus to get a sense of what's here, and is there anything like it that you've seen around the world?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Arrived at 12:00 last night, got out of my bed at 6:00 and came to the golf course. I have seen nothing but my room and the golf course.

I hear good things and been recommended a few different places to go and that sort of thing, restaurants-wise. I think we're going to have an enjoyable week. I think it's all here in front of us. Obviously still a bit of building going on, too.

Q. How do you approach a week like this where it's a course that you've never played in competition? What are the challenges?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: You know, I'm a professional golfer 25 years and playing golf 45 years. We spend our whole life doing this. We've got to this stage now on the quality of the yardage books, we're nearly good enough to play the golf courses first time out blind.

Now, not this particular course because this, as I said, has a lot more variation, and there's a lot more of, that looks okay, and then you go up there and it's not okay, and there's other shots out there, oh, God, this is a very difficult

shot, and you go, okay, this is not so bad. You definitely want to play a course like this that's moving around, that's the potential for a bit of wind. But we're all pretty good at figuring it out quickly.

Today I played 18. I'll probably stick to nine holes tomorrow just because I'm tired after last week.

But I don't envisage -- I will get caught out. There's no doubt I will get caught out this week on a couple of shots where I go, I didn't know that. But I'm prepared to accept that; it's not going to happen that often. Most of the time I'll have a good idea of what the challenge is in front of me.

But you've got to think with a Gil Hanse course, there's always going to be something you didn't see, something unexpected, and you're just going to have to take it as it comes.

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