

# Senior PGA Championship

Congressional Country Club

Bethesda, Maryland, USA

Tuesday, May 20, 2025

## Padraig Harrington

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Padraig, welcome to the 2025 sponsorship what are your thoughts on Congressional so far?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, I suppose 2011 U.S. Open is the last -- what I remember the golf course anyway. The I was here in '97 as well, so it's substantially different. It's in fabulous condition.

Seems the setup so far tees are up, so it's not particularly long, but the greens seem treacherous, I would say. They're not fast or anything, but a lot will depend on course setup and pin positions. I've got to say I have it on my list to go and ask one of the girls who would have played the U.S. Open here to see just about how some of the holes played and pin positions because it's hard to get a full feel for it in practice.

Obviously we're waiting to see what the weather is like, if the greens soften up. That could make it problematic trying to get on top of tiers. But it will be interesting to see how it plays during the week. But definitely the big battle seems to be pin positions, whether to go at them or not.

**Q. You are one of the few players in this field that gets to experience the contrasts between the PGA Championship and the Senior PGA Championship. How do you transition, how do you keep yourself in contention?**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: At the end of the day every shot is its own little battle. You're trying to get focused and stay focused. Last week's golf course, it was meant to be long, but it didn't play long. They just don't. When you get into a tournament, when tee boxes get moved up five, eight yards, like last week the 9th was a beast in practice. It was close to a drive and a wood in practice, but in the tournament it was like 7-iron, and late rounds in the week guys were hitting 9-iron. Golf courses shorten up when you get a little bit pumped up.

Coming here, yeah, it's shorter, so instead of hitting one or two wedges, you're probably hitting six wedges, seven

wedges, something like that, instead of hitting 6-irons you're hitting 8-iron, 9-iron. So yeah, it definitely plays shorter. Outside of that, the greens are a little bit slower. Well, they were very tough greens last week, so yeah, a lot depends with the setup. The rough is heavier here than last week. Substantially heavier here than last week actually. That's interesting. That could play into the week. If the fairways stayed firm like they were at the moment or firm-ish, sometimes it's hard -- with slopes, it's running off. So that could be difficult.

But yeah, you transition -- every shot is the same, to be honest. You pick a club and you try and stay focused and not second-guess yourself. Yeah, it's probably two full clubs shorter every hole than last week, but that's the difference.

**Q. There's a group of people here that can deal with this length and another group that is going to struggle, no?**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, but you can't pander to the lowest -- you can't go to the short hitters. That's what happens. Usually the shortest hitters are the ones who shout the loudest. Some of those tee boxes are up three tee boxes out there, which normally we play pretty close to -- it's a big golf course. I'm going to fight in my corner, put it like that, and the short hitters will fight their corner. But it's certainly -- length isn't -- there's a lot of 3-woods off the tees out there. There's a number of places you're hitting in between things -- you're hitting over bunkers.

Yeah, at the end of the day, I'm going to fight my corner. We don't need to be as far forward, no.

**Q. When you're playing and people use the word "form," what to you, how do you measure your form?**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: In general or right now?

**Q. Well, in general.**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I think we get caught up as players measuring form in how much control we have of



our swing, whereas the reality should be how well we're scoring and that's it. So I think when you're scoring well, you make good decisions, you do things right, and it kind of snowballs in the right direction. When you're focused on that -- yeah, so it should be really -- form should be results based and that's it. But I think as players we get sucked into wanting to judge our game by how we feel about our swing and how much control we have. But score is all that matters really at the end of the day.

**Q. I remember last week there were a lot of players that you talked to them and they said, oh, I hit it much better than I scored but I'm hitting it, blah, blah, blah. I'm wondering, are they losing sight of at the end of the day --**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I think that's what I'm saying. I think we all can get caught up in the fact that we want to feel like we're in control of our swing and what we're doing, and you'll hear that a lot. Definitely players will be happier swinging the club well and shooting 71 than swinging the club badly and shooting 70. It doesn't make sense, but that's the nature of the beast.

The longer you're out here -- I think all the time, you get drawn into this game of swing rather than score, what you deserve to score. Deserve has nothing to do with it; it's what you scored. So we do fall into that trap of always trying to judge our score against what we think we deserved, which is not really relevant. It's what you scored and that's it.

**Q. You don't deserve anything in this game --**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: That's my point, you don't. But the longer you play it, the more you feel like if you swing it well and you hit it well, you have some predictability in things like that, which there is merit to that, but I think the fact is you don't deserve anything, and the score is all that counts at the end of the day.

If you were trying to teach a kid and you asked the teenager how they played, you'd want to hear their score, you don't want to hear, I played well but I had 36 putts, but yet we fall into that category of always trying to justify that we're playing well. But at the end of the day, the score is the score in golf, and that's it.

**Q. From what you're saying, I feel like you also feel the same pressure, the same excitement, the same knot in your stomach when you're in contention here than when you're in contention in any other major?**

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I think for me personally, every shot is a battle to get your head in the game and go

through your routine and hold your focus on what you're trying to do.

I think then you have the separate thing of when do you feel nervous and under pressure. That comes in when you're in contention. So yes, I will feel -- clearly I will feel if I get myself in contention here on Sunday afternoon and I have a chance to win, I will feel more nervous than I did missing the cut for the first 36 holes at the PGA Championship.

It's not how big the occasion is or anything. It's where you are in that occasion. So yeah, it really comes down to if you've got something -- if you're in position and you're worried about losing something, then you can feel nervous and you're worried about messing up. As I said, yeah, so hopefully I feel nervous here this week on Sunday because that means you're there or thereabouts.

It's not possible in my world to win tournaments without feeling nervous, so I want to be nervous for sure.

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