

# The Ryder Cup

Sunday, 12 September, 2021

**Padraig Harrington**

**Sergio Garcia**

**Ian Poulter**

**Shane Lowry**

Media Conference



won the most points in The Ryder Cup, and I'm expecting a few more points from him this time around but I'm relying on him to stand up and be a leader.

**NICK DOUGHERTY:** You said when we spoke in Dubai earlier this year, you said you won't believe what he brings to the team room, not even what he brings to the golf course but the team room; what is that?

**PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON:** Passion. He just loves The Ryder Cup. He loves everything about it. I think he really enjoys mentoring the younger guys, bringing that bit. He likes the responsibility. He likes being around the other guys in the team room.

He's a very outgoing, enthusiastic person, and the team environment, we all know Sergio would have loved to have been a soccer player or footballer and would have loved to be a team player all his life. This is something, it's like he was made for it.

**NICK DOUGHERTY:** When you look at his experience, it goes all the way back to Brookline, 1999, the first time around. How much does that count for.

**PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON:** Experience is huge. We have an experienced team here but I think it's more the passion he brings in. Clearly he is a little bit old now. He's moved on himself. As you said he's been there a long time.

But I've seen how he interacts with the rest of the team as the other Ryder Cups and what he brings to the other players, and he plays great golf himself and he does seem to love match play. Being a great ball-striker, that is very important at Whistling Straits. It really is, which he's shown with his red Ryder Cup record. He is a very rounded Ryder Cup player. It's not like you can play foursomes or you can play fourball and literally there isn't a player on the team that doesn't want to play with Sergio.

**NICK DOUGHERTY:** Sergio Garcia is the first captain's pick for Pádraig Harrington. Could you let us know who the second is, please?

**PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON:** For my second pick, I am going

**NICK DOUGHERTY:** Welcome to our Ryder Cup special captain's picks from Wentworth Club, the home of The European Tour and I am joined by a very special guest in the European Team Captain Pádraig Harrington and of course that Ryder Cup trophy.

A little earlier today we found out who the automatic nine will be heading into Whistling Straits and hopefully bringing that thing home for Team Europe as far as Pádraig is concerned.

Pádraig, when you see that, how does it make you feel?

**PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON:** I'm really happy with my team. It's a great team for foursomes and fourball play, a lot of good ball-strikers, real good ball-strikers. It's a team going to Whistling Straits that is well-suited to the golf course and very strong, very rounded, very balanced team.

**NICK DOUGHERTY:** A big build up towards this, so please do reveal that first pick.

**PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON:** Yes, it has been an exciting week. I have gone with Europe's leading points winner as my first pick, he's won 25 and a half points, he's a talisman for the European Team, he's a major winner, Sergio García.

**NICK DOUGHERTY:** An incredible player and incredible achiever not just in The Ryder Cup but also in his own game as an individual. What does he bring, though, to the European side?

**PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON:** You know, he's a leader. He loves match play. In golfing terms he's a good ball-striker and well-suited to the golf course but it's what he does for the team. He really leads out the team in The Ryder Cup whether it's foursomes or fourball, very versatile. He's a player that gets out there and gets the job done and he's

**ASAP** sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

with a rookie. He is a major winner. He is a World Golf Championships winner. We don't think of him as a rookie. Everybody thinks of him as a winner, as an experienced player and that would be Shane Lowry.

NICK DOUGHERTY: An incredible achievement and a player that had to battle through the pressure this week at the BMW PGA to show you what he can do under the gun and how did he do in your opinion?

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: You know, you think there was pressure today, Shane has played with that pressure all year. Shane has been that name right on the edge all year, the fringe. Well-suited to the golf course again, well-suited to the conditions that we expect. I think, you know, it would be easy just to go, oh, well, let's just base it on links, but not at all. The stats are great. They have shown that he's one of our leading players.

I will say with all the picks, we have the strongest players in that position I think we've ever had in The Ryder Cup in the 10th, 11th, 12th spot. Everything lined up.

Obviously well-suited to the team environment. There's plenty of players again looking to play with Shane. Good, consistent form has brought him to this position.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Some people may look and think, Pádraig has picked a rookie. What would be your answer to that one?

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: Nobody thinks of him as a rookie. You know, all it says is if I picked a rookie, he's probably delivered twice to get on the team because a rookie has to prove himself more than anything else and Shane is a big time player. He's nothing better than when he's on the big stage. He delivers consistently under pressure in those sort of situations.

It was the pick. It was an easy pick based on his form. Could you imagine playing under that stress all summer, being that guy that people are talking about? He definitely delivered for me and he definitely delivers for all the vice captains and the stats. He lines up well and will certainly bring enthusiasm to the team. We only have three rookies, so we need the young guys in there. We need that bit of enthusiasm and as I said to him, we are going to enjoy the week.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Not your usual rookie, Open Champion, as well. Shane Lowry the second pick for Pádraig Harrington. Could you reveal the final one?

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, I don't think this should be too much of a doubt. He's played in six previous Ryder

Cups. Again, a talisman, brings the passion to The Ryder Cup. He is the post man, Ian Poulter.

NICK DOUGHERTY: No surprises you've gone there because of what he's done. He's clearly a different animal when he comes to The Ryder Cup. Why is that, do you think?

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: Look, he's proved that he's undefeated in singles. He brings an unbelievable passion to the team room. He brings incredible passion to his matches when he plays foursomes, fourballs. He lifts himself, he lifts his playing partners and he lifts the team. He has done that over the years and he's proved that but you can't pick a player just based on that.

He has played great all year. His stats are brilliant. He's playing some of the best ball-striking golf of his life. You know, we could see that behind the scenes. So I'm thrilled, not only am I getting a player like Ian Poulter who delivers but I'm getting a player who is in form, great form, probably the best form of his life. I'm looking forward to having him there and bringing that passion, bringing the heart to the team.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Does the fact that Ian has delivered some of the most iconic moments and memories in Ryder Cup history, certainly if you're a European, does that change the belief within a team.

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: Absolutely. I'm hoping he does it again. Maybe you leave it to somebody else, but I'm hoping he does do that. He consistently motivates people around him. You have to remember it's more than what he's doing. It's how he's influencing others around him; the passion, the experience that he has now. That's so important in the team. I have a great team. I have a great team of ball-strikers, probably the best ball-strikers that Europe has ever sent out in a Ryder Cup. They all -- they don't rely on -- those are quality players and we're going to a big golf course.

We are going to a very strong golf course. Ian brings that passion into the team that I know I have players who are good enough. They don't need anything else. We just need to make sure that they have everything they need that week, the passion that they have, and which I know they will be, but they are good enough to deliver, and Ian Poulter is very much a part, very much at the heart of our team to make sure the guys go out there and have a great week.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Well, all of that time, all those sleepless nights, all of the thinking and pondering is over because that is now the 12 that have been selected by

your good receive. We'll show you once more what the confirmed lineup will be for Team Europe heading across to Whistling Straits to face Team USA, and here they are, the 12: Casey, Fitzpatrick, Fleetwood, Garcia, Hatton, Hovland, Shane Lowry, McIlroy, Poulter, Rahm, Westwood and of course Bernd Wiesberger showed real courage this week.

When you see the 12 players, do you feel good, Pádraig.

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: I'm thrilled, absolutely solid. They match up super. Great partnerships in there. My biggest difficulty will be I've got too many good players and I'm not hiding anybody. Anybody can play every match.

NICK DOUGHERTY: The first man we are going to speak to has done it all and he's captured more points for Europe than any player, in fact, more points than anyone for either side.

Joining us from Austin, Texas, Sergio, immense congratulations on a 10th appearance in The Ryder Cup that is upcoming. How does that feel?

SERGIO GARCIA: Thank you, Nick, it feels amazing. Obviously it's been a good year. I think a lot of solid play on my part, and unfortunately just fell just a little short of making it by myself. But I'm so happy to have the confidence on the vice captains, on Captain Harrington, and can't wait to see the guys and just get going.

NICK DOUGHERTY: 25 1/2 points for Team Europe across the years, more than any player on either side. What is it about The Ryder Cup that makes you clearly come alive?

SERGIO GARCIA: I tell what you it is, Nick, is more important than that, I think it's being able to win six Ryder Cups with Europe. To me that's more important than 25 1/2 points. Obviously getting those points helps the team to achieve the goal, which is winning the Cup.

But I've always said it and I will never change my speech: I'd rather go 0-5 and win The Ryder Cup than 5-0 and losing. That's never going to change.

Hopefully we'll have a great week. I think it's an amazing team. We'll be ready.

NICK DOUGHERTY: A winner this season on the PGA TOUR, the season that's just come and gone but you finished in good style, sixth place at the BMW and one of the Top-10 best scorers at East Lake. How do you like your form heading to Whistling Straits?

SERGIO GARCIA: Yeah, I feel good. I feel like it's been solid through the summer. I felt like I played well and things just didn't want to happen but I was still having Top-20s and Top-25s. So the feel of the game was good, and I was just excited to have a couple good weeks and like I did at the BMW Championship when I needed it the most to get into the TOUR Championship, and then played solid at East Lake which is a tough golf course.

I was very happy to do that, and just hoping that that would be enough to make sure that the vice captains and the captain will have the confidence in me to be a part of that team.

NICK DOUGHERTY: As per usual, on paper, Europe will be seen to be the underdogs. How do you like the look of the American side that you're up against, Sergio?

SERGIO GARCIA: Yes, it's a good side, I'm not going to lie, a lot of new faces. I'll be expecting a lot of energy on their behalf.

But like I said, mostly -- most of the times we are underdogs, and it's the right thing because on paper, and when it comes down to World Rankings and stuff like that, they are a little bit stronger than we are.

But we have a lot of heart. We have a lot of great feel between us, and that's something that that is difficult to putt on paper. I expect us to bond like we always do, expect us to have a great time. I know that everybody is going to do an amazing job when it comes down to getting ready and vice captains, captains, everyone, all the assistants, everyone.

You know, it's not going to be easy, but I think that we have an amazing team and we can do it for sure.

NICK DOUGHERTY: When I had Pádraig Harrington alongside a few moments ago, mentioned back in Dubai we were chatting about you and the quality of your game and he said forget the game, you should see what he is like in the team room, the magnetic feel he has around the players. What is your role in the team room this time around?

SERGIO GARCIA: Well, it's like Pádraig explained it, it's quite simple to me. I love, I've always loved team events. Like I said, probably if I would not have been a golfer, I probably would have been a footballer.

I've always enjoyed that atmosphere, like getting closer to my teammates and pulling for them and them pulling for you and be there when they need something. Not only when they do something great but when they do something

that is not as good and just kind of put your shoulder and make sure that they feel that you're there; that they have support from your partner. I've always loved that and that's always one of the things I've loved about Ryder Cups the most.

I've always said I have made my best friend at The Ryder Cups because I feel like everyone opens up so much more than any regular event, and you really get to know the people within. That's something that I always take very, very seriously when it comes down to The Ryder Cup.

NICK DOUGHERTY: As Pádraig said, you're not a young man anymore, 22 years on from your first experience at Brookline. How bright does that fire still burn within you?

SERGIO GARCIA: It's very bright. You can probably see some flames coming out of my ears. No, I'm super excited. I said it from the beginning of the year. It was my biggest goal to be able to make this Ryder Cup Team and keep helping the European Team as much as I could.

Obviously there's other goals that were there but Ryder Cup was the most important thing, and I'm so thrilled to be part of it now.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Thank you for taking the time to join us this evening.

From the experience of Sergio García to a rookie but a rookie not quite like any other. Magical moment for you winning The Open at Royal Portrush, but this might be close, The Ryder Cup. You spoke to us earlier this week saying it's a lifelong dream and now you're here and it's going to happen. How does it feel?

SHANE LOWRY: It's amazing. Look for me it's been a career-long goal to get to The Ryder Cup. I actually just thinking about it here before I came on, I remember sitting in the media center here after I won The Open when the points started for this Ryder Cup Team and said that's my No. 1 goal and it has been for the last two years.

Obviously Pádraig being captain is extra special for me because I'm very good friends with him. I'm just so happy that I got a pick. I feel like I tried my best to make the team today. Things didn't go my way on the back nine but look I'm so happy that I got in. It's been a stressful week and a stressful few hours.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Tell us about it. What was the pressure like this week playing with that burden and feeling like you had done so much already, playing the burden of wanting to impress one last time?

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, like I felt, to be honest, we're golfers and we're individuals, so we back ourselves. I feel like I did enough before this week even but then you come here and you're like -- you see the guys and the lads that are playing well and I love this place and I like going around here and I wanted to win the tournament and I was going out there today, trying to win the tournament, trying to make the team.

Trying to do all sorts, and even when I went through a bad run on the back nine I was like, right, I need to make a couple birdies now because I need to show that I'm made of something here and I need to show I'm trying my hardest. I felt like I did a good job and I felt like I did well enough. I'm just incredibly happy and incredibly proud of what I've achieved, and for me, there's no point going over to make up the numbers. I want to go over and deliver points for Europe and bring The Ryder Cup back to Europe.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Real passion as always. How did he break the news?

SHANE LOWRY: I was sitting in the players' lounge with my dad and everybody was getting a bit nervous, people calling me and stuff like that. I was called over to the office, I was called into the principal's office and he just gave me a hug and said congrats, and we had a little conversation.

It was obviously very special, a very special moment. I had my dad there. He's gone off to the airport now but we got a great picture of the two of us when we both found out. That's very cool, stuff like that.

NICK DOUGHERTY: One of two rookies to make the side for Team Europe but you've achieved many big things already in your career, obviously none bigger than becoming The Open Championship on the island of Ireland, an incredible achievement for you. Where does this sit?

SHANE LOWRY: This is right up there. I actually spoke to Poults a while ago about it, and you know, obviously everybody knows what he thinks of The Ryder Cup and what it is to him. You know, when you see what it means to someone like Ian Poulter and even you listen to what Sergio was saying there, this is going to be a very special week in my career and I just hope like I said that I can go there and win some points for Europe and we can win the Cup.

There's no point going over just to make up numbers. We want to go over and win and I have that in my head. I've said that all year, I've said I obviously want to make the

team but I want to win as well. I don't want to be there just to say I've played The Ryder Cup. I want to go and I want to make it count.

NICK DOUGHERTY: You're here right now and you are a part of that team. Does it feel like you thought it would?

SHANE LOWRY: It's incredible. My phone is absolutely blowing up. My friends and family are texting me. I'll take a day or two to kind of settle down and then obviously I'll get to work. And then I'll head over to Whistling Straits and get to work over there.

It's all about playing good golf from here and soak it in now for the next couple days and get back to work Tuesday and Wednesday and fly over with the team tomorrow week. I'm incredibly excited about it. It's been an amazing few weeks for me and my family. We just had another kid, myself and my wife, Ivy, and they are sitting at home, Wendy, Ivy and Iris are sitting at home watching this now, and it's great for everyone. I'm very excited to go over to Whistling Straits and compete for Europe.

NICK DOUGHERTY: I think you're going to look really about in blue and gold. Congratulations.

Shane is ready to go for his very first appearance at The Ryder Cup, and they already have the sizes for the next man, because he's the Postman.

No doubt in training to prepare for the bruises coming to the left pec as we head to The Ryder Cup, regular occurrence, your seventh Ryder Cup coming your way. How does it feel?

IAN POULTER: Surreal, Nick. To be standing here with the trophy in front to know we're going to go again is amazing. Seven Ryder Cups, you know, is stuff that things -- you can sit at home and just only dream of, right. It's incredible. This trophy has meant a lot to me through the years.

For Paddy to call me today and say, listen, I want you part of my team, it's emotional. You can see it on Sergio's face when you talk to him what it means to him. 11 Ryder Cups.

It's a stacked team. I'm excited. I'm proud. As you said, my chest has been getting work the last few weeks, trying to do as many press-ups as I possibly can and hole as many putts as I possibly can to bring as many points as I can to this team.

NICK DOUGHERTY: You've had some big finishes this season, but the different beast that you clearly or when the

Ryder Cup comes around, can you let us in on why that occurs?

IAN POULTER: Team spirit. The factor of what it means to have other people around you that you can feed off of, that you can help. I played football as a kid. I love being part of a team all the way back then. That didn't happen for me. Turned to golf.

Right from 2004, to putt that shirt over my head really kind of changed my life from a golfer's perspective. I've made, as Sergio said, more friends, closer friends at The Ryder Cup than I have in all of the years that I've ever been playing an individual game of golf.

Got so close to so many players, and because of that, every one of these every two years has meant an awful lot to me, my family and obviously all of my teammates, captain's, vice captains, that we get to play in front of. No more so than the players that have allowed us to play for them that have obviously now passed.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Inevitably this time around, you will face a partisan crowd as we saw at the Solheim Cup as well. Restrictions in travel means it will be lopsided the support. I imagine you're the right guy to ask about this. How can you use that to fuel you?

IAN POULTER: Use their energy. I think we will definitely have expats, a number of guys that will be there. European fans will always create a buzz. Even if we have a thousand, two, three, four, yes, we are going to be outnumbered but it's about using that energy. They are going to be loud. They are going to be wanting to help Team USA get over the line.

So it's how we go about using that energy to fuel us at the right time. Use that for momentum and hopefully we'll be bringing this back home.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Your record as a captain's pick is better than your strike rate than when you've been an automatic qualifier. Clearly the extra pressure loaded on you as a pick brings the best out of you. Is that a feel that's been with you in your career; that when the chips are down, you can bring your best?

IAN POULTER: It's a lot to get a pick, for a captain to have a look at you and have the confidence to turn around and say, I really want you part of this team, that means a lot. So the focus over this next seven days kind of gets ramped up pretty much even though all year you've been working really hard.

I think the gear changes. The mindset changes. The



focus level. The phone goes off. There will probably be not quite as much social media done in the next week until it's go time and really put everything in to be able to deliver for Team Europe.

NICK DOUGHERTY: I'm going to ask you something similar to what I asked Sergio García as well. We see the 12 names or Team Europe and the names for Team USA. The World Rankings would suggest they are stronger as is often the case; how do you like how it stacks up for Team Europe.

IAN POULTER: I love it. Paddy said it, it weighs nicely to have foursomes and fourballs are going to play out. We have a lot of experience in the team.

We are going to have rookies, we always do, every single Ryder Cup. Those guys in my eyes are not really rookies. They are tried and tested. It's a great balance. We have got people for those guys to lean on for a little bit of advice they are going to need just at the right time.

It's such a strong team. I'm really pleased when I look at it, and Paddy said it himself, we've got options, plenty of them.

NICK DOUGHERTY: I can see you starting to light up already.

IAN POULTER: Can't wait.

NICK DOUGHERTY: Best of luck across at Whistling Straits.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports