

# The Ryder Cup

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Kohler, Wisconsin, USA

Whistling Straits

## Bernd Wiesberger

Press Conference



**THE MODERATOR:** Good morning. Welcome to the 43rd Ryder Cup here at Whistling Straits. We are joined by Bernd Wiesberger. Welcome to your first career -- the first Ryder Cup of your career. Curious when it became apparent, and I guess I'm not familiar with the European notification system, but when you were assured of being on the team, who was the person that you reached out to that you were most excited to share that news with? Who was that person you wanted to connect with emotionally about making this team?

**BERND WIESBERGER:** Yeah, in my case it was -- probably given that the three captains picks came after me, I was probably the last to qualify for the European team, so deep into Sunday afternoon at the PGA Championship at Wentworth.

So it was quite nerve-racking, but very glad I'm here right now. Given that I'm playing my first Ryder Cup, it's been obviously a big goal of mine to be part of a European team, and as you can imagine, we've got all -- a lot of people who have worked with us or supported us through different stages of our career.

But obviously it's very personal and very emotional when you get to qualify for those teams, so family was the immediate call-up once I got the thumbs up after the Sunday round at Wentworth to be part of the team.

**Q. On the picks that Pdraig did, Poulter went out of his way to mention you as one of his best friends. I'm curious how that relationship came to you and what you think of him.**

**BERND WIESBERGER:** With Ian? Yeah, I mean, I think the whole European team knows each other very well. We've played a lot of golf with -- all the guys have played a lot of golf with Ian. I've played for Europe together with Ian on the EurAsia Cup a couple of years back. I think everyone in this team room has a longstanding connection with each other, and everybody gets along really well with each other in the team room. It's a very relaxed atmosphere.

I feel like Ian and myself are very similar in character and we have good banter and good fun on and off the golf course. Yeah, you can imagine it's always quite entertaining when you're standing on the golf course with Ian, regardless if it's the Ryder Cup or whenever.

**Q. Do your eyes ever really like bug out when you make a putt?**

**BERND WIESBERGER:** I sure hope you see a lot of eyes popping this week from all the European members. But his intensity is unique, especially during this week. I hope we're going to see lots of it, as well, this week, and I'm sure I'll try my best, as well, to channel my inner Ian Poulter and get some of that going this week, as well.

**Q. I think you've been an emotional like two and a half, three years. You were in, then out, then in, then out. Do you think that put pressure on your game or was it better for your game?**

**BERND WIESBERGER:** You know, last Ryder Cup in Paris I was part of German speaking TV and tried to give my sense as to what's going to be the outcome, so I was on this side of the press conference and trying to make sense of what's going to happen this week.

Along this week something kind of fueled inside me and took it as motivation to be -- once my injury was healed that I had in 2018 -- to be part of one of these teams. I never really vocalized it or spoke about it too much, but it was definitely massive motivation for me to be the first to experience a Ryder Cup firsthand, first one I've been to, even more so giving myself a chance to be part of a European team.

Those days in Paris definitely started that. Everything that was along on that journey were steps in the ladder, and I've had some really good success since, and I'm very proud to have played my way on to the European team that way.

**Q. I know this is a team and you represent Europe, but representing your country, are you getting that**

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**response already from your countrymen? What kind of messages or feedback are you getting?**

**BERND WIESBERGER:** No, everybody is super excited in Austria. We have some great talent in Austrian golf. I think it was a little overdue for having an Austrian representing Europe in the Ryder Cup. I'm very proud that it's me.

I'm absolutely certain that I won't be the last Austrian to represent Europe at the Ryder Cup.

As you can imagine, everybody is really excited and looking forward to the week, as am I, to get going on Friday and put the Austrian flag on the European Ryder Cup team banner just as much as Viktor is for Norway and maybe even write a little piece of golfing history for Austria.

Everybody is really excited. I've got a lot of messages, and hopefully -- well, I'm sure there will be tremendous support from home, as well, during the whole week.

**Q. I guess you received No. 164 of the 164. When you saw that, what resonated with you, and what does that mean exactly?**

**BERND WIESBERGER:** I think it's a brilliant idea what the guys have done. I'm very, very proud to have that number for life. Everybody is buzzing. The individual aspect of the game that we have, but this week we all come together as 12, yet everybody has their number and nobody can ever take it from them.

I was very, very surprised that it's been this few, actually. I could have not told you if you would have asked me how many players would have represented the European team in the history of the Ryder Cup.

I'm forever going to be 164, and it's going to be amazing. The guys really loved it, and it brings a great theme, I think, to the whole week for us.

**Q. With all the emotions going on and media and everything else, how much does this affect your personal routine you usually do before a tournament?**

**BERND WIESBERGER:** You know, I think we all came here knowing that it's a different type of week. As individuals I think we all normally have our own kind of schedule and preparation time that we have for the events, but this week is totally different.

We're all -- we all have a little bit of an agenda, everyone, in the schedule. In my case because I'm a rookie I have not experienced it before. I got a lot of input from former

captains and the senior players who have been here many times and kind of manage expectations and manage my schedule and manage our schedule so everybody is rested up and well prepared for when push comes to shove on Friday.

**Q. What do you think -- you were an outsider, now you're an insider -- brings all these guys kind of from different countries together to be such an effective team at the Ryder Cup over the years?**

**BERND WIESBERGER:** I mean, it's tough to put it down on one thing. I kind of always stood where you were and thought, What is it that makes this European team in a way always getting from the underdog position to a victorious team, especially over the last couple of years at the Ryder Cups.

Being part of the team room, being part of the bigger picture of what is Team Europe this week as opposed to the last couple of years, it really bonds us really well together.

Obviously all the guys are unbelievable golfers, but the way everybody comes together, everybody loosens up for the week, has fun, enjoys their time, goes out there, does their work and get prepared as good as we can, but then just detach and have the best time possible is really great to be a part of and experience that.

I'm sure that also just feeds into the performance or the victorious side of things for a European team.

**Q. What was the best tip you got from one of the past captains or veteran players?**

**BERND WIESBERGER:** That was very, very unique was to absolutely enjoy the week, to -- there's going to be a lot of distractions. As I said, stuff that's going on around it. But just go out there, enjoy, have fun. That's what I'm trying to do here, as well, this week, and soak it all in. Just let it all out there on the golf course.

**Q. You've played tournaments over here in the U.S.; I think of the 12 you're probably the one who's played the least and hasn't had a PGA TOUR card per se. Is that something you plan to pursue at some point?**

**BERND WIESBERGER:** You know, what happens happens. I've played enough golf over here in the States, major tournaments, WGCs and regular PGA TOUR events where I'm probably the only guy who would call himself purely European based from a playing standpoint.

But again, I think I've always enjoyed the challenge of

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playing globally and getting the chance to play over here in the States.

Yeah, so whatever happens happens in the future. We'll see. But as for now, I'm really enjoying my time on the European Tour and competing on the European Tour. I've also cherished the events that are happening for me over here in the States.

**Q. Particularly in Paris, the way it's developed with the stands down the first, it's almost like a football stadium atmosphere, football stadium singing, chanting. Is that something that you think you'll relish? Is that something you have an idea of how other sportsmen feel in team events?**

**BERND WIESBERGER:** Yeah, we never get stuff like this happening, obviously. There's just people who love this player, this player, but never do you have like -- you're either blue or red.

I think that's what makes the Ryder Cup the Ryder Cup. First one that I experienced was Paris, and I did it non-playing-wise, but still, if you're a golfer and you get on that tee, regardless if you're playing that day, the experience there for the guys must have been unbelievable, and it will be the same this week.

Especially Paris, like it really became a big, big amphitheater. We have it this week again. Really bring the maximum out of the crowds for both teams. Really looking forward to stepping on a packed first tee there.

**THE MODERATOR:** Thanks for finding us today. Have a great day and enjoy your stay here in Wisconsin.

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