

The Ryder Cup

Friday, September 24, 2021

Kohler, Wisconsin, USA

Whistling Straits

Pádraig Harrington

Press Conference



Friday Afternoon Fourballs

JOHN DEVER: We are joined by European Captain Pádraig Harrington.

Pádraig, I think it's easy to say it wasn't the day you maybe had anticipated. What are your overarching thoughts on the two sessions and what you're looking at as we move into tomorrow?

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: No doubt it was a tough day. Clearly not what you wanted, 6-2. There's obviously still 20 points to play for. We've only just played for about 25 percent at this stage. It isn't a good start, but there's still a lot to play for.

My team played well today. You know, just a few times, the momentum, the odd putt didn't go in, and you need a bit of momentum. Things didn't go against us.

But hopefully, I just think the last couple of matches there, when it was really, really tight, the boys came through, and it certainly felt like we couldn't have afforded -- those two halves at the very end were crucial for us, Tyrrell with the birdie on the last, very, very important in those situations.

As much as we would have liked to have gotten wins on the board, we couldn't afford -- we didn't feel like we could afford to have lost those matches. Maybe a little bit of momentum swing there, and we feel good about that. And coming out tomorrow, obviously we need a big day.

Q. A lot was made coming in about the U.S. and its length, and they really dominated today on the par 5s. What were your thoughts and how do you turn that around?

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, I haven't had that much time to sit down and certainly haven't looked at their game to be honest. I've only looked at my own players at this stage and how they got around the place.

To us, it seemed like our ball-striking was good. So yeah,

you know, we just didn't hole the putts today. You know, part of that, as well, you hole a few putts at the right time, you do create the momentum to move on.

So it's a sort of Catch 22. Obviously the U.S. played well and obviously they holed the right putts at the right time and fair play to them. We're certainly not second-guessing the way they played. We would like to hole a few more putts ourselves tomorrow and create a little bit more good feeling and vibes for ourselves.

Q. We haven't seen the pairings for tomorrow, but are you staying the course, or is the plan being adjusted like you talked about, if you get behind a little bit, you might have to adjust?

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: We have plenty of options on our team. Spoiled for choice in many ways, and yeah, we have options, we have looked at that and we have always known that this week that our players are all capable of playing foursomes and fourball.

You know, sometimes you never see that. So plenty of options. I'm very comfortable again with the team I've put out tomorrow. Wait and see in each of those matches whether they can create their own momentum and then bring that to the team.

Q. Is it as simple as saying, 6-2 today, but same amount of points there tomorrow, we can do that, boys?

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: No, you don't look at it like that tomorrow. You can't just turn around and try to eat into a lead straightaway in one session. It would be lovely if it happened, but you can't think like that. You've got to do it slowly, one step at a time.

So yeah, we got 20 points to play for, and we've got to prepare ourselves for -- hopefully for us at this stage a long battle all the way through. If we are going to get this done, it's going to be a very tight one.

Q. Curious if you got the team together for any group speech tonight. And after a day like today, if that is the



case that you did that, what do you say to them and how do you resuscitate the mood?

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: I talked to every player after the round, but no group meeting as of yet. We were putting the team together, which is quite a process. You know, at the end of the day, you've got an hour to get it all in, and you've got to get all your partnerships right and you have to consider foursomes and fourball at that time.

So it would be counterproductive to hold the team. I sent them back to get rested to, get fed, to get some physio, and when I get back, as soon as I get back, we will have the team meeting to give them time to, as I say, get to rest more, get to bed, do whatever they need to do, so not yet.

Q. We haven't seen the pairings yet tomorrow. I know Rory had two tough matches today. Is there any chance that he might rest in the morning?

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: You know, you're going to have to wait and see the pairings. I'm not giving away anything obviously.

Q. When will the pairings be out?

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: Got to ask The Ryder Cup people that. I put mine in already.

JOHN DEVER: We'll have those shortly. The time limit has not expired.

Q. What are your thoughts on Rory's performance that he can put it aside and bounce back tomorrow and be a leader for you tomorrow?

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: He's already a leader. You saw him out there after a tough day, he was out following those matches and supporting his team. He is very much a leader amongst his peers and I couldn't have asked more from him during the year, I couldn't have asked more from him today. Yeah, the golf didn't go as well as he would have liked, but I'm not second-guessing him for a second in terms of his leadership and what he does for my team.

Q. What do you think you guys are going to have to do better tomorrow than you did today? Is there anything in particular? The golf course is obviously playing quite difficult.

PÁDRAIG HARRINGTON: Clearly if we have that couple of putts more, that creates that momentum. You know, we're very happy with everybody's play. Ball-striking was there.

Yeah, just hole a few more putts. Plenty of gutsy performances. So I'm comfortable with that. It's just a question of a few things going right for us. Getting the odd break, there's no doubt about that.

Clearly the U.S. played very well today, and they did what they needed to do. You know, we need to do that tomorrow.

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