

Hero Cup

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Abu Dhabi, UAE

Abu Dhabi Golf Club

Continental Europe

Tommy Fleetwood

Francesco Molinari

Dr. Pawan Munjal

Press Conference

BRIONY CARLYON: Thank you, everyone, for joining us today for our press conference here at the inaugural Hero Cup here at the Abu Dhabi Golf Club. We are pleased to be joined by Francesco Molinari, representing Continental Europe, and Tommy Fleetwood representing Great Britain & Ireland, and alongside them we have Dr. Pawan Munjal, chairman and CEO of Hero MotoCorp.

We'll hear from Tommy and Fran shortly but Dr. Munjal, if I could ask you to give us your thoughts this week on the exciting match-play event that we have here and the fantastic golf we've assembled here in Abu Dhabi.

DR. PAWAN MUNJAL: Thank you, everybody, and thank you for that great introduction. Good morning and wish you all a very happy new year, a very healthy new year, and a safe new year. I say safe because of all that's going on around us, we all need to be safe.

On behalf of everyone at Hero and my personal behalf, I'd like to extend a very warm welcome to everyone associated with this event to you all. You are our mediators with all our stakeholders. This is a unique tournament unlike most other weekly tournaments; we have one coming up next week and followed by another one week after.

But match play is a different ballgame. I personally very much enjoy match play. Innovation is at the core of everything that we do at Hero, and we continue to expand this philosophy in everything else that we do beyond just making motorcycles and scooters, or whether it's sports or any other association we have, especially in golf.

You all know at the DP World Tour, we have been innovating every few years with The Hero Challenge and some of the other events that are going on on the Tour.



The contribution us, the promotion of golf, and support to golfers around the world through our association with marquis golfing events is an inspiring story that is well-known to most of you.

Our association over the past several years with the erstwhile European Tour, now the DP World Tour, has been mutually beneficial and The Hero Cup is a landmark extension of that association. It has further strengthened our long-term commitment to the game of golf and also reflects the ever-growing global stature of Hero in golf.

We have often talked about a team match-play contest, and to give team and leadership experience to the players, that is something that resonates with us here at Hero MotoCorp as well, and authentic leadership is encouraged and practiced every day.

Luke has, in fact, done a fantastic job with both Tommy and Francesco here in putting together a field that has the best of emerging talent and as well as established major champions and Ryder Cup stars from U.K., Ireland and Continental Europe. I'm sure this is going to be a fantastic week of top-class golf that will witness a tuffal on the course between these two strong teams.

With Moliwood here at the helm, we can be sure of great match plays and drama that only team sports can bring. I do see some familiar faces here, and I am told there will be more coming by Thursday. Before I hand over the mic back to Brian, I thank you all from around the world for lending us your constant support.

On behalf of everyone at Hero and once again on my own personal behalf, I welcome you all to this unique event, The Hero Cup. Thank you.

BRIONY CARLYON: Thank you for those remarks.

We'll start with Tommy first. How much are you looking forward to leading a team this week? Definitely something different than what you're accustomed to.

TOMMY FLEETWOOD: Definitely it's a new experience for both me and Fran. It's also a massive privilege for Luke



to contact us both, and I think particularly myself, I was quite taken aback and very proud to be captain of a team of amazing players and a team of GB&I.

Looking forward, we have a really good team and good bunch of people that are already very close and very together and something that I'll hold in high regard.

BRIONY CARLYON: Thank you, Tommy.

Fran, as we know you have formed a great partnership, as Dr. Munjal has alluded to Moliwood, Pawan Munjal in Paris in 2018, picking up five points. How do you look to impart some of that match-play knowledge and experience to your Continental Europe teammates?

FRANCESCO MOLINARI: Yeah, like Tommy was saying, it's a huge honour for both of us and thank you to Dr. Monday and Hero for making this possible. I was fortunate enough to be part of three Ryder Cup teams, three winning Ryder Cup teams, but the first two individually were not as successful as the last one. That's why I think sometimes it breaks down, match play is something unique that we don't get to do very often.

So to give all the players here the chance this week to get accustomed to being in a team environment and playing match play, I think it's a great opportunity for everyone, something that Tommy and I and Luke, will try to make the most of in terms of knowing the players better and getting ready for the big goal of Rome in September.

BRIONY CARLYON: Thank you, Fran.

Q. How do you see this, start of a brand new year, which you individually personally have got a lot of goals for the year, and seeing the nature of this competition?

TOMMY FLEETWOOD: I look back on other team events that I've played in the past and how important they were to myself, to the teammates and the captains and everybody else involved. I think, yeah, we had a really good night last night that was very rightfully themed, we had Paul McGinley speak and Thomas Björn and Luke. The Ryder Cup is a huge motivator for every player in Europe that has a chance to play in September but there is a long way to go before that and you can only go one week at a time.

I think playing in a team, I've won in teams and I've lost in teams as well and definitely winning, it's going to be a great week no matter what, but I think as teammates and as players, you want to give it a hundred first for everybody that's involved and for all the teammates and us, that's

what you all will remember from this week.

But I would love to be a winning captain. I won't have too many harsh feelings for another captain if they win, but definitely I would love GB&I to win. The last match that GB&I played were in 2013 and got beat -- but would look to not get beat on this occasion. But yeah, everybody is taking it very seriously and I think if you prepare yourself properly for these particular events, that will hold you in good stead for what's to come in the future if you manage to make those Ryder Cup teams.

Q. Over the next few days, how much of an input does The Ryder Cup captain have of what you guys will do?

FRANCESCO MOLINARI: I think the best way to do it is there's a good balance, Luke has some input, and like I said, we are competitors. We want to win this week. Once we start playing, we want to win but we are well aware that we are Team Europe Ryder Cup.

Luke will obviously be involved in all the decisions but I think he's giving us room to learn, you know, potentially hopefully in the future to be able to have other chances to captain other teams.

So I think for me, it's a great opportunity as well as the rest of the guys.

Q. How serious is this tournament for you guys, given that there's The Ryder Cup is still quite a few months away? You have the stats; how much of input is Luke talking about all the players, and how much you guys are looking at all of the players and are you trying to motivate them? How important is it, and is it giving out a statement to the other team that this is how serious you are?

TOMMY FLEETWOOD: It is very serious as I alluded to. If you apply yourself properly in this event, I think it holds you in high regard for The Ryder Cup. I remember we had the EurAsia Cup in 2018, and I had a particularly good tournament there and Europe won but I remember Thomas was the captain and he was -- everything you do, they keep a very close eye on for the captains in September. When you play in these team events and when you play in The Ryder Cup, a lot, a big part of it is how you play but that's not everything that you can give to the team. There's attitude, there's motivation, there's the way you are with your teammates.

So there's a lot into it. So I think from the stats side, from the Luke's side, for the vice captains, for myself and Fran to the players, we are making it as close to The Ryder Cup as possible. It's a hugely important event for us all, this

event in particular, and team golf is something that everybody from the last Ryder Cup at Whistling Straits, they wanted another team event. We wanted to be sharper in that team format and it's a very important factor and a very important part for what we thought the preparation was.

So I think from my side and from speaking to my teammates, we are all in a very competitive mood. We all want to perform. We all want to do our absolute best and we want to win. But everything from the locker rooms, the stats, and how everybody is going about everything is absolutely very serious. It just like any other event that we all want to be winners at the end of the day.

FRANCESCO MOLINARI: Yeah, I think Tommy covered everything. I think the did you understand that has done a good job. Having the stats team around that's going to be around. We have the physios and we have anything we might need to get ready for the week.

So we are taking it as seriously as possible. We are friends, and you know, at the end of the day we all want to play well and show what we are able to do but like Tommy was saying, we are competitors and we want to win. When you go out there, you're just not thinking who you're playing against. You just want to win your match and the trophy at the end of the week possibly.

Q. After the success that you had in 2018, have you analysed and the other ten players, have they tried to feed off you on how to take on that success in a team format?

FRANCESCO MOLINARI: I think for us, it was a case of obviously being in very good form, both of us having a lot of desire to play together. Over the summer, I think we started speaking with Thomas Björn to try to get that together and we are good friend off the course.

So it was not hard to go out there and play well and play together. It's not something that I think you can recreate with every pairing. But that's why for us it's important to be here, to have this chance to try some pairing that might work well and give a chance to some guys to play together, and it's a process that they are starting. Tommy and I have been friends for many, many years and that was a very big part of our success in France.

DR. PAWAN MUNJAL: Let me add on to what both Tommy and Fran said about the seriousness of this event. We had all these questions to the Tour when this event was proposed to us, obviously. We are putting in money behind this event.

So the promise to us, and I believe this is what it is going to be, you cannot call it The Ryder Cup because you cannot have that but it is -- it is The Ryder Cup. I hope that's a simple and straight answer.

Q. Dr. Munjal, it was just announced a few days ago from the DP World Tour about the PGTI becoming part of that. I would just like to have your thoughts on that, and also the fact that three years since they have played, is there something on that you want to say?

DR. PAWAN MUNJAL: Personally I am very happy about this new association. There has been a lots of ifs and buts and doubts around this event, the Hero Indian Open and where India is going, left, right or center.

It's important for the game of golf, for the players, that there is clarity of thought where we are all headed and I'm sure we all -- all of us in this room and everyone associated in the game of golf clearly wants the game to grow, but first to do well as professionals; and for all the stakeholders, especially the spectators, to enjoy the game of golf and to come to the golf course and they watch a game on their devices. I believe and that's what I hear from my team, that's a very good thing to happen, and we are now looking forward to the next Hero Indian Open at the end of February.

Q. Just want to ask about your style of captaincy, really. How does it sit with you because you've been part of teams, and how you're leading the team; having to speak to colleagues and friend and maybe drop them from sessions and these kind of things. How does it sit with you and your personality, and adding on to that as well, which past captains that you've played under do you hope to take a few elements of?

TOMMY FLEETWOOD: Well, my hair dryer -- (laughter) I think like Fran, I've played under some great captains. I think every time you play a team event, you take something from it you and look at things that you liked about it or things that you thought maybe could have been better.

You know what, this is our first time being captain and I definitely am still going to be growing into it throughout this week. I think the most important thing is to, you know, read the players and make sure they are comfortable as possible and make sure that if there's anything you can do to help them be in the best possible place individually to perform at their best, then that's all you can do. I will only ever ask of 100 per cent commitment of anybody who is playing for me or with me and I'm very excited to get going with everyone.

I'm still going to be picking the brains of the captains that were here last night. All the captains spoke so well in very different ways adds well and you pick things up from them.

So I'm watching, I guess you saw from today, the practice day, I've always found that practice days in team events are particularly difficult. It's different. It's a different environment. And it's important to get that preparation right and do the things that you do, and I'll enforce that to the guys and hopefully make the most of the practice round and then before you know it, you're playing.

But all the guys are very motivated and all the guys are great together and they are very excited to play. So there's very little for me to do except keep them in that place and give them the confidence -- not that they need the confidence, but we'll just give them that; that they can go out there and win and play their best and that's all we can do.

We'll see where we are at the end of it, but it is a great experience and it's a great honour and a privilege to go out there and sort of be looked at as the leader of the team and it's something I would picture myself as goals in the future and hope to captain more teams in my career and this is a great start.

FRANCESCO MOLINARI: Yeah, it's a challenge for us, really to discover what it is to be leading a team. It's a new role and I think we all learned from the captains we had in the past. Winning Ryder Cup teams -- Thomas Björn, very successful and yeah, everything you try to pick from each of the captains you've had and add a little bit of your style.

I think both Tommy and I are lucky this week that we have really two good groups of professionals and guys who are motivated. They all come here trying to feet ready to play some good golf, Friday, Saturday and Sunday and that obviously makes our job a lot easier.

You also have the support of Luke and the vice captains. It's going to be a fun week and it's going to be a busy week for the two of us, but yeah, it will be a great chance to learn and make mistakes and hopefully not too many, and just try to make the guys comfortable and have them play the golf that we know they can play, have a great competition, and we'll see who comes out on top on Sunday.

BRIONY CARLYON: Gentlemen, thank you very much for your time this week. We'll be wishing you and our teams all the best. Thank you.

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