

U.S. Senior Open Championship

Saturday, July 4, 2026

Columbus, Ohio, USA

Scioto Country Club

Padraig Harrington

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We're here with Padraig Harrington, a 4-under 66. Can you talk us through the round? You had five birdies there in six holes. What did you find around the turn?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, look, it was a slow enough start, even though I didn't feel like -- I played okay. I think at one stage when the guys eagled the sixth, I hadn't put it out, I was six shots behind, so I was feeling it a bit at that stage.

But I suppose when it comes to a U.S. Open, you always know if you hang in there and try and dig deep when things aren't going your way and you wait for a run, which obviously happened on 9, 10, 11, 13 and 14, five birdies in six holes, that's the sort of run that gets any card moving.

It was a nice -- I'm looking out there, even the up-and-down on 6 there was important, that birdie. So there was a lot of good fight in me today.

It's always hard to win these things. Stewart is not giving it up. George had a good day, too. I see the three of us playing tomorrow again. Miguel is just there behind.

I kind of envisage it's going to be another long day tomorrow.

Q. Do you think the golf course played any easier today, or did you guys just play a little bit better?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: A little bit of rain helped. No doubt about it. That one heavy shower beforehand, just the greens were that little bit much more receptive. That means you could get at the pins up on top of the slopes.

If you hit it on the fairway, the ball is running out. You're going to have reasonable iron shots into the greens. There was definitely -- that little bit of softness made it very gettable.



Q. Last year you and Stewart were tied heading into the final round. You're one back. What's it going to take this year to get it done?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Shoot at least one better than Stewart tomorrow. That's not ruling out the other guys. You know, who knows. I play each shot as it comes. I really try and get into that kind of mindset I was in today and see if that works out.

Q. With a 69 on Thursday, 67 yesterday, 66 today, clearly trending exactly --

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Golf does not work that way. I wish. You don't get to declare your score. Unfortunately in golf -- yeah, none of that stuff matters, to be honest. You've just got to go every day and play your hardest. It gives you nothing.

Q. Do you feel like as this week goes on, you're learning a little bit more about the course, and that is potentially helping you a little bit?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I think yes. There's some of that.

I think there's some of -- certainly today -- the greens got firm enough yesterday afternoon. Today, though, you had opportunities.

There's a little bit of learning the golf course, but I do think the course was, as I said, just a little softer today. I'd like more of that tomorrow.

Q. You mentioned guys like Miguel and George kind of breathing down your necks, but when you're playing with Stewart, how does that add a level of intrigue and familiarity, especially because you've done this literally a year ago?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, I've done it a few times with Stewart, yeah. Look, it's one of those things -- there's lots of cliches in it. You've got to play your own game, knuckle down and do your thing. As I said, there will be ebbs and flows. There will be -- somebody is going to get a good stretch of holes. Could be two-shot swings on a hole. Who knows. There's always that sort of thing.



You just have to play your own game, do your own thing.

There's no doubt -- I say that, later on in the round, if you fall three shots behind, you're going to have to just go all out. You can't be defensive at all at that stage.

I would think you play the right shots as you go along, but if you do get substantially behind, you're just going to have to take it on and take your chances.

Q. You've addressed this week the pressure of being the defending champion and winning this for a third time. Has the heat taken some of the load off of that because you're just solely focused on just making that next shot or making that next putt?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I think that feeling is gone now, as in Stewart is leading the tournament. It's on his shoulders. He's the one with the lead. I'm now chasing, so I don't have that feeling at all.

Even today I didn't feel like that. (Audio interruption.)

Q. Being in the final group on a Sunday in a major, how much do you enjoy that with so much on the line?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, it's a little bit like riding a roller coaster. The further you get away from being on it, the more you think you enjoy it. Yeah, look, I'll be out there tomorrow. I know I want to be there.

I know this is why we do it, and I wouldn't want to be anywhere else. But I'll be questioning my decisions at times during it. It's one of those things; you put yourself out there, you put yourself under pressure. You don't want to mess up. You wouldn't want to be anywhere else. But it's still a tough place to be.

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