

**PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW**  
December 11, 2019



**GRAEME McDOWELL**  
**IAN POULTER**

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**DOUG MILNE:** Guys, thanks for coming in, we appreciate it. I know y'all certainly are not first timers here, I think you're making your eighth start, seventh start and past champion with Dustin in 2010 and three runner-up finishes, close but not first. Just some thoughts on getting the band back together with you guys here this week.

**GRAEME McDOWELL:** Yeah, it's always a fun way to end the year coming down here. QBE coming in the last couple years and kind of upping the purse a little bit, ups the interest level come Sunday afternoon, for sure, but certainly one of my favorite weeks of the year.

Ian and I've had a chance to play here together in the past, we've played a few sort of pairs events in the past and we certainly enjoy playing together. It's going to be fun. Whatever happens, it's such an interesting format from the scramble and the greensomes and the better ball, always an opportunity to make some birdies and have some fun out there.

Like I say, a great way to end the year. I think we're both hitting it pretty well and looking forward to the challenge.

**DOUG MILNE:** Ian, just some thoughts on being back.

**IAN POULTER:** It's great to be back. As you said earlier, G-Mac's played eight times, I've played seven times, so 15 as a pair so it's quite a bit of experience. We played some Ryder Cups, we've done okay as a team format and this is a great challenge. It's fun. It's the back end of the year. The pro-am obviously the first couple days, the guys are having a great time. It's nice for us to relax as well obviously coming into Christmas. As Graeme said, the format is a nice relaxed format as well, you can make tons of birdies, eagles. You've got lots of opportunities. It's a fun way to end the year.

**DOUG MILNE:** One more question from me. Thoughts on the game? I know you're obviously coming off the Puntacana win not too long ago and you've had a couple top-15 finishes already this season. Just some thoughts on how the game's shaping up. Not shaping up, but staying up.

**IAN POULTER:** I mean, the game's good. I've had a couple weeks off, I've been having some fun at home with a charity event I just finished on Monday, so I came straight down. In fact, Graeme won it with his team. We've had a little bit of time off and Christmas is coming. My form's okay. Obviously this kind of format you can lean on your partner a little bit and he can lean on me at times, and if you get it going, it's one of those formats you can shoot 10, 11, 12, 13 under in one of those formats and if you do that, you're on a roll and you can

shoot lights out.

**GRAEME McDOWELL:** Yeah, like you say, it's been an okay year for me. I actually haven't played a whole lot the last three months so I'm starting to kind of gear back up. I'm going to start early in the new year in Kapalua and Sony, so I'm sort of viewing my offseason as nearly finished and this is kind of -- I'm going to use this week to kind of kickstart my game as I get ready for the start of the season next year.

And like Ian said, it requires a little bit of fortunate luck, this event, because you have to hit the shots at the right times. There's no point birdieing the same hole in better ball. You sort of have to ham and egg it a little bit and lean on your partner from time to time and you've got to make some putts.

The golf course, it's a little softer this year than it was last year, which I think really suits this format well. It was firm and fast and tricky last year and it was difficult to get close to some of the flags, but I think this year with it being a bit softer, I think the scoring will be pretty low. It's just a case of getting the foot on the gas as soon as we get out there on Friday.

**Q. You guys are the elder statesmen this week. You played your first one in; '08, you obviously had not won a U.S. Open, you were not Ryder Cup famous, and here you are today. The young kids kind of look at you like, oh, there they are.**

**GRAEME McDOWELL:** Yeah, I think if you look at our first round draw, I think that you couldn't highlight the fact that we're nearly the oldest guys in the field and we're playing with the two youngest kids in the field with Viktor Hovland and Matt Wolff.

Poults and I are getting to that stage in life where we'll be turning up at events and we will be the older guys in the field, but --

**IAN POULTER:** I've had that tag already this year, yes, I have. Oldest man in the field. That's a bit scary.

**GRAEME McDOWELL:** Old by age, but I think Ian obviously when it comes to team golf is pretty prolific and he's always a great partner, and we're both highly motivated guys. I mean, getting into our 40s, the great thing about this sport, guys can have great years in their 40s. I'm probably more motivated than I have been for a really long time. I really want to try and kick on and have a big season next year, so this is a week I see as a platform to just play some good golf, get the juices flowing and get ready for the season.

Like I say, we'll be trying to do our best with these young lads. I'm not sure we'll keep up with them off the tee, but there's more to it than just that.

**Q. So the desire is still there?**

**GRAEME McDOWELL:** Oh, very much so. I think I speak for us both. We both work as

hard as we ever did. We both feel like we've got many good years left in us.

**IAN POULTER:** If the desire drops off, you won't see me playing golf, period, full stop. I want to feel competitive. I feel I have to, and because of that I'm working harder, and because of that I'm just as hungry as I ever was on my first year on Tour in '99.

So for me it's all about keeping the energy levels up. I can't play quite as much as probably I used to, but I can be competitive. I had a chance at the Masters this year, got off to a fast start in the Middle East, and I'm looking to do the same obviously 2020, see if I can get off to that hot start, put myself in position, move up the world rankings a little bit and hopefully do the same at the Masters, get myself in contention.

**Q. Last summer, Royal Portrush for The Open Championship, was that maybe the highlight of your golfing career away from tournaments, away from winning tournaments?**

**GRAEME McDOWELL:** Yeah, I think outside of competing and perhaps Ryder Cups, I think just the pride level that I had for the people of Portrush and the people of Ireland really was huge for me. It was an amazing week.

The golf course gets such amazing reviews from players and caddies and everyone involved with the tournament. I think I was just very proud. I think it's the most proud I've ever been of Portrush and Northern Ireland and the whole golfing island of Ireland.

So it was great to play well for three days. I didn't play well on Sunday, but I loved every second of it. It's my favorite walk in golf, the 18th at the Open Championship. This guy's had a chance to walk up the 18th at the Open with a chance to win a Claret Jug. I've been close a couple times, but that walk at Portrush was extra, extra special this year. Like I say, I was proud of everyone and the execution level and hope the R&A will have us back there very soon.

**Q. Do you know if you're among the top collectors in the world in Ferraris?**

**IAN POULTER:** Not even close.

**Q. Really? I mean --**

**IAN POULTER:** Not even remotely close. Yeah, there's leagues apart, so I would be in the kind of like eighth division. There are some --

**Q. You're a small-timer?**

**IAN POULTER:** I'm entry level. I'm entry level when we're talking about collectors and real collectors. There are car collectors, there are real car collectors and then there are super special car collectors. I might be down the pack.

**Q. How many do you have, five?**

**IAN POULTER:** Fourteen, 15. It's a nice collection. Listen, it's lovely, but there are some -- there's cars, cars, cars, cars and cars. There are many cars in the world that one car takes all of my cars.

**Q. How many does Graeme have?**

**GRAEME McDOWELL:** Zero, I have zero Ferraris. I call the guys at RBC and I work on -- my portfolio is not Ferraris, let's put it that way. Ian's very passionate about it and does a fantastic job and loves everything he does with that. I'm envious of that, but I'm a lot more conservative with my future planning.

**Q. Patrick Reed last week, the penalty shot, now they're giving him a hard time over in Australia.**

**GRAEME McDOWELL:** Shocker.

**Q. Do you think it's a lot about nothing or are you curious what happened?**

**IAN POULTER:** No comment.

**Q. That's good.**

**GRAEME McDOWELL:** Yeah, I think enough's been said about that. We're the other side of the world from these guys and we'll let them deal with it down there. We're here to play Shark Shootout, we'll let the Presidents Cup boys take care of that.

**Q. Will you guys watch the Presidents Cup?**

**GRAEME McDOWELL:** I'm not sure. When's it start? The middle of the night? I don't know, depends how much red wine is on the table these next couple of nights. Obviously very curious. It's a fantastic event. Myself and Ian are obviously very passionate about the Ryder Cup and we're always very curious to see how Team USA is coming together and what their plans are for obviously next year, which hopefully we'll both be involved in. There's a curiosity level, but timing isn't great this week from a watching point of view.

**DOUG MILNE:** All good. Easy enough, thanks, guys.