

ROUND 1 QUICK QUOTES
March 22, 2024



PADRAIG HARRINGTON (-8)

Q. Paddy, great start, birdies on three of your last four holes today. Couldn't help over listening to John here where you said yesterday you played well, you got a little bit frustrated that you weren't able to score or something to that effect. Just a few comments about today.

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: No, I scored well today, I scored much better than I played today, no doubt about it. I got up and down a few times, holed a few putts, holed a few important putts for par. Yeah, I scored better than I played today. Yesterday I played better than I scored.

Yeah, we'll see how we go. I think I was a little bit -- my expectations were high a little bit and Ronan said it to me on the last hole, he says I'm reacting too much to my average shots instead of just getting on with it.

Q. One of the things John noted was a lot of long hitters have won here in the past. You commented that last year you hit driver off every par 4 and par 5. What is it about this course and long hitters?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, look, the bunkers are all about 300 to carry. If you can open up and hit it, you can carry those bunkers. The driving areas are getting a lot wider, you're avoiding all the trouble. It is at sea level, so again, you've got to hit it around here. It doesn't go by itself, put it like that. It is an advantage if you can drive it long and straight here.

It's not a long course for the other guys, but there is a few carries out there. Five are good examples, they're kind of into cold breeze, 285. If you can carry them, you're hitting short irons in where some of the other guys, I gain 30 or 40 yards off guys that I normally would be 20 yards ahead of.

Q. How did the golf course play to you?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: It played very good. You know, I think the poa annua greens are the difficulty, there's no doubt about it. And they slowed them down a tiny bit from what they had been so they weren't as scary. If you get fast poa annua greens, yeah, at our age that's not a good combination. They were a nice pace that you could feel like you could still have a roll at your putts and they weren't getting away from you. Maybe they were -- there was obviously a lot more people on them the last two days, but they certainly seemed faster and today they were much more pleasant.



Q. Irish weather coming in the next two days?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: If I wanted Irish weather, I would have stayed in Ireland.

Q. You're getting it anyway.

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I'm getting it anyway and I'm in California. I come to California for Sony weather, for nice weather. I've gotten soft.

Yeah, look, it's a bit of -- it will be an advantage to me if it's tough conditions. If the course plays longer, it's going to be an advantage to me, but when you get bad weather, it becomes a little bit more of a lottery. You know, it doesn't mean -- you know, bad weather can beat anybody up. I think I prefer to play -- I prefer to try and beat these guys on a day like today. Maybe if I was playing against the young guys I might want an advantage, but I've gotten soft, I don't want to play in bad weather. Yeah, I prefer nice 75 degrees like it should be here.

Q. You're getting old.

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, I'm getting old.

Q. Does that forecast almost make it more important to put up a good round today?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, I think there was a level of get going today and get yourself up at the top of that leaderboard. If it is a tough forecast -- sorry, I know it is a tough forecast. If it materializes, you're going to have to batten down the hatches and play for more pars. Obviously that's -- if you're 3 or 4, 5 behind, you can't really play safe. At least when you're in and around the lead you can pick your moments.

Yeah, I think it was important to get myself up on the leaderboard and I was very focused on trying to get a low one in today. Not that I wouldn't be any other day, but -- and you never know. There's two things on the Champions Tour. If you don't start quick, it's really difficult. You mostly have to get to the 16 under par and it's hard to do that if you shoot 1 under the first day. And the second thing is it's fresh in our mind that we had a tournament that was reduced to two rounds there a few weeks ago. Again, you just want to be at the top of the leaderboard on an overall basis.

Q. Can you talk a little about what you like about both the golf course and the tournament, the Hoag Classic here at Newport Beach?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: The weather, I like the weather. Obviously that's questionable tomorrow or the next day.

The golf course is just an old-fashioned golf course. It's a nice course, you can hit driver off every hole. It doesn't play long, but there's a bit of length in it so you can hit it. As I said, it's



kind of like the style of course what I would have seen growing up. I would have played a lot of golf courses in sea air like this temperature, I would have played poa annua greens growing up. Yeah, maybe not the fairway grasses, but certainly the green grasses I'm very used to, and the temperature and the distances the ball goes is something I would be familiar with.

Q. You mentioned a little bit about the advantage the long hitter has. Can you talk about that a little bit more, about the carry distance you have to have?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: There's a lot of bunkers out here that they seem to be 305 yards on the downwind homes, 285, 290 in the crosswind holes. Yeah, a lot of guys aren't getting over that. If you're a long hitter and you can carry those, the fairways get a lot wider.

Q. Last time we saw each other we were in Mexico, Vidanta, you were playing the PGA TOUR. How does it -- how does it benefit you --

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: That was a big golf course down in Mexico, that was like 7,600 yards with no run. I happened to play it in the morning all weekend, which didn't help.

Look, it is different, it's very different. Out here there's a certain level of comfort that I know if I play my game I'm going to be in and around the leaderboard. I go back and play with the young guys and I feel under pressure that I have to have my very best game. Unfortunately, when you relax and play within yourself you play better and when you're on edge and you feel like you need to hole every putt and do everything right, it's when it doesn't work. It's very easy to verbalize it, it's not easy to I suppose handle it and do the right thing. It's just the nature of the game.

Q. One last question and we'll let you go. You spent a lot of time early in the week taping golf lessons, training, that kind of thing. I've known you, you're not doing it because you want to be on camera, you're doing it because you love the game and you want amateurs to improve their game. How much do you love this game to where you enjoy doing that kind of thing?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I really, really love doing it. Like I love playing my pro-ams every week. As I said, I think I broke my wrist there a few years ago and I had a few weeks off. Well, a good while off. Then I came back thinking I could come back and I couldn't play. I was actually at the Bear's Club, Jack kindly let me use the facilities. I was probably there four weeks where I wasn't playing. If a member made eye contact with me, he was getting a lesson.

I just like -- I'm a big contrarian, being the youngest of five boys, so I like telling people things that they might know and when it comes to golf, I think there's a disconnect between some of the elite level coaching and what you need to be an elite player and what you need to enjoy the game. Two different things.



You know, yeah, like really are two different things the way a 50-year-old should play the game and how you would teach a 16-year-old how to play the game.

I think there's a lot of confusion out there like for people who are looking online, looking at Instagram and things like that. I don't think they're physically capable of doing what is a perfect golf swing. That's an issue, what level do you go. Well, yeah, you should really rotate your hips open and open up with your torso and get side bend. Yeah, you know, it's not really going to help you if you're a 14 handicap, unless you're young. And of course if you're young, yeah, you should be doing that. You've got the ability. A lot of it comes down to if you're not hitting balls every day, it's hard to swing the club like a really, really athletic elite athlete.

