

PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE
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MARCO PENGE

MODERATOR: This is your eighth career PGA TOUR start and first since earning your PGA TOUR card through the DP World Tour top 10. So if you could start us off with some thoughts about your excitement to be here debuting for your PGA TOUR rookie season?

MARCO PENGE: Yeah, I'd like to have started a little sooner than this week, but yeah, I'm really excited for I'm playing the next four weeks. So Starting here at Torrey Pines and then heading to Phoenix and then Pebble Beach and Riviera is a pretty good start to my life on the PGA TOUR. So yeah, I'm super excited.

MODERATOR: And if you could share some thoughts, your first impressions on Torrey Pines Golf Course?

MARCO PENGE: Yeah, I mean, it's a little different to what you're getting in Europe. Two really good golf courses. It's obviously had some historical events on in the past. I feel really privileged to be playing a tournament here. Yeah, I mean, it's a good test of golf. The fairways are cut pretty tight and the rough's up. So I've lost quite a few golf balls five yards off the fairway already this week, so hopefully the ball spotters will give me a hand. Yeah, I'm looking forward to it. Let's see, I've got a good group on Thursday as well so that will be cool.

Q. Marco, I'm curious, you're kind of the third class now of players who have gotten their cards via the Race to Dubai. Is there anybody who's maybe gotten their card in the past couple of years maybe you've picked their brain on what life is like on the PGA TOUR or anybody else trying to figure out what your next year's going to be like?

MARCO PENGE: Yeah, I spoke to a couple of the guys who lost their card last year, and the likes of Rory and Tommy and people like that have been really helpful, Shane Lowry. It's been really nice to have the support from guys that I idolize in a way. Obviously this year they're going to be my opponents a lot more, which will be fun.

Yeah, had tons of help from the guys who graduated last year and the top European players in the world, so I feel like they've really helped me settle into life in America.

Q. Is there a course from afar that you've always dreamed of getting to play on the PGA TOUR rotation or is there a certain stop this year you're looking forward to most, not to take away from any of the other ones?

MARCO PENGE: Yeah, every week I'm obviously looking forward to, you know, playing in

THE PLAYERS, and obviously I've qualified for the Masters, that will be cool.

Yeah, there's tons on the list. I'm looking forward to going back to -- hopefully going back to Quail Hollow. I played the PGA there last year and I really like that course and I felt like it suited my game really well.

Yeah, like I said at the start, my first four weeks out here is a pretty good run of venues and tournaments. I'm just super excited to experience what it's like over here and Looking forward to engaging with the Americans as obviously I'm not used to that.

Q. Have you moved over here or are you like commuting back to Europe, or how will you handle that?

MARCO PENGE: Yeah, I moved here at the beginning of January. Moved to Palm Beach with my wife and my son, and brought the dog over and kind of the whole crew, to be honest.

My wife's giving birth in a month's time, so yeah, it's been a bit -- taken a bit of time to really find our feet and settle in. It's been a lot of work to sort out, but yeah, we really enjoyed a couple weeks before I've come here. My wife's been really supportive for me and my career. Yeah, it's cool. I've enjoyed it.

Q. At what point last year when you started to have some success did you start to think, hey, the PGA TOUR's a possibility and was that a carrot that that was really something that you were trying to strive for all along or did it just sort of you realized one day, wow, this is within my grasp, too?

MARCO PENGE: Yeah, I mean, I still even now I like being here knowing that I'm going to be playing on the PGA TOUR for a year and kind of ticked all the boxes in terms of what you could do as a professional golfer is kind of still pinch myself a little bit in a way.

At the start of last season obviously wasn't the start how I wanted, and after winning in China, it kind of become that I could achieve getting my PGA TOUR card. And then for then going on to win three times and have some other really good finishes, yeah, it gave me a lot of belief.

I'm really excited to see how I get on over here. It's obviously a new challenge and it will be a little harder than what I'm used to back in Europe, but that's part of being a worldwide professional golfer.

Q. First of all, Marco, and you mentioned your wife twice now, did you say she's due in a month's time or four months' time?

MARCO PENGE: No, I'm playing these four weeks and then straight home for the birth of our second child. Yeah, it's been a bit hectic. For us to have moved over here, it meant that

she had to give birth here. At the moment she's in Florida without her family and friends and I'm over at Torrey Pines and the next three weeks for me.

Yeah, she's been great. Obviously we're both really looking forward to having a second child.

Q. Did you make her unpack the boxes or did you help?

MARCO PENGE: What's that, sorry?

Q. Did you help her unpack the boxes or make her do it herself?

MARCO PENGE: No, no, I gave her a hand. It's OK.

Q. One last one on that. You guys won, was it Sunningdale Foursomes?

MARCO PENGE: Yeah.

Q. Was that the only time you competed together and was there any stress involved there?

MARCO PENGE: No, it's the only time we competed together. Unfortunately she gave up a couple of years after that. But I think her still being involved in it with me is still pretty stressful for her.

Yeah, it's nice to have -- I met her when I was 15. It's nice to have that support of a wife who understands kind of what it takes to be one of the best golfers in the world. So yeah, couldn't ask for more.

Q. Last thing from me. I know you won three times last year, a couple times on the Challenge. I'm just curious, at what point did something click? At what point did it switch on do you think? Was there a moment? Was there a result or anything that just allowed you in your head to have greater self-belief than you might have had before?

MARCO PENGE: Yeah, I mean, I feel like it's something I've always believed in my ability. Didn't necessarily know whether there was a certain point. I'm just striving to reach my full potential, which I still feel like I've got quite a long way to go. Hopefully I can prove that to myself, you know, playing well out here and playing well in majors and hopefully getting a couple of wins.

So yeah, you know, I'm kind of comparing my game to what I believe it can be and hopefully one day I can fulfill that potential.

Q. I think you were fighting a viral illness over kind of a long time period. How are you feeling?

MARCO PENGE: I've just seen the doctor actually about an hour ago, but I'm feeling a little better in myself. Still struggling with a couple of things, but it's come time that I need to forget about that and focus on the golf. But yeah, hopefully I start feeling 100 percent soon. My game's in pretty good shape, my speed, just I'm having to work a little harder for it, but it's fine.

Q. And then what went into the decision to join PXG?

MARCO PENGE: Took a couple of months of testing. I felt like there was a part in my team that I was missing in a way in terms of I feel like I could have got some -- a couple of one percent gains from my equipment and kind of the team that I was working with.

I went over to Arizona the week after I won the Spanish Open and spent a couple of days with the guys there at TPC in Scottsdale. Yeah, I was really excited as soon as I got there and I felt like they're a company that can really support me as a person over here being an American brand.

I'm excited for kind of what they're striving to achieve. Yeah, I kind of wanted to be a big part of that. It's kind of an exciting new chapter for me, so yeah, it's going to be good.

Q. You've got a lot going on. Where are you on kind of the scale between excited and overwhelmed, something else?

MARCO PENGE: Yeah, I mean, the last probably six months have been overwhelmed. You know, probably still now a little overwhelmed, but I'm really excited to have the opportunities that I've got ahead of me. It's just cool to be, you know, trying to achieve big things in the game and try and set an example for young kids coming up. It's great to have the support that I've gained over the last year and the people that are kind of on the journey with me is really exciting for me. So it's kind of why I'm here.

Q. I'm just curious of China, Denmark and Spain, which was the most meaningful win for you last year in terms of your progress?

MARCO PENGE: Probably the Spanish Open. I think it's probably the most historical event I won last year and kind of the way I won it, you know, winning in a playoff and not having my best game, it was, yeah, kind of cool to make it like a hat trick if you know what I mean. So yeah, definitely in Spain.

Q. And you're in West Palm Beach. Where do you -- where are you playing out of?

MARCO PENGE: I'm actually at Old Palm. they've been really -- they're like a real family orientated golf club and super chilled.

I did try and join a couple of others, but kind of got turned away a little bit. Yeah, I was kind

of a little too casual, I think. But myself and Old Palm is a good match and facilities are great there. So yeah, it's nice to be at a golf club that wants to have me there, so yeah, it's cool.

MODERATOR: Well, we will let you go. Thank you for joining us. Good luck this week.