

PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE
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ANDRÉ GOMES
CARLOS ABADÉ
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TODD RHINEHART: Good morning and thank you all for being here. My name is Todd Rhinehart, I'm the tournament director for the Portugal Invitational and it is a pleasure to have you here today to kick off this incredible week of golf in Portugal as we officially mark the beginning of what promises to be a truly memorable week and we're so thankful that you can be here today.

This is a culmination of more than 12 months of planning, collaboration and dedicated work. Bringing an event like this together takes an incredible commitment from many parties, organizations and partners.

Before we begin, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to those institutions and partners whose vision, commitment and dedication has made this inaugural edition possible.

Today we have with us representing the Portuguese government, Secretary of State for Tourism, Pedro Machado.

From the Council of Loule, President Telmo Pinto.

Representing Turismo de Portugal, President Carlos Abade.

From Turismo del Algarve, President André Gomes.

Representing Arrow Global, co-founder and head of real estate and hospitality, John Calvão.

From PGA TOUR Champions, President Miller Brady.

And of course our tournament host, who really brought this incredible vision to life by bringing all these parties together, four-time major winner, World Golf Hall of Famer, Ernie Els.

To kick off our proceedings, it's my pleasure to introduce my friend, John Calvao.

JOHN CALVÃO: Thank you, Todd. First of all, obviously I want to welcome everybody to what is going to be an historical event for Portugal, the first Portugal Invitational. The first of many, we hope. This is something that started about 16 months ago if I had to



take a guess and we were very fortunate enough to have Ernie basically stranglehold Miller into having this event.

It's been an absolute pleasure to work with everybody around the table. Actually, I want to start by thanking everybody who has put this event together. It is a large undertaking. We have a large team here locally that's done a fantastic job leading with Todd, the tournament director, and our local team, (indiscernible) team here, but also we couldn't do this without our sponsors. We have obviously our major sponsors to my left, Secretary of State Pedro Machado, and Carlos Abade (inaudible.) from the golf. They supported this from day one and they have been an absolute pleasure to work with on getting this project off the ground.

Arrow's excited about this project. It's part of our vision to continue to really market all of what Portugal is, Algarve is and this wonderful resort is at Vilamoura, which I think is going to be just an outstanding place to be over the next couple days.

Still a bit warm for me, but other than that I think it's fantastic. The course is in tremendous shape, couldn't have asked for a better field. The Tour's put together a tremendous field. I wish I could emulate some of them, I can't, my golf isn't that good, but it is great to meet them and get to know them in this setting.

So welcome. I think this will be a great event. Really, I hope all of you will get a chance to enjoy it. (speaking Portuguese.)

TODD RHINEHART: Thank you, John. You mentioned the field, 78 incredible players, one of the strongest fields of the year playing for 3 million USD purse. Here to talk a little bit more about PGA TOUR Champions is President Miller Brady.

MILLER BRADY: Thank you, Todd.

I will say that you didn't have to strangle me, Ernie didn't have to stranglehold me. For the Champions Tour to play our first ever event, PGA TOUR-sanctioned event in Portugal was a no-brainer, right? We knew it would be great. We knew we had tremendous partners not only in tourism but in Arrow Global. And what they're investing in this area is amazing and it's great for us to see it and it's great for us to see this event come to life, right?

We made the announcement just over a year ago, but to show up this week, our players are coming from the Senior Open, much different atmosphere there. This is one of our events on the Champions Tour, so to see this come to life, our players are showing up, arriving at the hotel, eyes wide open.

I'll tell you, last night I was having a beverage overlooking the pool area and I was watching the families of our players in the pool hanging out, enjoying the warm hospitality of this country. I mean, this is what this week is about for our tour. It's the family atmosphere, and I think it's just going to grow more and more every single year.



So for us it's great for tourism, it's great for golf, great for Arrow and great for the Champions Tour.

This is our 17th event of the season this year. We probably had some of the strongest competition we've ever had, and Ernie may be able to allude to this a little bit. Jerry Kelly won last week the Senior Open. Stewart Cink has won three times this year, he's the leading money winner going into this week. And then a rookie at age 50, a rookie on our tour, Zach Johnson, has also won three times. So the competition's been fantastic.

We talked about the Hall of Fame members in the field. We have five Hall of Fame members. Combined, this field has over 470 victories in professional golf. Think about that, that's pretty amazing. And they're all here this week hopefully to show off this wonderful golf course that Ernie did.

Ernie, I have to thank you for bringing this to us. He was very adamant when he mentioned it probably three-plus years ago. He said, "I've got something good for you." This is going to be better than good, this is going to be great for our tour. We look forward to a fantastic week here with all of our wonderful partners. Thank you.

TODD RHINEHART: Thank you, Miller. As you mentioned, this has been a vision of an incredible gentleman, but also his wife Liezl. They put their heart and soul into this event. I've met with them many times up in Jupiter, Florida, talking about details of the event, player wives' activities. They're incredible to work with and it's my pleasure to introduce Ernie Els.

ERNIE ELS: Thank you very much, Todd.

I recognize the main table here, the dignitaries. Thank you very much for all your help. As John and Miller said, this has been a team effort from the go.

My history with this area goes back quite a bit, more than 20 years we've been living in the U.K. and this was our holiday destination. So I was very familiar with the area. And then when I heard what the Arrow Group was doing down here and they contacted me through my previous associate, Thomas Rubi, who's working for Arrow now, I knew about this golf course. They said they had a big stake in this area, they wanted to revamp a lot of it, so they saw the value in golf.

Hence, where I come into the equation. We have a design company, myself and Greg Letsche. Greg, stand up. He's done a lot of work.

So it was an old Arnold Palmer golf course, one of my heros. That put a lot of attention on us because you don't want to screw up a great Arnold Palmer golf course either, but we also needed to put out a great one, which Arrow gave us the leeway for.

So we went to work. The foot was right down, accelerator was down all the time. We had a budget to work with. Finally, me and John laugh about it because it was a moving



target, but we got into the budget eventually so we were very proud of that. I think we have a really good product.

As Miller and you guys mentioned here, we've got some great players here this week. From the get-go again, I felt like I wanted to build a championship golf course but also one for everyone to enjoy. I was very particular in some of the design, for most of you that we put down we wanted to have a (inaudible) to basically run the ball into the green, you have to have an option. And now I'm getting there soon. I'm still putting it in the air nice, but at some point I'm going to play the ball on the ground, so we tried to really incorporate every skill player.

As it went on, we wanted to have a Champions Tour event. My boss-man next to me, Miller, we started talking to him. And we do play some events outside of the United States. I felt this was going to be the perfect venue. John Calvao had the vision here to make it a destination of tourism for people who love the game of golf, families. Basically the way we enjoyed our holidays from the U.K., that's what we want to recreate here.

So we're on our way. This is kind of the first big project, to put a golf course down. And there's a lot of attention, and then you bring in these great players that Miller was talking about.

We've got Bernhard Langer. We all know who Bernhard Langer is. He's 67 years of age and he beats his age every round he plays. So I think he'll do that a couple of times this week. But he's one of many, many great champions.

We feel the Portuguese public, you've had a great event here in the past and now you're going to have another event here for the next four years with all the partners we have here. so we're very excited.

I couldn't really sleep last night much knowing I've got to face you guys today, but I feel very confident, very proud to be sitting here to have pulled this one off. As John says, we've had some seriously professional people involved, still have, and a big influx of local community working this golf course, working this project, working this facility. So we're very proud to incorporate our local people also.

My Portuguese is not great, I'm sorry, I'll work on it, but thank you very much and enjoy your week.

TODD RHINEHART: Thank you, Ernie. It's my pleasure to introduce Andre Gomes, president with Turismo do Algarve.

ANDRÉ GOMES: Good morning, everyone. It's a great pleasure of course to welcome you to the Algarve for this first edition of the Portugal Invitational.

I would like to first thank to (inaudible) Secretary of State of Tourism Pedro Machado, Telmo Pinto, Ernie Els of course, Miller Brady, the president of the PGA TOUR



Champions, John Calvao and Arrow Global, partners, sponsors, players, guests and members of the media that are joining us here today.

For the Algarve (inaudible) hosting the European debut of the PGA TOUR Champions, it's a major milestone of course. We believe it is a strong recognition of our region of one of Europe's leading golf destinations and also Portugal's growing role in the international golf world.

In fact, like Ernie was saying, it's the comeback of the Algarve to the international events on golf. The Algarve in fact has a long and success history of golf. We have, as you see, world-class courses, excellent hotels, year-round sunshine, strong (inaudible) activity. Take the chance to say hello to our (inaudible) this year also with us and a destination experience that goes far beyond (inaudible). Players, fans, visitors, families will find here for sure not only great golf but also outstanding hospitality, our beaches, nature, culture, everything that we have to offer and the quality of life we have here of course at the Algarve.

This tournament is also important for us because it brings together two major important segments that are very important for us regarding the work that we have been doing and of course international promotion. Events of this level help us to attract new audiences, reach strategic markets and show the Algarve as a destination prepared to welcome high quality international events.

We are especially pleased to see these events take place here in Vilamoura, an area strongly associated not only with golf but also with tourism, with lifestyle. In fact, the (inaudible) Vilamoura takes a new level of quality to regions of golf offered and provides excellent (inaudible) for a tournament of this caliber.

The Portugal Invitational clearly shows the direction we want for the tourism. We are focused growing in a smart way, raising quality, being more sustainable, offering greater diversity in attracting visitors while creating real value for the region.

I would also like to highlight something that was already referred to here, the importance of partnership. I think it's the key for our success. Bringing PGA TOUR Champions to the Algarve for the first time have only been possible through a strong collaboration with the private and public sectors. The division of (inaudible,) the division of Algarve, the municipality Loulé, Arrow Global, PGA TOUR Champions, Ernie Els and all the teams involved.

To the players (indiscernible) an excellent tournament of course. To the media, thank you a lot for helping us share this story to the world. I hope you enjoy not only the Portugal Invitational but the all that our region has to offer to you.

So thank you again for being here. I hope you have a pleasant stay with us during these next couple days. Thank you and welcome to the Algarve.



TODD RHINEHART: Thanks, André. As you mentioned, truly the eyes of the world will be on the Algarve and Portugal as this event will be broadcast to over 170 countries and territories worldwide starting Friday.

It's my pleasure now to introduce Carlos Abade, president of Turismo de Portugal.

CARLOS ABADE: (Speaking Portuguese.)

When the opportunity to bring the PGA TOUR Champions to Portugal first emerged, we have no doubts. We immediately recognized the potential of this tournament to (inaudible) This event marks the return of major international golf tournaments to the Algarve, a region that has long established itself as one of the nation's leading golf destinations. Golf is a (inaudible) product of Portugal. It generates more than 4 billion euros annually, represents around 1.6 percent of the GDP and plays a vital role in attracting visitors throughout the year. Helping to (indiscernible.)

The impact of this tournament will be highly significant, estimated economic impact of up to 45 million euros benefiting hospitality, restaurants and local business.

But the impact goes far beyond the economy. We are talking about the broadcast in more than 170 countries with the potential to reach over 80 million viewers and generate media exposure worth up to 20 million euros per edition.

This is an extraordinary opportunity to showcase Portugal and the Algarve across key international markets. Hosting the PGA TOUR Champions will help us change (inaudible) to showcase Portugal and the Algarve across key international markets. Hosting the PGA TOUR Champions will help us change our position in our traditional European markets (indiscernible) while also increasing our visibility in our potential markets such as United States supported by the direct connections that bring our countries closer than ever.

I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to all those that have made this project possible. Ernie Els, Miller Brady, John Calvao, Pedro Machado, Secretary of State for Tourism. Your commitment, vision and confidence have been instrumental in bringing this prestigious event to Portugal. Portugal continues to establish itself as a destination that is high quality, authentic, sustainable and welcoming. A destination that offers exactly what today's most discerning (inaudible) are looking for, quality, safety, hospitality, beautiful landscapes and memorable experiences.

Let me conclude by wishing everyone an excellent tournament and I hope that all our guests, players, partners and visitors take the opportunity to enjoy and discover the very best of Algarve and Portugal both on and off the golf course. Thank you very much.

TODD RHINEHART: Thank you, Carlos. As you mentioned, it really takes an army to pull an event off like this. When PGA TOUR tournaments and PGA TOUR Champions events are held worldwide, we work very close with the local municipalities to pull an event of this magnitude off, so it's my pleasure to introduce Telmo Pinto, mayor of Loulé Council.



TELMO PINTO: Good morning, everyone. I'll be speaking Portuguese. (Speaking Portuguese.)

TODD RHINEHART: Thank you, Telmo.

It's really an honor today to have the Secretary of State of Tourism, Pedro Machado, here today. Pedro?

PEDRO MACHADO: (Speaking Portuguese.)

Of course I have to say some words in English. It is my pleasure of course to be here to meet you today to mark the PGA TOUR Champions. I would like to begin my thanking you for being patient and thanking everyone who made it possible (inaudible).

A special word for the (indiscernible) from Portugal whose dedication was instrumental in making this (inaudible). Above all I would like to thank Miller Brady for confidence in Portugal. Of course John Calvão and Arrow Global, this is a contribution (inaudible) Ernie Els, who's international career (inaudible).

To each and every one of you, my sincere thanks. This event is an excellent (inaudible) for both the Algarve and Portugal. We are hosting the competition with outstanding international reach broadcast in more than 170 countries, attracting an audience of around 80 million viewers, generating over 220 hours of television coverage and engaging millions of followers worldwide. It is an event with an economic impact to reach 45 million euros.

More important than those figures, however, is what they represent. A unique opportunity to showcase Portugal to a highly qualified international audience that values quality, lifestyle, history, safety, climate and excellence of our tourism. Golf is one of Portugal's (inaudible) and plays a particularly important role in the Algarve helping to enhance the destination's appeal. Welcome to the PGA TOUR Champions (inaudible) global benchmark for golf (inaudible) with a world-class (inaudible.) Recognize international over the coming years events across different sectors and disciplines will be one of the main (inaudible) in Portugal. This is for us a priority for the government. Events are (inaudible) capable for (inaudible) the markets bringing visitors and quality and (inaudible) of Portugal's tourism offer. Whether in sport, culture, wine, technology or music, events generate benefits that extend far behind the days of which they place leaving a lasting legacy for destinations, business and communities. That's why we have extended our support for organizing major events. I would like (inaudible) Portugal events which was 45 million in 2026 and 2027, support for 643 events, that (inaudible) more than 380 million of investment.

We already have outstanding calendar of events for the years ahead. 2027 FIFA World Cup, the F1 and (inaudible) in Algarve, the PGA TOUR Champions, the Ocean Race, the (inaudible) Summit, the Michelin guide, the major music festival and many other



international (inaudible.) Together they (inaudible) new markets, new investments. Portugal offers exceptional conditions to host world-class events. Safety, talent, infrastructure, community (inaudible) and tourism recognized around the world. Above all, however, we have an extraordinary capacity to welcome visitors. It is this combination that makes Portugal one of the world's destinations to visit and invest in our events. I wish this edition of the Portugal PGA TOUR Champions success.

To all guests and visitors, I hope you enjoy the tournament, the Algarve and our extraordinary (inaudible), a very, very warm welcome to Portugal. Thanks.

TODD RHINEHART: Thank you, Pedro, and thank all our distinguished guests today for their remarks and their partnership.

We would also like to thank the Els Club Vilamoura, the members and staff to give up their golf course this week to the top 78 players. They've been a tremendous asset to work with and we look forward to sharing this week with you.

At this time we'll open it up to some questions from the media.

Q. This question is for you, John. If you can tell us a little bit about the expectations in terms of spectators this week and what will be the atmosphere, what are your thoughts about (inaudible)?

JOHN CALVÃO: I think it's going to be well attended. I don't know how many thousands of people will be here. We certainly have eyes on at least 5,000 a day or so, which would be very good for a first-time event here in the Portugal region. There are lots of people vacationing, so there are lots of people down here who enjoy golf and are spending their family time down here anyway.

We've tried to add some family events and family things to do during this event, face painting and things for kids in some of our tents and some of our activities with the activation of our playhouse (inaudible). Things for kids to do and family.

We obviously have great gastronomy out there in food trucks and other places. We have (inaudible) villages to visit. We expect it to be very well attended. We do have a lot of people on the list so they expect that they do come. It's a first-time event and we have to remember that as well and we're perfectly conscious of that. But with a field like this, I think we're going to see a lot of people here.

Q. For John or Miller, I want to know if you talk during last night or another time about the possibility that in the future it bring to Portugal Tiger Woods. My second question is for Pedro Machado. I want to know if supporting this strong tournament if you are thinking in the future and the possibility of present a (inaudible) for 2035 or '39.



MILLER BRADY: Tiger who? We get asked that question often and I know Ernie gets asked that question often. I know first and foremost we want Tiger to be healthy, right? For his family, for his own long-term health. We do believe that once he is fully healthy that Tiger is going to come out and want to still compete, and I think he has a lot of relationships with players. So will we one day see Tiger? Possibly, but I don't want to guarantee anything.

ERNIE ELS: Can I say something? He's always welcome, he knows that. We had the discussion (inaudible) champions Tour and he asked me about (inaudible) and he started warming to it. He's a busy guy, he's got a lot of responsibility. He's always been very (inaudible) shifting, shifting around the last four or five years, a lot of stuff behind the scenes. I'll keep knocking on his door. I think this is the type of golf course that would really suit him. (Inaudible).

PEDRO MACHADO: As you know, we have F-1 in 2027 and '28. We have the (inaudible) We have the Ocean Race, '26, '27 (inaudible) and of course we are on the road to (inaudible). If we have the opportunity, we are working on that.

Q. Just one question as it has been a big team effort and finally it is here. In one word, what is your main feeling now?

ERNIE ELS: Very thankful, very excited, I think it's, you know, it's taken a long time, but yeah, the Champions Tour is here. Yeah, very excited.

MILLER BRADY: What I would say for me is grateful, grateful for the opportunity for me to showcase our wonderful players in Portugal and experience the warm hospitality of the region.

JOHN CALVÃO: (Inaudible) Excited is not the right word probably. Finally. Starting with Ernie, he's under budget after the third revision of the budget. You should come work for us, Ernie. (inaudible). Excited is the right word, too. We've finally gotten to this point. Everyone is super anxious to just get this tournament going. As everybody said, there's so many people involved in this to get to this point but at the same time everybody's had a lot of fun. And you should not do this if you're not having fun and it has been a very fun process.

This is a first for us at Arrow, for myself personally, just getting to know everybody and really having a chance to hang out. I think I could say they're my friends. I think Ernie's my friend, I'm not sure, but I think just having this friendship outside of the serious work environment has been really cool from an environment perspective.

PEDRO MACHADO: In a word, let's play golf.

TELMO PINTO: Just happy because when you see that we have all of this investment and we have this event, like this one, talk about Formula 1 (inaudible) in Vilamoura so we can say not just Algarve but the region (inaudible) so when we see that we arrive



here in the end because it was a (inaudible) that John start talking a lot of time ago and we see that it's happened and we are glad.

CARLOS ABADE: I feel a huge enthusiasm and a little bit of a relief. But it's been several months preparing, working together with all of you, so it's very good to be here. Enthusiasm and a little bit of relief.

ANDRÉ GOMES: Very honored, honored to be part of this and honored to be part of this region and having the possibility to give a little bit of contribution for the development and wealth of this region. Thank you.

TODD RHINEHART: We're honored to have all you here today. We're going to carry on that theme. We're going to have a little tour with all our distinguished guests, including going by the clubhouse, and we'll have a photo with the trophy. So thank you for being here. We look forward to a great week and let's play golf.

