

PADRAIG HARRINGTON (-4)

Q. Nice score, Padraig. What was working well for you today?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Yeah, I kind of (inaudible) to the game coming into it. You know, I played okay, holed a putt or two early on.

It's an interesting course. There's a couple of shots you've got to hit well on it, some par 3s are tough. And then there's plenty of opportunities if you could -- probably six or seven holes if you played them well, the rest give up some opportunities. I think I kept myself out of trouble on those holes. You know, you feel like you could have done a few more on the other ones.

Q. Would it be fair to say that having played in Europe a little bit, your short game has struggled a bit, did you notice a difference here today or this week with your short game?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I think I came back out of lockdown and I've been hitting the ball off the tee the best I've ever hit it and I've been putting well. My irons and my wedges haven't been good and again my wedges were poor today. So I'm in a nice place, I don't feel in any shape or form that I outplayed myself today. So we'll see how the rest of the week is.

Q. Being the first group out, that's kind of unique.

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: First time ever being the first tee time ever in my life. Never been out first on a Thursday or Friday.

Q. What was that like for you?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: It was nice. You know, it's nice, I have no problem getting up and get going. You know what, I probably changed over the years. If this was 10 years ago I would probably be getting up three and a half hours before my tee time, I would be doing all the physio and training and all sorts of stuff. Now at my age I just get up and I do a few stretches and off. I could go on a much quicker time frame, so I really don't mind that early tee time.

Q. You mentioned the Port Royal course already and the uniqueness, but what were your thoughts on coming to Bermuda? Why are you here and what do you like about this place?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I won here the last time I was here in 2013, so obviously I have

good memories. You know, before I played the four in Europe, I drove to those four events. I think once you're out, it whets your appetite and you want to keep going. I've got two tournaments here, I've got an invite next week in Houston, so it was a great opportunity to come and play another two events. I'll probably shut it down then because the fact that I don't want to be flying back and forth at this time. So coming to play the two events is nice. And Bermuda, as I said, I don't think you could be anywhere in the world where you feel safer, like it really is -- they've done a great job here. I'm sure it's a really nice place at any time, but in COVID times it is a spectacular place to be.

Q. You made half a dozen birdies today. What was your best birdie today you made?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: You know, two reasonable runs at eagles on the two par 5s, so they were probably the best ones. That was nice. Probably the most satisfying birdie, I holed a long putt on 6. So I hit a bad wedge in and spun it down the tier. And you know what, that easily was the most important birdie because I've been playing -- I played the first five holes well, 1 under and feeling like I need to be doing better. I was frustrated with my pitch on 6. You know, I'm starting to get -- then I hole a putt, birdie the next par 5 and all of a sudden I'm 3 under, which you go from being a bit disappointed to all of a sudden you're right in play. So that putt on 6 was a big putt.

Q. How do you balance the Ryder Cup duties with playing?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Right now it's very quiet with Ryder Cup duties. It's kind of all about me now at the moment. Come first of January and the points start up again, obviously there will be a bit more detail. I think how do I balance it? Basically I'm older and I know I can't do as much, so that's it, yeah. I'm not -- I just have to take it a little bit easier and not, you know, do my old schedule and that kind of suits the Ryder Cup because I'm busy with that.

Q. You mentioned the start next week in Houston. Just talk about your schedule a little bit for the rest of the year.

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: That's it, and PNC Father & Son. Look, I would like to play RSM, I would like to play Mayakoba, but flying back and forth, you know, I don't have places to stay so going back home. If they were back-to-back, you know, I would love to be there, but I don't think so. Traveling from Ireland, it's a long way to be in a tin can at this stage, to be dealing with almost 10-hour flights or more and then connections and things. I'm going to have to satisfy myself with this and Houston.

Q. And last one, we're all creeping up in age, you're getting close to that 50 mark. Do you have an eye on the Champions Tour seeing what Phil and everybody's doing out there, and Furyk?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: I do look at the scores. Possibly even before the PGA TOUR scores, I look at the Champions Tour scores. I don't know what that tells you.

I would play wherever I think I could win and that's it. So if I don't think I can win out here, I won't play here. I'm not here to turn out, I'm here to try and win, and wherever I'm playing, in my head I think I can win.

I'm kind of aware that you go to the Champions Tour, you don't come back. I would like to be winning tournaments and if I'm not competing out here, I would love to -- I actually think the Champions Tour, shooting 20 under par, you know, my problem on the regular tour is the length of the golf courses. There's no -- it's not distance, it's holing putts and things like that. I have seen a few guys go to the Champions Tour and they seem to have a miraculous cure for their putting. I'm hoping that happens to me. To shoot 20 under par for three rounds on any golf course, you've got to be playing well, holing putts, hitting good wedges. Yeah, got to work on a few of my weaknesses.

Q. You said you've been driving it some of the best in your life. What do you attribute that to and whatever you done that's helped you with that?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: You know, I've always worked on my driving and always try to get more speed, more speed. With the work I've done on my driving, in training I got lots more speed so I can play well within myself on the course. So it's not like I can get 196 ball speed at home, I'm not getting anything near that. At the speeds I'm getting, I'm getting it with a very controlled shorter swing. So it means that on a nice distance, now I hit it straight, which I haven't hit it straight. This is really -- like the last tournament I played in Europe, I led strokes gained off the tee, which that's never happened.

Q. You said you would go somewhere where you think you could win. After today's round, what do you think you need to do to be able to be in the mix for Saturday and Sunday?

PADRAIG HARRINGTON: Nothing different. Just, unfortunately, to win a golf tournament, it requires certain things to fall into place, breaks, this, that and the other. So actually winning, that's nearly outside your hands. All I need to know is that the game I'm playing, if things fall into place, I can win with. I spent the last couple years struggling on cut lines, now I feel like I can be patient and still be in contention on Sunday.