

November 1, 2007

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An Interview With:

PAUL McGINLEY

GORDON SIMPSON: Paul, very well played today, very difficult conditions, but clearly you've done well right here again as in the past.

PAUL McGINLEY: Yeah, obviously I'm very pleased. You know, I was hovering along, 1-over, probably going to shoot 72 and be somewhere around 20th position or 25th position and then I went two-two and all of the sudden it's a great day. I'm very happy and obviously very good finish.

GORDON SIMPSON: Tell us about 3-under on the two holes.

PAUL McGINLEY: 15, 235, I hit 2-iron and hit it 15 feet from the hole.

And then 16, I hit 3-wood down the middle of the fairway. I had 155 to the pin, 9-iron, pitched it 157 three yards from the hole.

Q. Does that tell you that something's changed?

PAUL McGINLEY: I mean, it is nice to get a great score. You know, that's the bottom line. As I say, I was going along, 1-over par, probably finish 20th, 25th for the day and all of the sudden two holes doesn't make your summer and all of a sudden I'm back and I'm playing great.

I played okay. I kept the ball in play. I putted okay. I didn't putt great but I putted okay. I hit the ball great, good attitude and I knew it was going to be a tough day. Stayed in the present and, you know, if I had shot 1-over, still would have been pleased as well. But I mean, obviously my game hasn't been good enough for the whole season and it's something I'm going to work out obviously on getting right and it's been a very disappointing year, it's just not getting away from that. I think it's my worst year ever on Tour apart from my year as a rookie, I don't remember being so far down on the Order of Merit.

But it's not the fact that I've played horrendously. I just haven't had any good weeks.

I think I've missed three cuts, which is a very low percentage by anybody's standards, but I haven't had a Top-10. I haven't had a big check. 14th position is my best finish all season. Even the Open where I played very well, I still finished 19th shooting 73 on Sunday went from third to 19th. There haven't been any big checks and big checks are what put you up the Order of Merit and up the World Rankings. It's not like my game has fallen off dramatically, it hasn't. I just had any good weeks and that's why I'm languishing down on the Order of Merit.

Q. With the Ryder Cup points available this week and World Ranking points, does that make it more --

PAUL McGINLEY: I don't know. There's so many rumours going around about it, I really don't know. Ask David Garland, he said, yes, it can, so I really don't know. I don't know. I'm not getting involved. As I say, I'm not particularly worried. Let's get the points on the board and then worry about it afterwards.

From my understanding, the decision made by the committee and the decision made by the Tour was that they didn't want anybody, me included, who has come here as a past champion to count on the Order of Merit, for example, say Ronan Rafferty comes second this weekend and he gets his card and the guy who doesn't get his card last week at 115th is now 116th, and that's why it doesn't count on the Order of Merit.

Q. Do you think one shot makes it --

PAUL McGINLEY: I don't think one particular shot, but certainly a finish. A good finish, I made that Ryder Cup Team for Detroit and again I was having a very mediocre season up to the Irish Open and finished fourth there, fifth there, and then took off for ten weeks in a row and played super and made the team on the mark. One shot doesn't make it but certainly a finish would be great, a good, high finish and points on the board.

As I say, points have been coming in in

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small numbers and haven't been coming in in big numbers and big numbers are what determine your World Ranking. Your big finishes determine your World Ranking and big finishes determine your Order of Merit.

Q. Is there a reason you think you haven't played well?

PAUL MCGINLEY: I really don't know. I haven't played well enough, that's the bottom line. I mean, there's no getting away from it. I know what I'm capable of doing and I haven't played to a high enough standard. I can't blame any other reason.

I don't feel I've swung the club particularly well this year. I got a little confused with the way I was doing my golf swing and I'm going to put quite a lot of work in it and become quite clear in what I'm doing. I haven't played well enough, that's the bottom line. It's not the fact that I need a reason. I haven't produced the shots. I haven't produced the golf to get me in those positions.

The Open I did, to be honest, I played really, really well. I was very disappointed to finish 19th because I played so much better than 19th that week. But take that week out of the equation, there's not another week that I can say, God I played well that week and I walked away from The Open disappointed, for myself, that I played so much better than 19th. On Sunday I shot 73 and there were nine guys that finished one shot ahead of me so maybe one shot better I might have been Top-10 but that's the way it was.

In the whole contesting of Irish, it was a very good week.

Q.

PAUL MCGINLEY: Maybe so. Maybe so. Really honestly am not thinking about it on the golf course and it's not something that's giving me a whole lot of grief. Yeah, it's taken a bit longer than normal, than what I've wanted but it's turned out beautiful. It's turned out the way we wanted and we're pretty much -- virtually a very small number, so it has not caused more than what we expected.

The fact that I went down longer, but I don't really think it's had an effect. Maybe at a subconscious level, yeah, maybe. Maybe so.

Q. Did knowing that you would get Ryder Cup points help you to make the decision?

PAUL MCGINLEY: The longer I did the job, the more I went down the road of doing it, the more I realised it was a drain on my energy and

something that I wasn't really free. Hopefully there will be times in the future when I can do it again but I wanted to nip it in the bud and get to doing it more my own thing. Down the road maybe I can be part of the Ryder Cup captaincies but I don't think I'm ready for that yet.

Just the fact that, you know, there was a pre excursion thing to have a look, like see the hotel, see the clothes, see the golf course, what it would all be like, get all that.

Now to be honest, if I was captain, I would be missing maybe two tournaments on the Tour and it's not like me to not give the job 100% and miss something as big as that.

And then the Seve Trophy was the same thing as well, too. There was other players going for the same position that I'm going for and I thought it was a bit of a conflict of interest so I stepped aside to do my own thing.

Q. How tough is it? Is this a really good score?

PAUL MCGINLEY: Yeah, yeah, it is a really good score. I did I play fantastically well? No. Did I play very well? Yes. You need a lot of ball control out there. The fairways are so slow, and the rough is higher than I've ever seen it in the Valderrama. So hitting the fairways is imperative. So when you've got a crosswind into these narrow fairways, you need to be holding the ball into the wind and working it into the wind so it lands softly on the fairway. So it demands a level of a lot of skill today. So it's a real good test, yeah.

Q. What are the knock-on effects of slipping down the Order of Merit that you've noticed?

PAUL MCGINLEY: The knock-on effects obviously you're not in the big tournaments. You know you're not in the majors and the world events. As we stand now, I'm only into one world event and a major next year, and that's the Bridgestone in Firestone. So I've fallen a long way. I've fallen a hell of a long way.

But it's a competitive business and a competitive game. I've got no complaints. I don't feel that I deserve to be in those things because I've played poor enough to be out of them. I have no excuses. Tone of voice play better. I have to perform better and I have to get some big finishes. Big finishes determine your Order of Merit position more than anything else. And big finishes

determine your World Ranking more than anything else.

As I say, per cent of the tournaments I've played this year, I've earned World Ranking points. Okay, they have been small, one point or two points or three points or five points or whatever, and yet I've fallen like a stone in the World Rankings. The World Rankings and the Order of Merit is much more -- particularly the World Rankings, it's much more beneficial to go five missed cuts in a row and second and five missed cuts again and finishing 15th or 40th every single week. You get far more weeks in that 11-week period having one second place than you would finishing 30th every week and that's the penalty I've paid this year.

Q. Are you getting tired of people saying, what's happening or what do they say?

PAUL MCGINLEY: It's an understandable thing to say, no question. If it was a football team, I'd be asking questions as well, too. It's understandable, the public eye and the public business, it's been tough. But as I say I'm determined to come back and I know there's a lot more golf left in me and I've got to get to the bottom of it.

Q. Do you think that score will stand, 2-under?

PAUL MCGINLEY: No, I think somebody will get to 3, maybe 4.

Q. It is very tough?

PAUL MCGINLEY: It is very tough and obviously the greens at Valderrama are notoriously more difficult in the afternoon than in the morning when they are cut up. If you are down low on the Order of Merit, you have an advantage going out first. It's unlike Formula 1 where the best driver seems to get pole position. That's what I can't figure out whereas here you've got the guys worst down the Order of Merit go down first and get the best conditions. Normally the wind isn't up, although it was this morning and the greens are obviously a lot smoother in the morning than they are in the afternoon.

GORDON SIMPSON: One thing is for certain, you won't be first out tomorrow.

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