

2006 RYDER CUP PREVIEW

WHO HAS THE EDGE?

TEAM USA

CHAD CAMPBELL

- Age: 32
- World ranking: 23
- Ryder Cups: 2004
- Ryder Cup record: 1-2-0
- PGA Tour victories: 3
- Majors: None

STEWART CINK

- Age: 33
- World ranking: 23
- Ryder Cups: 2002, 2004
- Ryder Cup record: 2-4-1
- PGA Tour victories: 4
- Majors: None

CHRIS DIMARCO

- Age: 38
- World ranking: 15
- Ryder Cups: 2004
- Ryder Cup record: 2-1-1
- PGA Tour victories: 3
- Majors: None

JIM FURYK

- Age: 36
- World ranking: 2
- Ryder Cups: 1997, 1999, 2002, 2004
- Ryder Cup record: 4-9-2
- PGA Tour victories: 12
- Majors: 1

J.J. HENRY

- Age: 31
- World ranking: 62
- Ryder Cups: Rookie
- Ryder Cup record: 0-0-0
- PGA Tour victories: 1
- Majors: None

ZACH JOHNSON

- Age: 30
- World ranking: 40
- Ryder Cups: Rookie
- Ryder Cup record: 0-0-0
- PGA Tour victories: 1
- Majors: None

PHIL MICKELSON

- Age: 36
- World ranking: 3
- Ryder Cups: 1995, 1997, 1999, 2002, 2004
- Ryder Cup record: 9-8-3
- PGA Tour victories: 29
- Majors: 3

VAUGHN TAYLOR

- Age: 30
- World ranking: 59
- Ryder Cups: Rookie
- Ryder Cup record: 0-0-0
- PGA Tour victories: 2
- Majors: None

DAVID TOMS

- Age: 39
- World ranking: 14
- Ryder Cups: 2002, 2004
- Ryder Cup record: 4-3-1
- PGA Tour victories: 12
- Majors: 1

SCOTT VERPLANK

- Age: 42
- World ranking: 34
- Ryder Cups: 2002
- Ryder Cup record: 2-1-0
- PGA Tour victories: 4
- Majors: None

BRETT WETTERICH

- Age: 33
- World ranking: 65
- Ryder Cups: Rookie
- Ryder Cup record: 0-0-0
- PGA Tour victories: 1
- Majors: None

TIGER WOODS

- Age: 30
- World ranking: 1
- Ryder Cups: 1997, 1999, 2002, 2004
- Ryder Cup record: 7-11-2
- PGA Tour victories: 53
- Majors: 12

TEAM EUROPE

PAUL CASEY

- Age: 29 • Country: England
- World ranking: 27
- Ryder Cups: 2004
- Ryder Cup record: 1-1-0
- Career victories: 6
- Majors: None

DARREN CLARKE

- Age: 38 • Country: Northern Ireland
- World ranking: 21
- Ryder Cups: 1997, 1999, 2002, 2004
- Ryder Cup record: 7-7-3
- Career victories: 15
- Majors: Majors

LUKE DONALD

- Age: 28 • Country: England
- World ranking: 10
- Ryder Cups: 2004
- Ryder Cup record: 2-1-1
- Career victories: 4
- Majors: None

SERGIO GARCIA

- Age: 26 • Country: Spain
- World ranking: 8
- Ryder Cups: 1999, 2002, 2004
- Ryder Cup record: 10-3-2
- Career victories: 13
- Majors: None

PADRAIG HARRINGTON

- Age: 35 • Country: Ireland
- World ranking: 17
- Ryder Cups: 1999, 2002, 2004
- Ryder Cup record: 7-4-1
- Career victories: 14
- Majors: None

DAVID HOWELL

- Age: 31 • Country: England
- World ranking: 12
- Ryder Cups: 2004
- Ryder Cup record: 1-1-0
- Career victories: 5
- Majors: None

ROBERT KARLSSON

- Age: 37 • Country: Sweden
- World ranking: 44
- Ryder Cups: Rookie
- Ryder Cup record: 0-0-0
- Career victories: 7
- Majors: None

PAUL MCGINLEY

- Age: 39 • Country: Ireland
- World ranking: 52
- Ryder Cups: 2002, 2004
- Ryder Cup record: 2-1-3
- Career victories: 8
- Majors: None

COLIN MONTGOMERIE

- Age: 43 • Country: Scotland
- World ranking: 16
- Ryder Cups: 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2002, 2004
- Ryder Cup record: 19-8-5
- Career victories: 33
- Majors: None

JOSE MARIA OLAZABAL

- Age: 40 • Country: Spain
- World ranking: 18
- Ryder Cups: 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993, 1997, 1999
- Ryder Cup record: 15-8-5
- Career victories: 29
- Majors: Masters (1994, 1999)

HENRIK STENSON

- Age: 30 • Country: Sweden
- World ranking: 11
- Ryder Cups: Rookie
- Ryder Cup record: 0-0-0
- Career victories: 4
- Majors: None

LEE WESTWOOD

- Age: 33 • Country: England
- World ranking: 47
- Ryder Cups: 1997, 1999, 2002, 2004
- Ryder Cup record: 11-8-1
- Career victories: 26
- Majors: None

BY STAN AWTRY
Cox News Service

Atlanta
On Monday morning 24 of the best golfers in the world will arrive in Dublin, Ireland, for the Ryder Cup, a biennial event that has managed to grow in stature and importance even though no prize money is at stake.

The European team has won the last two competitions and four of the last five. All 23 betting services posted at oddschecker.com, have the Europeans favored, typically at 5-to-6 odds. But since golf is such a unique sport with numerous variables, a case can be made for either team as they compete Sept. 22-24 at the K Club outside Dublin.

CURTIS COMPTON / Cox News Service

Tiger Woods has been on a such a hot streak lately that he may be able to single handedly lead the U.S. team to a victory in the 36th Ryder Cup.

Why the United States will win

1. Tiger Woods is actively engaged in the process and wants to win. Never before has the world's No. 1 player been so fired-up about the Ryder Cup. Despite his first-round loss in the World Match Play Championships, would anyone be surprised if he won all five of his matches?

2. Tom Lehman is properly handing the captaincy. Unlike Hal Sutton and his "bag of hammers" approach, Lehman has gone about the job the right way. He's talked to the players throughout the selection process and is a calming influence.

3. The pressure is off. For the first time, the Americans are the underdogs. They can approach the matches with a nothing-to-lose attitude, which should reduce the tension early in the week.

4. There's a rash of dissension among the Europeans. Colin Montgomerie was yammering at Jose Maria Olazabal. Thomas Bjorn had some harsh words about not being a captain's choice. And captain Ian Woosnam is a wee ticked about former European captain Bernhard Langer offering advice to Lehman. Unity, always a European strength, seems to be eroding.

5. The rookies will be assets, not liabilities. Zach Johnson, Brett Wetterich, J.J. Henry and Vaughn Taylor have all won on the PGA Tour. What they're missing is a losing history in regards to the Ryder Cup; they've never been on the losing team.

Why the Europeans will win

FACTS AND FIGURES

- Event: 36th Ryder Cup matches.
- Dates: Sept. 22-24.
- Venue: The K Club (Palmer Course).
- Defending champion: Europe.
- Series: U.S. leads, 24-9-2.
- Streaking: Europe has won four of the last five times.
- Format: Four foursomes (alternate shot) and four fourballs (better ball) matches each of the first two days. Twelve 18-hole singles matches on Sunday. One point for each victory, a half-point for a tie. Because Europe holds the cup, it needs only 14 points to win.
- Captains: Tom Lehman (United States), Ian Woosnam (Europe).
- Television (all times EDT): Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., USA Network. Saturday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., NBC Sports. Sunday, 7 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., NBC Sports.

Crenshaw and Lee Janzen. You don't want to meet Montie on the telex on Sunday.

5. The win-one-for Darren campaign. All golf fans are aware that Clarke's wife, Heather, succumbed to breast cancer a month ago. This could turn into a misguided, although effective, motivational factor.

HOLE-BY-HOLE

Hole	Yards	Par	Comment
1	418	4	Most players will use a fairway metal and aim toward the bunker down the left side.
2	413	4	An easy birdie hole, as long as the tee shot can avoid small fairway bunker on the left.
3	170	3	Anything long might find a bunker behind the green, which will make for a tough par.
4	568	5	Any tee shot too far to the right will require a fade around another group of trees.
5	440	4	The prevailing wind is left to right and into the player, so a draw would be ideal off the tee.
6	478	4	Anything in the rough likely will make it tough to get the second shot over the water.
7	430	4	A small bunker is between the water and the green, which has a slope in the middle.
8	173	4	An elongated bunker approaches the green on the left and is the true strength of this hole.
9	461	4	Two bunkers are short and right of the green, and another one is to the left.
10	584	5	A slight dogleg, but otherwise a par 5 that can be reached in two by the big hitters.
11	450	4	There's a sharp dogleg to the right, with trees lining the preferred left side of the fairway.
12	182	3	The putting surface has two tiers and slopes from the right to the left.
13	428	4	Any drive should go about 270 yards to get a good look at the green.
14	213	3	A strong par 3 with no gimmicks. The prevailing wind is into the player's face.
15	446	4	It doesn't look like much from the tee, but birdies might be rare.
16	555	5	The green is some 40 yards long, allowing for plenty of hole locations.
17	424	4	Perhaps no other tee shot will jangle the nerves as much.
18	537	5	The shortest of the par 5s, but it might be the toughest because of the pressure.

Out: Par: 35; Yardage: 3,551. In: Par: 37; Yardage: 3,784. Total: Par: 72; Yardage: 7,335.

PAST RESULTS

Year	winner	Site	USA	Europe/GB
2004	Europe	Oakland Hills CC, Bloomfield Township, MI	9 1/2	18 1/2
2002	Europe	Sutton Coldfield, England	12 1/2	15 1/2
1999	USA	The Country Club, Brookline, MA	14 1/2	13 1/2
1997	Europe	Valderama GC, Sotogrande Spain	13 1/2	14 1/2
1995	Europe	Oak Hill CC, Rochester, NY	13 1/2	14 1/2
1993	USA	The Belfry, Sutton Coldfield, Eng	15	13
1991	USA	The Ocean Course, Kiawah Island, S.C.	14 1/2	13 1/2
1989	Tie	The Belfry, Sutton Coldfield, Eng	14	14
1987	Europe	Muirfield Village GC, Dublin, Ohio	13	15
1985	Europe	The Belfry, Sutton Coldfield, Eng	11 1/2	16 1/2
1983	USA	PGA Mini GC, Palm Beach Gdns, Fla.	14 1/2	13 1/2
1981	USA	Walton Heath CC, Surrey, England	18 1/2	9 1/2
1979	USA	The Greenbrier, W. Va.	17	11
1977	USA	Royal Lytham & St. Annes, England	12 1/2	7 1/2
1975	USA	Laurel Valley GC, Ligonier, Pa.	21	11
1973	USA	Muirfield, Scotland	19	13
1971	USA	Old Warson CC, St. Louis, Mo.	18 1/2	13 1/2
1969	Tie	Royal Birkdale GC, Southport, Eng	16	16
1967	USA	Champions GC, Houston, Texas	23 1/2	8 1/2
1965	USA	Royal Birkdale GC, Southport, Eng	19 1/2	12 1/2
1963	USA	East Lake CC, Atlanta, Ga.	23	9
1961	USA	Royal Lytham & St. Annes, England	14 1/2	9 1/2
1959	USA	Eldorado CC, Palm Desert, Calif.	8 1/2	3 1/2
1957	GB	Lindrick GC, Yorkshire, England	4 1/2	7 1/2
1955	USA	Thunderbird CC, Palm Springs, Calif.	8	4
1953	USA	Wentworth GC, Wentworth, England	6 1/2	5 1/2
1951	USA	Pinehurst CC, Pinehurst, N.C.	9 1/2	2 1/2
1949	USA	Ganton GC, Scarborough, England	7	5
1947	USA	Portland Golf Club, Portland, Ore.	11	1
No Matches played due to World War II				
1937	USA	Southport & Ainsdale GC, England	8	4
1935	USA	Ridgewood CC, Ridgewood, N.J.	9	3
1933	GB	Southport & Ainsdale GC, England	5 1/2	6 1/2
1931	USA	Scioto CC, Columbus, Ohio	9	3
1929	GB	Moortown GC, Leeds, England	5	7
1927	USA	Worcester CC, Worcester, Mass.	9 1/2	2 1/2