

Ernie Els at the Porsche European Open 2016

22/09/2016 South African major winner Ernie Els is back at the European Open for the first time for many years. “The Big Easy” was kind enough to give us a short interview before heading to the first tee.

Ernie, you flew in yesterday from Florida to Linz in Austria and …
Ernie Els: … that proved as a mistake.

Why?
We would have been better off picking a German airport, because then we could have felt the real horsepower at our disposal in the Porsche 911. In Austria we had to respect the speed limit of 130 km/h. That was a little bit frustrating.

Why did you add the Porsche European Open to your schedule this year?
I received an invite and I’ve been off for about a month, plus it’s one way of getting to drive a nice Porsche. I haven’t played too many European Tour events this year, so I’m here to catch up a little on that.

Why have you decided to play over here at this time of the year?
I'm playing the Dunhill Links Championship, and I really want to get ready for when the season starts in the US, which is in about three or four weeks. I want to get some tournaments under my belt, play in Europe where I'm a lifetime member, see some of my mates and play some good golf. I haven't played the European Open since 1994 so it's nice to be back.

Now you find yourself back here at the Porsche European Open, a very prestigious event with a great history, which was first played in 1978?
The European Open is such a huge event historically. I remember watching it at Walton Heath on television for many years and I think when I last played it was in England at East Sussex National. It's taken quite a few years to come back and what an event – to have a nice sponsor like Porsche getting it back on the schedule is huge.

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