



# Links Players

## Adversity - The Ultimate Pressure

*...the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him (John 4:23).*

I suspect the weight of pressure for those players about whom it is said, “He is the best player in the world without a major,” is virtually impossible to bear.

There is no doubt commentators and sports writers can add a few tons of pressure by constantly writing, “So-in-so” is the “best player in the world without a major.”

In May at Valhalla Golf Club, Xander “got the monkey off his back.” Now, after The Open, that “monkey” is nowhere in sight. I can’t say from any personal experience that being on the receiving end of that sort of public scrutiny is “unbearable.” Still, I suppose it is, if nothing else, utterly annoying.

Here is my take on all that banter! While the endless chatter about who the “best player in the world without a major is” will continue until Jesus returns, I want to suggest that the weightiest pressure is altogether different.

What do I mean? I mean this—while the mounting pressure coming from the press to win one’s first major is weighty, the self-imposed internal expectation of getting over the hump has to trump all public scrutiny.

Come to think of it, what about all the public pressure that begins to mount a few weeks before The Masters for Rory? Imagine the ever-increasing weight of winning another major after a decade-long drought for this favorite Son of Ireland.

I can’t imagine anyone wants it more than him! As I write, I look out the window from the Slieve Donard Hotel overlooking the Irish Sea.

In my room, a drawing of Rory in a self-reflective moment is displayed. I don’t know if he posed for this portrait; I doubt it. Whether he did or not makes very little difference.

What ultimately matters for Xander, Rory, and everyone else is this.

When we come to that time when we “hang up the spikes” on this mortal life, the ultimate pressure is this—Have we lived our lives for the glory of God? When it is all said and done, have we lived our lives before the “Audience of One?”

As the Apostle John reminds us, “...the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him (John 4:23).

That the Father has to go looking for worshippers is, to my mind, the greatest of all indictments against the human race. He should see multitudes adoring him with deepest affection and adoration.

I will “tee it up” at Royal County Down with some genuinely remarkable players in a few hours. Is there pressure to play well? You bet! Ultimately, however, my goal is to honor my King and do my best on and off the course.

**Prayer: Jesus, fill me again and again with the Holy Spirit that I might worship you in all I do.**

### READING: John 4

1. How well do you manage pressure? Why do you suppose the first tee jitters are so common? Discuss your finest and worst moments off the first tee with a crowd watching.

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2. After reading John 4, what do we discover is the most important issue in life for the Woman at the Well and, by implication, us?

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3. Application: knowing that “worship” is not reduced to singing in church, how might we “worship” the Lord through the game of golf?

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