

IN TIME WITH



ROLEX

editor's  
**letter**

BY  
**S. MURALI**



# THE FAT MONKEY BETWEEN A SORE LOSER AND A GARCIA WINNER

**E**verybody that is around me is helping me, making me not only a better golfer but also a better person.

It's not easy, because I know how much of a hard-headed man I can be sometimes, but it's been great.

— GARCIA (ABOVE), AFTER WINNING THE US MASTERS

A very sore loser.

That was how Irishman Pádraig Harrington chose to describe Sergio Garcia during a recent radio interview following the Spaniard's victory at the US Masters.

His exact words?

"I gave (Garcia) every out I possibly could at the 2007 British Open (where Harrington beat Garcia in a play-off). I was as polite as I could and as generous as I could be. But he was a very sore loser, and he continued to be a very sore loser."

Though one may question the timing of Harrington's assertion, and the effect it will have on his dreams to be a European Ryder Cup captain, there are probably very few who would disbelieve those words.

After all, 37-year-old Garcia has had a rather colourful golf history, in a game where anything but being polite and behaving impeccably is frowned upon.

At Doral in 2007, the Spaniard shocked many when he spit in the golf cup after missing a putt.

At the US Open in 2002, when he was mocked by the crowd for constantly gripping and re-gripping his clubs, Garcia pointed the middle finger at the hecklers.

The Spaniard is known for hiring and firing his caddies, has taken off his shoes and thrown them into the crowd and has flung his clubs in disgust after poor shots.

And while he can be charming when he

wants to, journalists know that Garcia can be caustic and brusque with fans as well as scribes following a bad day at the office.

Constantly plagued by self doubt, he famously suffered a meltdown after a third-round 75 at the 2012 US Masters.

"I'm not good enough – I don't have the thing I need to have," Garcia said in Spanish. "In 13 years, I've come to the conclusion that I need to play for second or third place."

Someone asked, "In the Masters?" In any Major," he spat back.

Ironically, it is at the very same venue that a much calmer Garcia has now eventually proved himself wrong by finishing first.

All of Augusta rooted for him to get that monstrous monkey off his back, the one that has been sitting there since he famously sprinted down the fairway as a 19-year-old trying to take on Tiger Woods at the 1999 US Open in Medinah.

Maybe it was the weight of that monkey which made him sore all through these past 18 years, as Garcia was plagued by questions about not living up to his potential and winning Majors.

Now that he has one, he will be expected to do a Phil Mickelson and go on to win a few more.

Can he do that with a smile on his face and a spring in his step?

I think so folks. I really do.

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