

Gold and blue fish? Now that's attention to detail

TONY JIMENEZ

When the victorious European players said that captain Paul McGinley had left nothing to chance in his planning for the Ryder Cup, they were not kidding. Quite how beneficial having gold and blue fish in the fish tank in the team room was to the players is maybe debatable – but not according to the Irishman.

"Everything in the room was planned," McGinley said yesterday, "from the carpet to the wallpapers to the images on the wall, to a big fish tank with [European] blue and gold fish. It was the colours I was interested in rather than the breed. It was just a little, small touch.

"We had two rooms, a dining area and a lounge area. There was a big picture in the corner of John Jacobs, the first European captain, a big picture of the first Britain and Ireland team in 1927 and big pictures of Seve Ballesteros and Jose Maria Olazabal.

"We had a lot of different images around the team room. It was my idea for the fish tank and it worked great."

McGinley, still on a high after Europe won the biennial team event for the eighth time in 10 editions, said the fish might be a bit worse for wear the morning after the night before. "The fish are still there, swimming away, very happy, but they might have a few hangovers," he laughed. "A bit of wine may have been spilt into them.

"There have been a number of requests for images from the room and maybe we'll do a little portfolio and exhibit it... and maybe the fish can come and be a part of that."

McGinley then turned his attentions to the much-maligned American effort and he may have been swimming against the tide of popular opinion when he said there was no danger of the Ryder Cup getting too one-sided.

"We all know how proud the Americans are of their country and they will galvanise themselves," he said. "If you saw some of the American players backstage at the closing ceremony last night, there were tears in their eyes. This was tough for them, it hurt. They will come back very strong in two years' time."

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Nick Bradley

www.NickBradley.com