

**PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT:
HARRIS ENGLISH & MATT KUCHAR
Tuesday, December 9, 2014**



DAVE SENKO: We would like to welcome our defending champions, Matt Kuchar and Harris English. A year ago you guys tied the tournament record, 34-under. Maybe just get us started, Matt, talk a little about last year and how things went for you guys.

MATT KUCHAR: Last year was an amazing year, it was a treat to play with Harris, both of us had it going. It was really a lot of fun. We walked up the 18th hole with about a seven-shot lead and said we can enjoy we can enjoy this, this has been a fun couple days. It was a great week.

DAVE SENKO: Harris?

HARRIS ENGLISH: It's so much fun playing with Matt in a tournament. We can pull for each other because it's so much different than a regular PGA TOUR event. We get to learn from each other and had a lot of fun, that's what we did last year. Obviously playing well you have a lot of fun, but really thoroughly enjoyed it and love the team aspect of this tournament.

DAVE SENKO: Questions?

Q. And then they changed the format. You guys probably just --

MATT KUCHAR: Don't forget, and the course. Not only do we return as defending champions but to a new format and to maybe nine new holes, eight new holes, something like that. It's at least nine new holes, so a little different for all of us. We'll be relearning what the new front side is.

It's one of those weeks I think everybody that's here really is excited to be a part of. Harris and I made a great team last year. I expect we'll make another formidable team this year. We had one of those special weeks where we made a lot of putts, hit a lot of great shots. It's what it takes to win this thing and have to do something similar to try to be in contention again.

Q. Harris, when you saw that, did you think, okay, maybe we had something to do with that, changing the course and the format?

HARRIS ENGLISH: I would like to think so because we played -- I mean, winning by seven shots last year, we had it going. But obviously they had some trouble with the greens out here. We played the new nine today and it was awesome. I think it's a great 18 holes. Even though there's a couple shuttles in between the holes, it's going

to be a great week.

Q. Yeah, I'm with the Palm Beach Post and word is that the Ryder Cup task force is going to be meeting over there this month sometime. As PGA TOUR players and certainly as a Ryder Cupper yourself, what would be the one suggestion you would like to give them as far as input going forward?

MATT KUCHAR: The only thing I would immediately say as advice or what I would change would be the selection deadline needs to be pushed back. I think Paul Azinger made a great job in going from two picks to four picks and pushing the date of the picks back a little bit. I think the date still needs to push back further. If you push the date back further, Billy Horschel is the hottest player in the game of golf, you would without a doubt pick Billy Horschel. I think you want guys -- I think the reason for pushing the date back initially was to try to get guys playing well. It's still too far away after the BMW Championship when the picks are made. I think it might even be after Deutsche Bank. After Deutsche Bank, there's still three or four weeks and a lot can happen in three or four weeks. A guy could go from being just off to really on or really on to just off.

So I think the thing I would encourage them to take a look at is pushing that deadline back to make sure you've got a guy like Billy Horschel on your team.

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, I definitely agree with Kooch because you want the guys playing the best at that time. Obviously I don't have much experience, but I'm looking forward to trying to be a part of those teams in the future. I want to be one of those guys who's playing really good in the playoffs and can make my way on that team.

Q. Staying on the Ryder Cup idea, one of the things of course everybody points at is that the difficulty the U.S. seems to have in the one particular format, the better ball, whatever, whatever the format.

MATT KUCHAR: I want to know which format we would struggle in.

Q. Well, I'm thinking the one that was 3 to 1. What was it, the best ball or better ball?

MATT KUCHAR: We've got alternate shot and we've got best ball. I don't know. We clearly play an extra year of the format, so you would think the U.S. would be better in the team events because we have the Presidents Cup as well to play in. I don't know which we would be weaker in.

Q. Again, the morning rounds from the Ryder Cup -- I get my things mixed up.

MATT KUCHAR: Yeah, I do, too.

Q. That put you behind the eight ball and they seemed to play that format a little bit better. They seemed to have a -- is there any way that you can play more of that or you see more of that maybe during the course of the season?

MATT KUCHAR: We're going to struggle with the answer because both you and I get mixed up with what format we're discussing so we really don't have an answer.

Q. You don't have one, either.

MATT KUCHAR: We really don't have a question, do we, without knowing the format you're talking about. I'm mixed up as well. I don't know what happens first, Friday morning.

Q. It would be the morning format.

MATT KUCHAR: I don't know if that's alternate shot or best ball.

Q. And again, I'm trying to figure out --

MATT KUCHAR: Yeah, yeah, so we really don't have an answer because, yeah, yeah.

Q. How do you both approach this tournament? Is this a winding down and you just come out and enjoy yourselves and have some fun or do you have an eye on something that you're working on for next season?

MATT KUCHAR: I see this as more of a winding up than a winding down. My December I treat as my spring training. This is my get ready for 2015. This is my get ready for the next season. I had a nice break off after the McGladrey tournament. After Sea Island I took four weeks, no golf, practiced a handful of days before Tiger's event. Take these two events, I use these two, Tiger's and here, as a bit of my barometer to see what kind of shape my game is in, what I need to focus on, practice some more of, get dialed in so that come Kapalua and the Tournament of Champions I'm ready to go and I start out strong. So I see this part as my spring training. I'll spend the next two, three weeks trying to figure out, making sure that come Kapalua that I'm ready to go.

Q. Is there anything that both of you have carried over into next year that you feel let you down this year? Because you won at Hilton Head Island and everybody's, as you know, you were getting (indiscernible) for the next thing. And Harris, you were in the mix for selection sometime in the Ryder Cup. Is there anything that you look back on and you think I should have done something differently?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, I definitely learned a lot from last year. That was my third

year on TOUR and I feel like each year I've learned something more about myself, how I play, when I get tired, why I get tired. So yeah, I started out really good last year, kind of stemming from playing good at Mayakoba last year and playing good with Kooch here. You can definitely build a lot of confidence off these tournaments. Like Kooch said, just keep it rolling into next year and figure out what you're doing really good and what you need to tune up a little bit. I'm kind of coming in this week, I've been playing a lot of golf, I'm ready to go and looking forward to getting some confidence from this tournament.

MATT KUCHAR: I think you could throw all of us in this category, that each year we try to improve, each year you look to get better. Now, when you look back at last year, I didn't feel like I had any glaring weaknesses. I didn't feel like there was anything that held me back. I just know that going forward, and I've taken this mentality each year, my goal is to always continue to improve. The great thing about the game of golf is there's endless room for improvement. It doesn't matter how good of a putter you are, you can always become a better putter, doesn't matter how good of a wedge player you are, you can always be better, how good of a driver you are, you can still improve. There's just endless room. And I think I take the game as a whole. Couldn't pick a single category that I said I need to focus more time on due to last year's play. I felt like everything was pretty good, but again I'm going to take that pretty good and try to make it better in all categories.

Q. Matt, the one thing I wanted to ask you about the Ryder Cup is that there's a feeling that this task force is an overreaction, there's a feeling that it will open up dialogue. Do you stand one way or the other on that?

MATT KUCHAR: It's very interesting, I'll be anxious to see what comes out of it. I don't know that there can be a whole lot of harm that comes out of it. I just, I don't think you have to look too far back to find some great things that happened. I wasn't part of Paul Azinger's pod system, I don't know exactly how that worked. I heard there was some things people loved about it. I heard there was also some things that held the pod system back as well.

I did play under Davis Love. There was no pod system but it was very clear as to who I was going to play with. It was going to be one of two guys, I think, that I was going to play with. Enjoyed knowing that. Do you have to know that? No, I don't think you have to know that. But I don't know that there was any exact system he followed and yet we had the largest lead you could amass after the team format was over.

And going into singles, there's no controlling what happens in singles. You put your guys out, put their guys out. There's no coaching that, there's no captaincy that. That falls where it does. Unfortunately we got boat raced in singles, that was a real bummer. I think had one match gone differently...

Then you look back to what just happened at Gleneagles. How do we flip two or three of those matches. You're talking a four to six point swing. It's always really close. You just flip two from losing to winning, now you're four points different and it's a whole different ballgame.

So it's always so close, and I think that's the great thing about the Ryder Cup. No matter what, no matter how big of a lead somebody amasses, singles can always make up for it. There just aren't that many matches. In Presidents Cup we play another round of matches. You don't sit as many guys. You can accumulate more points where singles can sometimes be anti-climactic because there's such an insurmountable lead. Ryder Cup never seems to get to that point you can't come back from.

Q. I've got it, the foursomes, alternate shot. Yeah, do you play -- normally growing up and everything else like that, have you played a lot of alternate shot matches or is it more of best ball?

MATT KUCHAR: No, and, see, I would go back to when we played for Davis. We crushed them. We owned the foursomes, we owned the four-ball, we owned all the matches. I don't know that there's a need for guys to do something different or to perform better in foursomes. I think you would look back to however we did under Davis, however Paul Azinger did it, it worked. I don't think anybody grows up playing a whole lot of alternate shot unless you grow up at Muirfield, and I don't know that many kids that grow up at Muirfield. It's the only place I know that plays a whole lot of alternate shot. It's a fun thing, and for Team U.S. it's once a year. It's once every other year for Team Europe. We should have an upper hand in that format.

Q. Zach Johnson called it an out-of-body experience.

MATT KUCHAR: Alternate shot?

Q. Yeah.

MATT KUCHAR: It can be a rush. You can get it going and it can be awesome. It's certainly the most challenging of the formats just because of the rhythm that you can get into or out of really easily.

Q. Fox will be doing the Saturday telecast and Joe Buck and Greg are going to be, obviously you can't watch it because you're playing, but just your thoughts on Fox getting involved and how you think Greg will do as an analyst moving forward?

HARRIS ENGLISH: I think it's awesome. I know they've got the U.S. Open this year and this is kind of their warm-up to that. But I think Joe and Greg will do awesome. I think Faxon's on there as well. I've been watching Joe a long time doing football and

baseball and I know he'll do really well with this thing and I'm looking forward to it.

MATT KUCHAR: I think competition is great. I think having Fox involved is fantastic. I'm anxious to see how it goes. I think they'll do well. The first run, it would be hard to pull it off without anything going wrong. There will be some slip-ups, I'm sure there will be. I know they had kind of a test run at last year's U.S. Open. They did kind of their own mock version of commentary.

I think commentary's got to be a tough thing. Joe Buck's a legend in it, golf will be new. For Greg, he's done a bit. Actually I think Greg will be very good. It's tough in that you have to voice an opinion and I look at how I would handle some commentary, I just think a guy hits an 8-iron to 25 feet, what do you say. It's not a great shot, it's not a bad shot. It's hard, and it seems like you have to have an opinion. Greg certainly has an opinion, which I think will do him very well. There's a lot of situations I think of to myself, and that one, I think if a guy hits an 8-iron to 25 feet, you just go, well, that's a nice shot. It's not good, it's not bad. How do I comment on it? I think that the guys that do well are the Johnny Millers that kind of come out and call somebody. I couldn't call that a bad shot. It's not a bad shot, it's really not. I think Greg will be good.

Q. This is for both of you guys, just wanted to get your thoughts with the format changing, will there be a key day as far as something that stems the tide or gives an edge to somebody?

MATT KUCHAR: I completely understand the idea that the scramble format, there's not a whole lot of separation that happens in the scramble format. Guys go from kind of 12- to 15-under kind of thing as kind of the normal range of scores. You don't get the big differences in scores. The best ball, you might have guys go 2-under to 12-under in best ball, or even better.

I think the format will lend to some greater Sunday excitement even though you can understand the scramble -- I think the scramble will certainly provide you the most birdies but it doesn't lead to the most separation between scores. So I think Sunday will certainly be the most exciting day, the day there will about be a lot of movement with the best ball format and just the ability to really make a big move. I'm sorry, it's a Saturday now, not a Sunday.

Q. I would like to get your guys' thoughts on what your takeaway was from Tiger's first appearance in three and a half months in competition last week and what we might expect from him in '15?

HARRIS ENGLISH: I didn't play last week but I watched on TV. I love watching Tiger play because he was one of my guys growing up, he was one of the reasons I got in the game. He really moves the needle. I guess people love him or hate him, and people love to watch him on TV and I love to see him play and I love to see him

back in action.

Q. Any thoughts on how he played?

HARRIS ENGLISH: I think he definitely got better as the week went along. I think every time he tees off he's got a chance. He's going to be competing in a lot of majors this year.

MATT KUCHAR: I'm on the fence and I think we're all trying to figure out the Chris Como and how that's all going to work and what changes they made and what his role as consultant really is, if he's really offering swing advice or just in agreement with whatever Tiger says. I think it's kind of interesting. Tiger is dissected more than anybody and analyzed more than anybody and scrutinized more than anybody. Certainly this new relationship he and Chris Como, everybody will just be over-dissecting and overanalyzing and figuring out. I think from the coach's perspective, it's almost a tough role to take because you've got the greatest player in the game. If he doesn't get better, have you failed? And that's a tough one to take Tiger and take him back up to a dominant player. It's a tough position because there's not a huge amount of up side. Now, granted he went from nobody knew who Chris Como was to now everybody in the golf world is anxious to see what he does. It's a tough one because if Tiger continues to stub chip shots and finishes last in a tournament of 18, you know, things won't go -- look real good on Chris Como. It will just be interesting. I'm just one of those guys on the fence and anxious to see how it plays out.

Q. You guys talk about moving the needle when it comes to Tiger Woods. Fox Sports picking up golf, how exciting is it for you guys to see golf picked up by another major network and see golf kind of expanding to America?

MATT KUCHAR: Great to see another avenue. Great to see what Golf Channel's done and how far they've come. Just to start out a tiny thing with showing 20 infomercials a day to now having huge amounts of coverage and different tours and now the quality of their broadcasts. And to be NBC and CBS and now to have Fox in there is great for the game. It's an exciting time. I think we're all excited to see how the newcomers do. It's a tough thing to have that professional feel and look, but they've got a great crew. And of course they'll have great equipment and all the technology available. So I expect to see a good product shown and I'm pretty excited that now we've got another player in that market.

HARRIS ENGLISH: I agree. Like Kooch said, competition is good in anything and I think it's going to help the broadcasts get even better. It's good to see guys that we play with like Greg and Brad Faxon, some of those guys commentating and it's going to be great, I look forward to it.

Q. How much responsibility do you feel as players to try to grow the game of

golf in America, or do you feel the responsibility?

HARRIS ENGLISH: I definitely feel responsible. I'm very privileged to be on the PGA TOUR and being shown on TV. I know I've got to act a certain way and broadcast our sport to people maybe seeing it for the first time and showing them how much fun it is to play the game and how much we love playing this game. So I definitely feel responsible for doing that. Especially the kids that are watching me from where I grew up in Thomasville and back home, I kind of feel responsible for doing what I'm supposed to do and acting like a professional.

MATT KUCHAR: I think it's one of the cool things about the game is the ability to give back and the history and tradition of giving back. I think Greg Norman is a guy that had Jack Nicklaus take to him and kind of show him the ropes and knew that when it was his turn, he had to give back and follow those same traditions and same roles. And he's taken a number of guys, whether it's Adam Scott or when I was a kid I was down in Jupiter playing out of Medalist and he was fantastic to me. Just to be able to follow in his footsteps and be able to continue to give back. It's cool and it's great to be part of Greg's tournament, to be a defending champion here, to have my name up on the wall. This sport is cool in there's traditions in those ways.

DAVE SENKO: Okay. Thanks, guys.