

**PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT:  
BILLY HORSCHER & IAN POULTER  
Wednesday, December 10, 2014**



**DAVE SENKO:** Ian and Billy, thanks for joining us. I guess first off, both of you have played here before. Billy, last year was your first year. Maybe just get us started how this team came together this year.

**IAN POULTER:** Well, I think Billy was feeling sorry for me after his big win there in September. You know, felt like he would help me out for the back end of the year.

No, I called Billy just as I knew he was playing and I said to him, listen, I think it would be great fun if we can go out there and play as a team. And he kindly said yeah, he would love to. So here we are, ready to go.

**DAVE SENKO:** Billy, care to share anything?

**BILLY HORSCHER:** Yeah, I was sort of doing a photo shoot at the time he called and we usually text back and forth. He called, so I was wondering exactly what -- why was he calling.

**IAN POULTER:** Why is Poulter calling.

**BILLY HORSCHER:** You know, sort of said, Are you done counting all the FedEx Cup money? I said, No, I'm still going, you can come help me out if you want.

Just asked about playing Shark Shootout and I said yeah, sounds like a lot of fun. I got to know Poults over the last few years. We have a good friend, Mark Horton, he's known Poulter for a long time and he became my stats guy this past year. So yeah, looking forward to a great week.

**DAVE SENKO:** Maybe you can share, each of you guys were doing some globetrotting in the last month. I know you both were in Shanghai and in Malaysia. Ian, you played in Turkey and a couple other European Tour events. Maybe just catch us up how your game is coming in here and what that experience was like with all the travel.

**IAN POULTER:** Yeah, it's always for us. Well, for me as a European player to play the back end of the year is always a busy schedule. Playing four weeks in a row, you know, opened a course with Justin in Mission Hills before that as well, so we were in Shenzhen. Then went over to Shanghai for a couple of weeks, played in Turkey, then played in Dubai. And I was in London to do my book launch, so it was a busy five and a half weeks shall we say. So I've probably nine, 10 days off and obviously looking forward to getting going, you know, for these last few days for me for the season. But I've got new equipment in the bag, they seem to work really well over

the four weeks in Asia and looking forward obviously to play well this week and play well in 2015.

**BILLY HORSCHTEL:** Yeah, played in Malaysia, China and played Vegas before that. So game feels good. Obviously I didn't play as well in relation to China as I would like. I think that was more or less due for, you know, from the FedEx Cup. And taking a lot of time off, something I haven't done in quite a while and just game wasn't in great shape. But I wasn't too worried. I knew I was going to have plenty of time to get ready for last week's event and this week's event. And I was happy to see that Poulter started playing better. I know he had a tough year. So when I saw he had a chance to win in Turkey and playing well overseas, I was like this is going to be a good partnership. So I'm happy that this new equipment he's got is making him play a little bit better.

**Q. I wanted to get your thoughts on the changes this year in the tournament format, course, Fox doing the Saturday finals. What are your thoughts on the changes?**

**IAN POULTER:** I think the changes are good. I mean, the course, you know, the greens on one side were suffering. So to move it to play nine holes on the other course actually is the first time I've played it and actually it's a lot of fun. It's very tight, very tricky. So if you put it in play, you're going to make plenty of birdies. But it's easy to get out of position, so from that standpoint it's good, it's a good change.

In terms of changing the format for us to play scramble in the first I think is good. When guys get too far ahead early and then scramble the last day, I think it's very hard to be chasing someone down. But I think by switching it, this way definitely you can put some pressure on the last day around the back nine making plenty of birdies and making inroads to catch people. And obviously the Fox coverage is going to be great as well. So three good changes.

**BILLY HORSCHTEL:** Yeah, I mean it's sort of unfortunate they had the issue with the greens that they did. But at the same time it's a blessing that there is 18 holes at this great 36-hole facility that we can use nine of it to move the holes around so we can play 18 great holes. Like Ian said, I think there's going to be more birdies made on the front side because it's a little bit shorter. And if you put it in play, you're going to have some wedge shots. And the format's going to be a lot better. When guys get out there, you look at Kuchar and Harry the last year, I don't know what they won by, eight or 10 going into the final round. You tee it up knowing you can't win. It's like the feeling guys had in the early 2000s when Tiger's winning the U.S. Open at Pebble by that much.

And I think Fox is going to do a great job. I think they're making their inroads into golf. And with Joe and Greg leading the coverage, I think they'll do a great job. They do a great job in baseball and football and all the other sports they cover, so I

wouldn't expect anything less from them in the golfing world.

**Q. Ian, the U.S. Ryder Cup task force had their first meeting yesterday. And seeing as you're Mr. Ryder Cup, I thought I would ask what do you think of this whole idea that they have to put together a task force to try to figure out how to beat the Euros?**

**IAN POULTER:** No idea. No idea what they're going to be talking about. No idea what they're going to be discussing. I guess they've been scratching their heads, so no idea. It's tough for me to comment. I have no idea what they would be talking about apart from getting their act together.

**Q. Does it seem strange that they're even doing something like this when --**

**IAN POULTER:** Probably inappropriate for me to comment on that.

**Q. Ian, how do you feel that you will possibly be a footnote in American golf history having caused Ted Bishop to evaporate?**

**IAN POULTER:** That was not my doing.

**Q. Were you done?**

**BILLY HORSCHER:** I was looking for my question. You asked him about the task force. I'm American, I thought I was going to get the backup.

**Q. I'll ask it. What do you think about the Ryder Cup task force?**

**BILLY HORSCHER:** I think it's a lot of political BS. I just don't understand that. I think we understand that we haven't played as well. The Europeans over the last 10 years have played better than us when it comes time to step up. And I think maybe there's some logistical stuff that could be done a little bit differently. Like I said, I've been a couch potato watching it for 10 years. I haven't been on a Ryder Cup team or Presidents Cup team, so I couldn't tell you what the ins and outs are of everyday practice sessions and what you have to do at night and everything. Just sitting on the couch, it seems like when we did, I think from my experience sitting on the couch, it looked like when Davis Love was captain at Medinah in 2012, it looked like the team was enjoying themselves, the players were enjoying themselves. They were enjoying playing with each other.

**IAN POULTER:** Until Sunday.

**BILLY HORSCHER:** Until Sunday, exactly. Yes, until Sunday. And obviously we got outplayed on Sunday, but it looked more like Americans -- the Americans looked more like the Europeans. Like they were enjoying the competition and they played

well because of it.

Like I said, maybe most of the task force is just the little things that could be done differently to help us play better. And if they need to put a task force together for that, sure. But I think if they're putting a task force together to figure out who the next captain should be, that's pretty easy. Fred Couples should be captain. They should have named it the day after the Ryder Cup was over.

**Q. You were at Tiger's last week, what are your thoughts on where his game is and starting over with a new swing coach?**

**BILLY HORSCHTEL:** Yeah, I mean, I think we got to play together on Saturday. Unfortunately he was pretty sick, but I was pretty impressed by the way he's swinging at it. By the end of the round he felt a little better, so I was able to talk to him a little bit more because his voice was sort of really bad and couldn't talk very much.

I like the changes he's making. It looks like his swing's a little bit freer. It's got more speed in it. He hit some shots that I haven't seen him hit in a while in the sense of he hit really good golf shots and he drove the ball really well. He wasn't aiming 50 yards left and trying to hit this banana cut out into the fairway. From what I saw swing-wise, I think he looked pretty good, healthy. And obviously chipping is chipping. Everyone wants to sort of, you know, they like to break down everything that he does wrong when he does something bad. And people don't understand it's pretty difficult to chip. If they had the camera on me of every chip shot, I've duffed my fair share just like everyone else did there. So I expect him to have a great year in 2015. I think we're going to see him compete for some majors and possibly some victories.

**Q. Ian?**

**IAN POULTER:** I didn't play last week and I don't watch golf on TV, so I mean I can't comment on that. I didn't see how he played, I didn't see how he swung it. Obviously I know where he finished, but I can't comment because I didn't see him make a swing.

**Q. Billy, your thoughts on the new football coach in Gainesville?**

**BILLY HORSCHTEL:** Yeah, seems like I get asked that question a lot right now. I think McElwain's going to do a good job. My teacher (inaudible) in Alabama alone, played golf there and he's been telling me early on in the process that we should go after this guy out at Colorado State. And obviously he was offensive coordinator there for four years. He said he's a really charismatic guy, really can entertain a room. The people around him love him a lot. I think when they hired him, all the coaches and former players, this guy's a great guy, he's going to do a good job. So you know what, there's two things in Gator Nation that we want. We want to win and we want somewhat of an explosive offense. Even if we lose and we look like we're trying to win the game, then I think we'll be okay still with that.

**Q. Billy, the question I was going to ask you about the Ryder Cup is Matt Kuchar was in here yesterday, and you may have touched on this with logistics, but he was saying that he thought the selection process should be delayed and he thought you were a perfect example of that. That you were playing well late in the year and he thought you would have been a logical pick. I was just wondering if you have a similar feeling on that?**

**BILLY HORSCHEL:** You know, whatever criteria they set, you've got to meet that criteria. Obviously I didn't meet the criteria when the selection process was -- took place and I played well a couple weeks, the couple weeks after they picked the captain picks. But listen, I'm not here to say anything needs to change and wait a couple more weeks. Whatever deadlines they have, then those are the deadlines. Whatever they think is the best. When it really comes down to it, ultimately we just as a team haven't played nearly as good as the Europeans and we can sort of make excuses going -- if you want to call them excuses or whatnot, but the Europeans have played better at every Ryder Cup since.

**Q. But you would have like to have played, right?**

**BILLY HORSCHEL:** Oh, am I an idiot? Yeah, I would love to play. I would love to have been on that team. Would me being on the team have us win? I don't know. I'm not going to go out there that far and say that. I'll say I would play my ass off, and win or lose I was going to give everything I had. But yeah, I would have love to have been on the team.

**Q. Along the same lines I've been asking the American players this week if they had one suggestion for this task force. Obviously you already gave one with Freddie Couples being the next captain, but would you have a suggestion of a direction you would like to see as a PGA TOUR player for the task force?**

**BILLY HORSCHEL:** The two things, number one important thing is I think Fred Couples just because what he's done in the Presidents Cup. And I'm sure it's a different animal for us and everything, but like I said, this is me perceiving something from my couch. Maybe, you know, we're such an individual sport, we have our own routines out here and then we get into a team atmosphere and you have requirements with dinners and everything. Maybe the guys aren't having their normal time to prepare for a regular event. So if that's the case, then I would say that's an issue. But if it's not the case, then it's not an issue.

**Q. Billy, changing the subject, are you ready to write a book on infant care?**

**BILLY HORSCHEL:** No, but Ian Poulter is sitting right next to me, you guys can ask him some questions.

**Q. Have you asked Ian for his advice?**

**BILLY HORSCHER:** I think my wife and I, everyone's giving us some advice and it's all been very good. Everyone has something that they've been through with their kids or whatnot. Like I said, anybody's advice is good advice. Whether it's been repeated or it's the first time being said, you can always learn something from someone just trying to give you one or two pieces of advice.

**Q. How soon will the little one travel?**

**BILLY HORSCHER:** She's here this week and she was here last week. She was here last week at Tiger's event and she's here this week. But checking it out, trial run these two weeks and we'll see. We've got two or three weeks out on the west coast.

**Q. Ian, does your family travel with you all the time?**

**IAN POULTER:** Kids are at school. My kids are a little older, 12, 10, 5 and 2. I certainly wouldn't take them around Asia for four weeks. That would be impossible. They need to be at school and they need to enjoy themselves with their friends. So I just make sure I get back as soon as I possibly can on Sunday night, so I can enjoy as much time as I can with them.

**Q. Question for you both. Can you just talk about Mark, how he helped you, Mark Horton?**

**IAN POULTER:** Mark is a personal friend. I've known Mark since I was 14 years old, so I've known Mark for 24 years. I don't use Mark for statistics and stuff like that, he's just a really good personal friend. Billy would have experienced much more from a statistical standpoint. I understand what he does with all of his stats, how he breaks it down. He's the best at that side of stuff than anyone else that's ever tried to do it, gives a very honest opinion. Some guys like it, some don't. Certainly helped Billy I know picking up obviously the FedEx Cup. Come September he was pretty happy with the work that he's done. But from a personal standpoint, he's a great guy. He worked very hard and he has a good group of people that he works with.

**BILLY HORSCHER:** Hertz's a great friend. I love that he's honest. There's a lot of guys out here that sort of will just toot your own honor just to do it. I like honesty, whether you're saying something good about me or whether you're saying something bad, so I get the point. And like Ian said, he's the best at what he does. There's stuff he does with his statistics and advice that he gives to Sneds and I and then the Brendon de Jong, who he's helped out, that other guys don't. People will try to figure out what information it is that he's giving us that other guys aren't. We are very secretive about it and that's the way we want it. We don't want anyone else having the information we have because we feel it's that helpful to us. But he's a great guy. Just being around him for a year, he's really one of my good friends. I mean, he'll go

out of his way to help you any way he can. Like Ian said, they've been friends for a while. If Ian needed his help, I'm sure Hertzky would be there willing to help him any way he can.

**Q. Billy, the feeling of being the 2014 FedEx Cup champion, what was that like?**

**BILLY HORSCHER:** Yeah, I think I'm used to it now. The first couple events playing Vegas, Malaysia, China and being announced as the FedEx Cup champ, sort of surreal. You know, always had a smile on my face when they introduced me as that. But I think now it's sort of, you know, not that it's worn off, but like hey, it's over, it's done with, you've got to move on to the next thing. You've got to keep working hard, keep putting one foot in front of the other to meet other goals.

So it was fun doing it, those three weeks were unbelievable. As I said I think to somebody at dinner I did the other night, I can't exactly remember the feelings I had those three weeks or even the feeling walking up 18 when I won. You know, I could probably tell you what I may have been feeling but the exact feeling, how I felt, that's not there. I mean, I can tell you, you know, how I felt when I missed a cut or when I missed a putt to win a tournament. Or I can tell you how I felt after I hit that 6-iron in the water at Deutsche Bank because that's what sort of drives me. I want to always be at my best so I'm always thinking about the stuff that I didn't do well. Sometimes the stuff I've done well, sort of embrace it in the moment and it's sort of over with.

**Q. Ian, Jimmy Walker said yesterday the Ryder Cup is almost like a flip of the coin and sometimes you flip a coin seven times and it comes up heads every time. As a guy who made the shot who made the biggest difference on Saturday morning or Saturday afternoon but this year that seemed to be one of those shots that turned the whole thing. Is it that simplistic to put it that way, that the Ryder Cup comes down to a flip of the coin, or do you think there's more to it than that.**

**BILLY HORSCHER:** There's more to it.

**IAN POULTER:** You can't put it down to a flip of a coin. There are lots of factors which help a team win a Ryder Cup. And when you see the golf that was played at Celtic Manor, phenomenal golf that was played there. Obviously Medinah to turn that match around, that's not the flip of a coin. You know, for teams to be able to be successful and to win those cups, you have to have momentum and the momentum is absolutely huge. You know, the epitome of that I guess was at Medinah to see from 10-4 to be able to turn that around to going that even Saturday night 10-6, to then win the first five matches on Sunday to be up. That's momentum. That's not just the flip of a coin, are we going to win that match.

Then when you look at Gleneagles, you know, again momentum is absolutely key. When you look at the board Sunday morning as we teed off, the momentum was red

early. Every player in the European team would have looked at the board and said, oh, no, surely this isn't going to be a rerun of two years ago. And obviously, you know, guys were patient, waited their turn, took their chances and the board obviously turned back blue.

So there's ebbs and flows in Ryder Cup which make great TV for it to become as interesting as it is. It's not the flip of a coin, it's some damn good golf basically. You see hole-in-ones, you see bunker shots holed, you see chip shots holed, you see 50-foot putts holed. You see a run of guys putting six holes on the spin with holing 20-foot putts. That's not the flip of a coin. That's just pure golf at its best and we see it every single time in the Ryder Cup. It's 's amazing TV. What amazes me is how good the actual quality of the golf actually is when you see how many birdies guys make, it's incredible.

**Q. Ian, when you talk about momentum, did you from the start understand how much of a team sport that this event is, or was it something that as you were a part of it longer and longer you realize how really --**

**IAN POULTER:** I don't think you ever realize until you've played a Ryder Cup. Obviously it's easy to look from the other side and comment on how a team gets put together or how the momentum goes together or how you bond as a team. But once you've played on, you get it straightaway and you understand how much of a team you really are and how much of a team you become stronger the more Ryder Cups you play. Your friendship with other players, the bond is so strong and that's something which is unique.

It just amazes me, Stephen Gallacher, yes, I've known Stephen for a long long time as a player but never have I got as close to him as I got in that week of the Ryder Cup. More so in the one week than I have in the 14 years I've known him. So, you know, just five, six days with someone means so much and that will last a lifetime and that's why Ryder Cups are so special. Friendships are grown and they do, they do last a lifetime, it's amazing.

**Q. One last thing on that, is there any explanation for how you raise your game? Have you figured it out in Ryder Cups?**

**IAN POULTER:** I just like the Ryder Cup. You know, I hate losing, it's simple. I hate losing. My match play record's been pretty good. I'm not competing against 155 guys, it's one on one, it's black or white, it's dead straightforward. You beat your guy or he beats you. That's it, dead simple. And I hate losing. I'm proud to say that.

**BILLY HORSCHER:** I hope he hates losing this week.

**Q. How about along those lines that you're also playing for someone else?**



**IAN POULTER:** That is also a factor. Obviously you're not just your own guy. You have 11 teammates, captains, vice captains and a continent or a country. So you're playing not much for yourself and that makes a massive difference. You don't want to let anyone down. So therefore that's where the added pressure comes in, that's where the added tension comes in and that's what creates great drama.

**Q. After your big win, and this applies to Ian as well, but how difficult is it for you to motivate yourself, you know, get up at the crack of dawn for a first tee time, et cetera, et cetera. How difficult is it for you right now? And Ian, with the family, how difficult is it for you to jump on a jet? I know you've got private jets, still you're going to Malaysia and all these places. How difficult is it to start over again come the new year? Again, I would like to know how do you feel.**

**BILLY HORSCHTEL:** It's not very hard for me. If anyone knows me, they know that I work hard and I'm not satisfied with just FedEx Cup. I'm trying to be the best player I can be. If that means that I win tournaments and majors and maybe one day get to No. 1 in the world, that's fine. But the day I wake up and I stop working hard is the day I will put the clubs away. It's in my blood. I love working hard, I love working at the game. I do take my time off to sort of recharge the batteries but it's not hard. There's always another goal, there's always another tournament. There's always something else that you're trying to achieve in this game of golf, and whenever I decide that is no longer there for me is the day that I'll just walk away from the game and I'll be a happy man doing it.

**IAN POULTER:** You know, it's very easy as a professional, you love to compete. So the money stuff aside, I mean, I don't have to work. Billy doesn't have to work again after September. So from that standpoint, that's not the real drive. The drive is to want to get better, to improve, to win tournaments, to win tournaments you've never won before. I would love to win the FedEx Cup. I would love to know what that feeling's like. I would love to win a major. I would love to win a European Order of Merit. There's so many guys, Monty winning seven Order of Merits. I probably don't have the opportunity now to win seven Order of Merits. I would like to win a major. There's so many things that keep me hungry to play golf. Money aside and jets and all that crap, not interested. If I don't want to play golf ever again, I can put my clubs away right now and I can be a happy man. But I'm not, because I want to stay committed to winning tournaments to compete against the best players in the world that keep me hungry to play golf.

So that's the thing that drives players from a competitive standpoint. And yeah, we're earning more money than we could have ever dreamed of, but it's not about the money. This is about winning golf tournaments and testing yourself against the best week in and week out. That's what keeps you hungry, seeing that great guy comes through the game of golf that you want to beat week in and week out.