

ROUND 2 INTERVIEW: JERRY KELLY & STEVE STRICKER
December 9, 2016



DAVE SENKO: Well, Steve and Jerry, thanks for coming in. We'll try to make it pretty quick. Maybe just some general thoughts on your day. Just talk I guess how the day went, especially with the weather, a little bit of a change from yesterday.

JERRY KELLY: Well, this is where you see what Steve's made of. This is really the tougher format mentally. I was very shaky at the start, I just didn't have the swing as much as I normally do. Into the wind like this starting out those first five holes, I was just trying to trap it and that's not the way I've been swinging. So he held us in there, he did a great job of that.

Then made a putt on the last one into the wind on the front side to get us back to even. Then we thought we were going to really start playing well and I just got caught when the wind died and thought I hit a good shot and put it in the only spot you can't be on 9. So I caused a couple bogeys. It was just solid play by him and I was a little more marginal, that was the difference.

STEVE STRICKER: That's not true. (Laughs.) It's just a hard day, it's hard. I'm driving it out there a little past him, so he's hitting all the irons and it's just difficult. It's just a difficult position to put him in every hole and I'm just sitting back watching him hitting the irons. It's tough. You don't want to make a mistake, hit it in the water or plug it in a bunker, but it's going to happen. It's just a difficult day. It's hard to get any momentum at all. You feel like you're just clawing and scratching your way around. So it was a good team effort today again, we just hung in there. We played 4 under on the back side. I was thinking at the turn, we were 4 down at the turn, if we could get within a couple shots going into tomorrow, it will be a good turn of events, and we got to within one. So we're in a good spot. We're going to have to play great tomorrow. Those two guys are hitting it well and putting it well. It will be a challenge for us, but a challenge that we'll look forward to.

Q. How bad was the wind out there and was it more of an effect on that first five holes you were talking about?

JERRY KELLY: Yeah, just hitting balls for 45 minutes straight into that heavy wind and then playing the first five holes. You know, it's just tough not to try and trap the ball towards the hole. I just wasn't releasing the club the way I've been the last three days that I've been playing. It's tough coming out of the north sometimes, I'm not in play shape. I'm happy with the way things have been going and it's just a fun game.

Q. Considering how hard you guys found it, how well did Kuch and Harry play?

STEVE STRICKER: They played great. They had some opportunities on the front. They made some great putts. They really didn't seem to struggle with making any pars where

Jerry and I at times made some really good pars. They were just consistently in the game giving themselves opportunities. They slowed down a little bit on the back side, but again, a 6-under round is, as you can tell by all the other scores, is a pretty good round. Even our 4 under held pace with everybody else. So it was just a difficult day and it was a day where you could get too far behind for tomorrow, so we hung in there and gave ourselves an opportunity for tomorrow.

Q. What will you guys have to do for tomorrow? With the different format and things like that, what will you guys have to do to take care of Harris and Matt?

JERRY KELLY: We have to beat them by two shots.

Q. Do you have a number in mind, though, what you think you might have to do?

STEVE STRICKER: I don't know. I never go out and put a number on things.

JERRY KELLY: Neither do I.

STEVE STRICKER: We're just going to have to play our best, make as many birdies as you can. In that format tomorrow, we're going to have to make a lot of birdies. The weather will probably be a little bit nicer and a little bit warmer, but you've got to get in that aggressive mode again tomorrow. Today was kind of a defensive mode and then tomorrow it's back to being aggressive again and trying to make birdies on every hole.

JERRY KELLY: Strategy-wise, I haven't talked to him about it, but I am going to be farther back. I am going to make sure that he's very comfortable at being aggressive. I've just got to get myself in the middle of the greens and working it towards the pin but not actually going for it as much as I normally would, because he's much closer and he'd be able to have the pressure off and he can go at it then. So I think it will be a good strategy to us.

Q. Do you mean by not having a number, that you never have a game plan?

STEVE STRICKER: Game plan?

Q. Yes.

STEVE STRICKER: Birdie every hole.

JERRY KELLY: That's it.

STEVE STRICKER: I mean, no one will shoot 18 under tomorrow, but that's the mentality I think you've got to have going out tomorrow is you have to try to birdie every hole. And nobody will, but -- I don't think, but scoring is usually pretty good in the best ball. You'll get somebody shooting 13, 14 under maybe depending on the weather, there's been rounds like that in years past. So that's the mentality you've got to have and you've got to be out there

and be aggressive. Not stupidly aggressive, but you've got to give yourself, if we can get two putts at birdies every hole, that's the key. Try to make as many birdies as you can. Like I said, they're playing great and they're hitting it long. Harris English is out there 30 yards ahead of us, so he's got a big advantage that somehow we're going to have to --

JERRY KELLY: 30 yards ahead of you.

Q. In other golf tournaments you make plans, you make game plans and you have a number?

JERRY KELLY: No, you don't have to. Weather is different every single day. If the weather was exactly the same, if the firmness of the ground was exactly the same, then you could maybe have a game plan. But it can switch 180 degrees, the wind. You don't have the same game plan. You can set a game plan that morning after you see the weather, but still it's never going to go as planned. This is a reactionary game as far as I'm concerned. I can't plan to hit the bad shots I do.

Q. So you play with cautiousness and awareness?

JERRY KELLY: Did you say cautiousness?

Q. Like you know what to do?

JERRY KELLY: I just step up on the tee and say okay, let's hit the fairway and then I step up on the next shot and I say I'm either hitting the green or I'm going at the pin and then I try and make the putt, and then I do the same thing on the next hole and the next hole and the next hole. Sometimes it's a green light with a 4-iron, sometimes it's a red light or yellow light with the wedge, you never know.

Q. The guys you're chasing, they finished first, second, second in three years together. What do you think makes them such a good team?

STEVE STRICKER: Well, they're both really good players. But they do, they have a distinct advantage with Harris English hitting it out there literally 30 yards in front of everybody else, and Kuchar has been playing great over the last 10 years or so or however long he's been playing great. There's just a lot of offense on that team and they get along well with one another and they communicate well, it looks like, and they just get along well.

Just like Jerry and I, we get along well. There should be other teams beating us probably, but there's something to that. When you get along with your partner and enjoy being out there with him, it usually adds up to better scores. So I can see that in those two and they're just playing some really good golf. They're going to be tough. They're definitely the favorites to win this thing going into tomorrow, but that's okay with us. We'll just try to play our best.