

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
November 16, 2022

BRIAN HARMAN



PRESTON EDWARDS: We would like to welcome Brian Harman here into the interview room at the RSM Classic. Brian's making his 11th career start in this event, obviously a resident of St. Simons Island.

How much are you looking forward to this week and what's essentially a home event for you?

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, it's always nice to sleep in your own bed. Course looks like it's in great shape. I'll see Seaside today for the first time in several weeks, so excited to get out there. It's going to be cold, it's going to be windy, it will be a challenging week.

PRESTON EDWARDS: Making your fourth start of the season, three top 25s highlighted by a runner-up last week, how are you feeling about your game as we kind of near the end of the fall?

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, last eight months has been pretty fun. I've been working really hard at it and just trying to stay patient and wait for the results to come. Had a good chance in Mexico, just couldn't chase Russell down, he had a great week. Hopefully this week I'll get off to a good start and make a run at it.

Q. We were talking to Sepp Straka yesterday and wondering how often have you had an opportunity to play with him either just practice rounds, recreational rounds or in a Tour event and what's your evaluation of his game to this point?

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, Sepp's a fantastic golfer, he strikes the ball really well. Broke through last year with a win, big strong guy, flights the ball. He's everything you want in a golfer. He's got a good short game and, like I said, I'm most impressed by the way he can control his trajectory. He'll be out here a long time.

Q. Brian, being this event's probably very close to you, very special to you, what do you think this event's going to be like in two years given sort of the uncertainty of what's going to happen in the fall?

BRIAN HARMAN: Well, I think there's tons of moving parts to it, but my caddie and I talk about it all the time how like Greensboro always feel like is one of the most interesting events of the year because everyone in the field's kind of playing for something, you kind of figure out what somebody's made of. The consequences are almost, you know, life and death, guys are trying to keep their card, guys are trying to make the top 30, 70, everyone's really serious that week.



So I think you could see that kind of transition into this, but if it ends up with the same date, because this will be the last event where guys are trying to keep their cards. When Q-School, when you had to finish top 25 to get a PGA TOUR card, I feel like it was one of the most spectated on television events of the year because the consequences are very real and so that sort of intrigue here could be very interesting, I think.

Q. Brian, sort of along the same lines, the change in the schedule having the elevated tournaments, you've got those stacked up and then we've got whatever what the fall's going to amount to. How do you feel about the elevated series and what that does for the tournaments that get them and what that does for the tournaments that are not elevated?

BRIAN HARMAN: Well, I think that, I think it's important that we remain kind of a, you know, the situation remains fluid, like we can change it around. I think that's what's most important, not get so married to one idea and have that be the law of the land forever.

I don't know how I feel about it yet. I'm excited to play in them and I love that some -- I love that Harbour Town and Cromwell are getting the elevated and I think that's important to try to cycle in some new spots that maybe guys wouldn't have gone to normally and being able to showcase some places that guys don't see very often.

I can remember my rookie year at Cromwell, it was not a big tournament during the summer, it was not a highly -- it wasn't -- it was kind of down the vine and then all of a sudden the last five years it's been the best tournament, one of the best tournaments in the summer. So I think that's because guys put it on the schedule and they see it and the place is able to show off what it's got, show the golf course off, show off the amenities and guys come back. It was just a really organic kind of growth for that tournament. I think the elevated events could help other places do that if we'll spread it around and make it work that way.

Q. How much do you think your schedule will change next year with the way the system's changing and how much do you think getting an early really strong finish will impact it?

BRIAN HARMAN: Well, I want to make the Ryder Cup team, that's the most important thing on my schedule for me. I feel like I've been kind of the first man off of two or three of these teams now, so I'm going to play as much as I possibly can and try to accumulate as many Ryder Cup points as I possibly can. I'm fairly certain it's off of money, correct? Is it money for the points, right? So I'll play in all the big-money tournaments that I can to try to accumulate those points.

Q. When you first moved here, what players in the local area kind of took you under their wing and is there anybody you're kind of doing that for now of the younger guys?



BRIAN HARMAN: I'm trying to do that, I try to be as approachable as I can. I come off as a curmudgeon sometimes. Lucas Glover when I first moved here and as of late Davis, Davis Love has really -- Davis, I always say that he's the exception to the rule "never meet your heroes" because the more you get to know the guy, the greater he is. He's always been -- and I've just tried to copy what he does when it comes to the younger guys. He's very approachable, he's forthcoming with all sorts of information, he's just an awesome guy and that's what I try to do to the younger guys.

Q. What's an example many of something you did trying to be like Davis?

BRIAN HARMAN: Let's see, you're going to put me on the spot here.

So like take, for example, like Keith Mitchell. Like Keith Mitchell is a dear friend of mine, but he's a good bit younger than me, but I've just tried to kind of involve myself with him a little bit more in trying to be there whenever he needs anything and just talk to him as much as you can. He loves to talk, so I'm there for him.

Q. Now that you bring up the Ryder Cup and that goal, I know you haven't been able to play on one yet, but you're close to Davis and I'm sure you know almost every captain since you've been here. What kind of captain do you think Zach is going to be given his personality? Hands on, hands off, a player's captain? Seems like he might be a detail oriented guy. Do you have any opinion on that?

BRIAN HARMAN: Zach's personality, I mean, he's a bulldog. He's a fighter and I think that's the kind of captain that you need, especially playing that tournament overseas. You need a hard nosed guy that cares more about winning than he does about the style points and I think he's going to be fantastic.

Q. Get a couple Bulldogs on the team?

BRIAN HARMAN: (Nods head.)

Q. Brian, I don't know if you follow the World Ranking at all or kind of studied how it's changed over the past few months, but there was some pushback from DP World Tour today how this field is getting more points than their field based on the new formula. Do you have any thoughts on -- does that sound about right to you, because this is a 156-man field versus a limited field over there?

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, I think the depth is important. I think the depth of the field's very important because there's guys that are ranked outside of the top 100 that are in this field that aren't going to be ranked outside the top 100 very soon, so I think the size of the field does matter.

And I haven't done a deep dive into the semantics of the World Golf Ranking, but to me it seems like there's less floor and less ceiling and it's more about who's actually in the



tournament. So that to me on the surface level makes sense. I haven't really heard a good argument against that yet.

Q. Going back to guys that you took under your wing, you mentioned Keith. J.T., after he was going through some struggles last fall, is another guy that you spent a little bit of time with. Could you speak to that a little bit?

BRIAN HARMAN: J.t.'s a fantastic player and you watch, you watch the guys, they go through it. We've been through it, Davis has been through it, Zach's been through it. You just see this evolution of kind of how things go on Tour. You start playing well, you're really frustrated, and then you play great and then you start playing, it's just like a big wheel.

I saw J.T. was kind of at the bottom and I just wanted to help him and I just told him like, hey, look, man, like you just have to be -- I know everyone's going to tell you to be patient, but like, no, you have to be patient, you can't force this.

He's like, man, I'm worried about losing my job, this, that. I'm like yeah, we all do, all of us think about that, you're not alone in that, everyone is in this exact same spot and you're either going to pull yourself out of it or you're not, that's your decision.

He ended up playing really well after that. I don't take any credit for him playing well at all, but it was nice that he would listen a little bit. He worked hard and played well, so I was super proud of him.

Q. Brian, can you maybe take a step back and talk about how your game has evolved? How is your game different now than when you came out here? Like what parts of your game are better or different? You said you were working on things to get better, but how has your game changed?

BRIAN HARMAN: So I've always been a pretty good driver of the golf ball and I've always been good around the greens and a pretty good putter.

The thing that I've always felt was missing was my kind of short to mid iron game. I could hit a bunch of fairways. There were a couple years where I was top 50, top 30 strokes gained off the tee and I would be outside of the top 100 in approach to the green, which you're just losing a bunch of strokes that way.

So I've worked really hard on my iron game and I'm getting some more looks at birdie. When you start getting more looks at birdie, you start putting worse because your average putt's longer. So it's all kind of relative on how it -- so I've had to kind of change the way that I practice putting because I'm getting more looks outside of from 10 to 20 feet whereas usually I was chipping it up and making putts inside of 10 feet. It's always something, always a project.

Come on, Rex, what else you got for me, bud?



Q. I can't believe people think you're a curmudgeon.

Q. Brian, how much are you trying to get in Zach's ear about the Ryder Cup?

BRIAN HARMAN: I don't. As I said, Davis is, he's like a second dad to me and he's the president or he was the captain of the Presidents Cup and I wanted to make that team so bad. I felt like I was playing really well, felt like I could have really contributed, but I didn't tell him any of those things. Him and I are neighbors down in Camden County, a couple farms down there, and we've spent tons of time together. We never talked about it. I would never want anyone to think that I got picked because I was someone's friend, like I want to earn my spot. So I made a point to never talk to him about it and I'll do the same with Zach.

Q. You said you were close a couple of times, like the first guy out, which one of those (no microphone)

BRIAN HARMAN: The one that hit me the hardest was I think I was 11th on the list and got left off for Phil. That one hurt. That was, I forget what year it was.

Q. And how does that hurt, like what's --

BRIAN HARMAN: Just get mad and play really well. That's what I did, so it's not the worst thing in the world.

Q. You got a little chip on your shoulder?

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, I think I had like five or six straight top 5s after I got left off that team. It was 2018, 2018, 2017 team maybe, 2018 team started the year off like five top 5s or something.

PRESTON EDWARDS: All right. With that, Brian, thank you for taking the time.

BRIAN HARMAN: You got it. Thanks, guys.

