

Travelers Championship

Tuesday, June 21, 2022

TPC River Highlands

Cromwell, Connecticut, USA

Harris English

Press Conference



TRAVELERS CHAMPIONSHIP

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome the defending champion, Harris English to the interview room here at the 2022 Travelers Championship. Harris, some pretty great memories last year, including that 8-hole playoff with Kramer Hickok. Just some comments on what it's like to be back and some memories from last year.

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, it's awesome to be back. Obviously haven't been playing a whole lot of golf lately, so I was happy to come back here. I didn't want to miss this tournament. Yeah, 80 holes last year was a lot of fun. Had a good time playing with Kramer. I feel like we pushed each other to our limits and had a lot of fun and I was lucky to come out on top.

This is an awesome tournament to win and, I don't know, being back home over the last few months and seeing some of those names on that trophy just makes you realize how big this tournament is, how long it's been around, and a lot of legends in this game have won the tournament. So it's awesome to be a part of that.

THE MODERATOR: You mentioned coming back from hip surgery. You've got a couple starts under your belt. How are you feeling?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Getting closer to a hundred percent. I was happy to make the weekend last week at the U.S. Open. Pretty tough starts out of the gate with Memorial and U.S. Open. But it's nice coming back to a place that I know and can make a little bit more birdies here and a little easier track out here.

So I'm happy with my game. Obviously I'm still rusty and still getting used to it and looking forward to it. Still honing my game some and hopefully will be around on Sunday.

THE MODERATOR: Before we open to questions, I don't know if you saw this, your face on some M and M's.

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, that's kind of weird. I never had my face on M and M's before. I guess from media day some friends sent me that and kind of joked about it, so it's

pretty funny. It's kind of scary looking. I don't know if I want to eat any of those.

THE MODERATOR: With that we'll open it up to questions.

Q. Obviously it's impossible to ignore the news of the day and the news of the times. Just wanted to get your thoughts on what's happening with the LIV Tour and obviously the possibility of Brooks not being here. Just wonder what your thoughts are on all that and where you kind of stand on all that.

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, it sucks Brooks isn't playing. I thought he was in the field weeks ago and obviously to lose a top player like that kind of sucks. You want to play against some of the best guys in the world and it is what it is.

We got a great field this week, with Cantlay and Rory and Xander, Sam Burns, Scheffler, a lot of guys who are playing some really good golf right now. So I think it shows how great a field this place pulls every single year.

People love the golf course. People love coming to Hartford. The community that wraps itself around this tournament. Walking up 18 last year was incredible, the amphitheater that that hole provides.

But I love the PGA TOUR. I've dreamed about being on the PGA TOUR since I was a kid. This is my 11th year out here. Still have to pinch myself every day that I'm playing on the PGA TOUR against the best players in the world. So I enjoy it out here and like I said, with winning that tournament last year, looking at the names on that trophy, that means more to me than anything. Having my name on a trophy with Lee Trevino, Arnold Palmer, you can go down a list of everybody that's won this tournament. You can't take that away from me now, my name's going to be on that trophy for years and years and it's something I'll never forget.

Q. Obviously you've already had a busy morning while trying to prepare to defend, but the player meeting this morning with Jay, can you characterize how that went?



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HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, I was only able to go for about the first 20 minutes. I did a breakfast with the Chamber of Commerce over at the Sheraton, so I was only there for a little bit. But I've talked to a couple guys and a couple guys that I trust that listened and took some mental notes.

But we're in a weird time right now. I know the PGA TOUR, Jay's doing everything he can to inform the players about what's going on. And I know they're having a big meeting this afternoon, so we'll probably know more from that. But I trust they're doing everything they can in the best interests of the players and we got to let 'em go to work.

Q. Some of the details as you would imagine have come out and the conversations about additional fall series and increased purses. Is stuff like this enough to deter people from even more people from leaving?

HARRIS ENGLISH: I think it can be, for sure. One of the things out here on the PGA TOUR, I mean we have a lot of tournaments and I think the fall series has been tough. There's been some great sponsors in the fall, one of my home tournaments, the RSM Classic, is in the fall, so I definitely don't want to see that go away.

But you also, guys have families and they want to play a little less golf. However they can manage that to the best of both worlds of having the top players and the guys who are fighting for their card.

I know they will figure it out, they got a lot of smart guys on the policy board, on the PAC. Jay's a smart guy, they will figure out the best way to do it.

Q. You mentioned meetings, breakfasts and now you're the defending champ. Have you noticed a difference in preparing this week for the tournament as the defending champ as opposed to times when you weren't?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, I mean coming off last week was a grueling week. But I know this golf course well. I can't remember how many times I played here, but I don't think they have changed a whole lot. I know they changed number 17 tee a little bit. But I feel like I can go play the pro-am tomorrow and get ready to play the tournament. Practicing some today. I mean coming down from Boston it's an easy transition with the same grass, the same type of greens, so it's pretty easy to get used to this. You just got to rest, got to get my mind ready for a new week. So I'm going to do that the rest of this afternoon and tomorrow and get ready to play the tournament.

Q. As a guy who is career started here you were down here somewhere and then pre-hip surgery you went all the way kind of back up to the top again. And I would ask you, with that background, when the TOUR is moving toward some degree of elitism, big purses, fewer spots in the playoffs, for the ones who are the elite. How do you think that will change opinions of players depending upon where they are in the pecking order?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, we've kind of had that for the last number of years with the WGCs, some of the invitationals. We kind of had some of that where, if you're a top-50 player in the world you're getting in the best tournaments. But if you're not, you're not getting in some of those no-cut events.

I've been on both sides of it. The way I see it, if you play the best golf, they're going to let you play in the best tournaments. I was at a point where I wasn't getting in a lot of normal events, I didn't get in this tournament a couple years ago based on my FedExCup ranking, and it pushes you to get better.

Because if you kind of have it the best way you can have it the whole time you never really know how to push yourself to get back there. I've had it both ways and I like how it is right now.

Everybody knows that when you step on the PGA TOUR, you shoot the best scores, you're going to be playing against the best players in the world and playing in the best tournaments for the most money.

Q. Not getting paid to make the cut. Obviously this isn't the U.S. Open, but would you be in favor of basically giving anyone who has their card a hundred grand or two hundred grand to start the year?

HARRIS ENGLISH: I actually am a fan of that. Because you have a lot of guys who play on the PGA TOUR that are losing money if they don't have a good year. If they're coming off the Korn Ferry TOUR, they don't get a good head start in the fall, they don't play well, they're not getting a whole lot of tournaments and it's tough. They're traveling all over the world, traveling all over the country.

I think it's a good kind of base to help them pay their caddie, pay to travel. For me, being on the PGA TOUR you can't lose money.

Q. How is the hip after four rounds at the U.S. Open? Are you close to a hundred percent or not yet?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Getting there. Getting there. That

was one of the toughest walks that I can imagine. It's the unstable surfaces walking off tees, walking off greens. I played seven days in a row. I got up there Sunday, played 12 holes and then made the cut and played Saturday, Sunday. So that was the most golf I've played in a long, long time.

Definitely took yesterday to take a day off, get, do some exercises, do some soft tissue stuff. Practicing a little bit today. So I'm definitely recouping a little bit. But it's going to take some time. The best thing for my hip is to keep walking, keep playing and getting it stronger and stronger.

Q. Given how well you know Greg from the Shark Shoot-out did you ever get an offer from LIV?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Not officially. I spoke with Greg six months ago, really early on -- because he's been nice to me. He was great in the Shark Shoot-out, teamed up with Kuchar down there for many years and Greg's always been great. But I haven't officially got an offer.

Q. You're happy here, I take it. You like playing the PGA TOUR I think is what you said.

HARRIS ENGLISH: I am. I am. This is what I grew up dreaming to be a part of and they have been great to me. And looking at memories last year from this tournament, it's hard to replicate that.

For me playing golf has never been about the money. It's a great bonus, but I enjoy playing against the best competition in the world and trying to win golf tournaments and trying to get trophies like I got last year. For me that's why I practice, that's why I play, that's why I push myself to play against the best in the world.

Q. I guess what I'm getting at is there any part of you that wouldn't want to see a number they were offering?

HARRIS ENGLISH: I mean, I don't really think so. I don't think it's time for that yet. I guess it's -- I mean, you see the numbers Bryson and Phil and all those guys are getting and I think a number is just a number. I don't even know what my number would be. I haven't even gotten that far.

Again, I love playing tournaments like this and trying to hold up the trophy at the end of the tournament and whatever check that they put in your bank account, it is what it is.

Q. Is there an awkwardness among the players or do people kind of understand the decisions that players are making? And I wanted to ask you also, do you agree with the decision to suspend the players who

play in the other tour or do you think that they should be allowed to do both?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, I mean I think it would be unfair to the PGA TOUR players for those guys not to be suspended. I mean it would be very awkward for a lot of those guys to be playing this week and it's like, well, you just turned your back on the TOUR, you just went and played this other tour and here we are teeing it up side by side.

So, yeah, it definitely is awkward. Especially if some litigation comes down the road. I mean they're pretty much coming after us, the players. So it's going to be an interesting couple months. I really trust Jay as the head of the PGA TOUR. I think they got a lot of very smart guys in their court and they're going to do what's best for us players.

Q. So just moving away from all the craziness and all the news today, obviously last year being involved in that 8-hole playoff, looking back now a year later, what's the first thing that comes to mind when you think about that experience and all the fans and the energy that this tournament brings every year?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, it's incredible. You've seen a lot of really cool things happen on 18. Jordan holing the bunker shot. I mean, Jim Furyk, didn't he shoot 58 or 60? I can't remember what he shot. So this course leads to unbelievable things happening coming down the stretch. 15 being one of the best short par-4s we play. I mean, in my eye, I mean you can go shoot an easy 3-, 4-over on the back nine or you can go shoot 6-, 7-under. And that leads to anybody winning the tournament coming down the stretch and makes for an exciting nine holes.

But playing that playoff, I mean the fans are incredible. They kept us in it for two hours or so. I don't know how long we kept going back and forth. I lost track of what even hole we were on when we were coming down the stretch like that.

But it's really cool for the city of Hartford to, seems like everybody in the whole town is out here on 18 and it's an incredible experience. It's a great setting for finishing a golf tournament. It's something that I'll remember for the rest of my life.

THE MODERATOR: Harris, as always, appreciate the time. Good luck this week.

HARRIS ENGLISH: Thank you.

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