

U.S. Open Championship 2020

Friday, September 18, 2020

Mamaroneck, New York, USA

Winged Foot Golf Club

Harris English

Flash Interview



Q. Harris, even par-70. A different course out there today, but you must feel good about where you are headed into the weekend and how you played today.

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, I knew starting out, waking up this morning, seeing the wind blowing, obviously seeing some of the scores from this morning, I knew it was going to be tough. It's all you want out there. Just got to grind, got to battle.

You're going to have to make some hard pars out there. You're going to hit it in the rough some, you're going to miss some greens, and just got to figure it out.

I feel like I did it today, got off to a really good start, had a couple birdies early on and kind of hunkered down and grinded on the way back.

I think maybe the last nine holes I made all pars, so very happy with it.

Q. A year ago you were playing the Greenbrier, I think you had kind of conditional status after not quite getting your card through KFT finals. Do you look at that and think, wow, what a difference a year makes? Is it hard to believe you're here in contention?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, it was obviously a lot of hard work. I didn't feel like I was that far off. The margins out here are razor thin. I mean, from not making it through the Korn Ferry finals to here, top 5 or so going into the weekend of the U.S. Open, I mean, it's razor thin lines. I just fixed a couple little things with fundamentals and working with my coach back home, and you gain some confidence, and then you start having belief you can do it out here in the tournament.

I'm pretty happy with my last year and glad I made that turnaround, and looking to keep making strides.

Q. What's his name and what months did you guys start working together?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Justin Parsons down in Sea Island. We started working probably April of last year, so coming up on about a year and a half.

Q. Memorial, right?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah.

Q. What clicked so well between you and Justin?

HARRIS ENGLISH: It wasn't really about reinventing my game. It was about what I did that kind of separated myself or what I did well that was the way I swung the club, and looking at a lot of old videos and getting back to the fundamentals. I had kind of lost that. I didn't have a system I was working on, and kind of went back to that.

Q. What's the hardest shot you hit today, and do you think the average fan watching at home understands the degree of difficulty on some of the shots you have to hit on a course like this?

HARRIS ENGLISH: I mean, when you get wind blowing like this, 15 to 20, and then your targets are so small -- the greens look big on TV, but they don't play that big and you've got to leave them on the right spots. Really those first four holes on the front nine coming back into the wind were really, really tough, and I think I hit driver, 6-iron in the first hole; driver, 4-iron in the second hole; ripped a low 4-iron in the 3; and then 4 is really hard with the back pin.

It's all you want out here. You've got to do everything well.

Q. Does a performance like this validate the kind of year you've had?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, I mean, I don't feel like I'm done yet. I've still got -- we've still got 36 holes to play. I am just looking forward to the challenge. I love playing U.S. Opens. I think this is my fourth or fifth one. I've made the cut in every single one, and I feel like I'm ready to give myself a chance to win coming down Sunday.

Q. You had to get creative on your third shot on No. 1 today. Can you discuss the unique nature of that green and how different it can play day-to-day?

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HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, that's one of the craziest greens out here. When I first saw it on the practice round the first day, it looked like a green straight out of St. Andrews or a links course. It was wild. I was lucky to have that backstop on the left to help me out, and my caddie mentioned that, and we kind of looked at it, and I knew with that shot with the rough and the ball being so above my feet that the ball was going to tend to come out left, and it came out perfect.

Q. Do you ever get recognized in grocery stores as a professional athlete, and how would you assess your career to this date?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, for the first question, I mean, sometimes. I feel like some of the southern cities there's a lot of PGA TOUR fans. I don't know, back home in St. Simons, it's a small town, so you pretty much know everybody. I would say a little bit.

What was the second question?

Q. How would you assess your career to this date?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, I mean, I've definitely -- this is, I think, starting my 10th year out here. It's gone by really fast. Very fortunate to be playing out here. Lucky to have no injuries so far. But I feel like I've still got a lot I want to prove for me of winning majors, playing on Ryder Cup teams. There's still a lot I want to accomplish in this game before it kind of passes me by.

Q. Do you feel like the next step is contending on the weekend? I know you've been in the top 10 going into the weekend but getting it done on the weekend and getting that adrenaline on a Sunday? Is that sort of the next step for you?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, yeah. That's why everybody practices and plays out here. That's what you want. I love feeling that adrenaline on the weekend, especially in a major. I know it's so different without the fans out here. It's easy to get adrenaline from the fans, but you're going to have to kind of create that on your own with you and your caddie out here this weekend.

But yeah, that's the next step. I want to see how my game stacks up with some of the highest levels in golf against some of the best players in golf.

Q. When it gets really hard like this, was there a little bit less chitchat than yesterday, or were you still pretty chatty in the group?

HARRIS ENGLISH: No, we were still chatty today. Brendon and I were both pulling on Davis coming down the stretch. We wanted him to make the cut, and he was grinding hard out there. It's just really hard. But I know he gained a lot of experience out here, and it's pretty awesome -- I never got to play in a U.S. Open in college, so I feel like the earlier he can get out here and learn, the better he'll be.

Q. I know that you've been asked this before, but would you mind reviewing how much Brendon's example of recent comeback helped you or encouraged you?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, I've known B-Todd for a long time, and he's always been a heck of a player, and went through a little bit of a slump and really found it. It was inspiring to me that he put in a lot of hard work and found a system that he believes in and works for him, and it was inspiring to him.

And I've kind of done similar to him. I haven't won twice like he did last year, but hopefully can do that here soon.

Q. But it made you feel like it's more possible perhaps than you might have felt?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, you definitely pull on your friends, and Brendon is a good friend of mine. You kind of inspire each other. I've had a lot of friends win out here, and it kind of inspires you to work harder and see if you can get in the winner's circle, as well.

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