

The Ryder Cup

Tuesday, February 20, 2018

Jim Furyk

Pete Bevacqua

Tiger Woods

Steve Stricker

Press Conference

JULIUS MASON: Good afternoon, everyone. I'm The PGA of America's Julius Mason. Welcome to The PGA of America headquarters in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida and for those of you that are watching and streaming live on Facebook and Twitter, welcome.

I'm joined today by United States Ryder Cup Captain, Jim Furyk, and PGA of America CEO Pete Bevacqua.

Pete, why don't we begin with you as you have some exciting news to share in The Ryder Cup space.

PETE BEVACQUA: Thanks, Julius and it's great to be here with Jim. We had a great afternoon together. I think back to when we were going through our Ryder Cup committee, talking about what we could do as The PGA of America, to quite frankly help Jim, help the team at Hazeltine and we talked about data. We talked about analytics.

I'm looking at our good friend, Jason Acquino, from Scouts who really helped us prepare for Hazeltine and helped captain Davis Love, and excited today to say we are taking that to the next level.

We are introducing Microsoft as our partner in this space and to combine what Jason and Scouts has done really with the power of Microsoft, to provide Jim and his vice captains and the team with everything they need this this area.

As Jim and I were talking this afternoon, whether you're managing a Major League Baseball team, you're coaching a college or NBA basketball team, NFL or college football team, that use of data, the use of analytics is so critical to have this today's sports environment. Jim will use it as he sees fit.

But to be able to utilize a partner like Microsoft, and I can state here today very confidently that this is just the beginning of a really promising relationship between The PGA of America and Microsoft; but how



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can we use player statistics and give that information to Jim to evaluate the players, and also to help him with his captain's picks, how can we make Team USA more familiar with the golf course well in advance; and maybe, and I think Jim would agree, most importantly, really situational data in analytics, the week of The Ryder Cup in realtime.

So to arm Jim and his vice captains with that information, with data and a platform that's easy to use, as I said, to use in a moment's notice, to have that in his mind and at his fingertips as we go into Paris.

So I'm excited about it. I know The PGA of America is incredibly appreciative of what Microsoft will bring to the table and I think it's a good start to hopefully a good afternoon here today.

JULIUS MASON: With this news, we can think back to 1997 when Tom Kite was the United States Ryder Cup Captain, arguably one of the captains that we've worked with that needed more information than anybody else. We wound up shipping Xerox boxes of golf statistics to Spain so he could have it at the ready.

Fast forward to where we are today, it looks a little different now, doesn't it, Jim.

JIM FURYK: It does. It does. I've enjoyed working -- I was with Davis Love in 2016 with his first meeting with Jason and Scouts. I prototypically wasn't a statistically-related golf professional. I think that's why Davis invited me along. But I enjoyed the meeting. I had an open mind. I felt like their work was extremely useful and let's be honest, we have a difficult task in front of us. The United States hasn't won in Europe in 25 years, so we're looking for any edge, any advantage, any help we can get.

I'm excited to have this relationship with Microsoft to give Scouts, to give myself a better opportunity to trade information and it will give us an opportunity as captains and vice captains to help the team to the best of our abilities.

JULIUS MASON: So let's get to your golf game real quick. You began the 2018 season in Los Angeles. You carded a pair of 73s, probably came home a little earlier than you wanted to. Where are you today with



your game, your health and what does 2018, your playing schedule, look like.

JIM FURYK: I think I'm on the mend. Obviously I'm back to playing. It's been six months since I was able to play competitively. I had an injury at the U.S. Open last year to my SC joint, where my clavicle meets my sternum. It ended up that I had a couple options between a possible surgery or really trying to do a lot of rehab to get a lot stronger and to try to improve my posture and strength in my back to try to relieve some of the pressure on my sternum.

I feel healthy. I'm not 100 percent but I'm getting closer, and it was nice to get out last week and really see the guys again to hang out in the locker room, to say hello to everyone, to kind of get the competitive juices flowing.

Obviously I'm not happy with the two 73s, but I did a lot well last week. I have a lot to build on and obviously a lot, also, to improve on. You learn a lot more about yourself in competition than you do practicing at home.

So in a perfect world, I think for this calendar year of 2018, it would be nice to play about 18 events.

JULIUS MASON: Last October, you spent some quality time in Paris with European Ryder Cup Captain Thomas Björn. I think you experienced French hospitality like nobody else really could experience it. Can you tell us a little bit about what your experience was after we watch this video to remind you what happened.

(Video played).

JIM FURYK: Truly, the French have a flair, we know that, but they are so excited to host this event. We visited a local school, Thomas and I captained the French Junior Team. I think there was about a thousand local kids from schools in the neighboring area that came to watch, dinner at the Palace of Versailles, and also visiting the President's residence, as well. I enjoyed his dog as a side note. He's a little wary of the bag, and in particular, the USA side of the bag, I believe.

Just a wonderful trip. They held no stops. We had a blast, and it was truly nice to kind of spend that time with Thomas, talk a little bit about what The Ryder Cup meant to us and how important it was and what a great event it was. But really, this was the tip of the iceberg. The event itself is going to be grand, as well.

JULIUS MASON: Speaking of the event itself, what did you learn about Le Golf National, where the competition will be held?

JIM FURYK: Yeah, Le Golf National is -- I love the golf course. All I had heard since I was named captain a year ago from The European Tour players was: You know, man, we love this golf course; it's a top-three, a top-five on our tour. I was excited to see it, just because of how excited they were.

They've played The French Open there now, I think over 20 times in the last 22 years. It really is a target-oriented golf course. You have to hit the ball straight. You have to be accurate. Coming down the stretch, you've got a lot of water, almost a stadium-like atmosphere around holes 15 through 18.

So I think it's going to be a great venue, not only for The Ryder Cup, for the players involved, but I think the fans, television. Everyone is going to enjoy it. It really has a lot to offer.

JULIUS MASON: Pete, what's your takeaway from the venue?

PETE BEVACQUA: I was lucky enough, three years ago, I actually played in the Pro-Am at The French Open with Thomas Björn, and it well before he was named captain.

But I've gotten to know Thomas well over the course of the last decade or so, and just to play that golf course, where we knew The Ryder Cup was going, at that time obviously didn't know what Thomas's role would be. But just to talk about all things Ryder Cup with him for the better part of four hours and to spend that time with him was really fantastic.

I think Jim said it so well: It's going to be such a great venue because of how it sets up for a Ryder Cup and those final few holes and the amphitheaters that it provides for the gallery and the spectators, and then to have the action and the excitement of a Ryder Cup just outside Paris. That's a powerful one, two purges to say the least.

JULIUS MASON: European Tour's Chief Executive Keith Pelley, is he just as excited as we think he should be?

PETE BEVACQUA: He is. I talk to Keith frequently. I talked to Keith last Friday. We catch up every week or so, and I think for him in his position, this will be his first home event, his home Ryder Cup.

I think walking around Hazeltine with him, it was great to see The Ryder Cup through his eyes, and I think it really opened up his eyes to the power of this event, and I know he's excited and I'm looking at Kerry Haigh, who is our chief championships officer; the relationship

we have with Ryder Cup Europe is so good and so strong, and that just helps makes this event just bigger and better every year.

JULIUS MASON: So Jim, on January 11, a little over a year ago, when you were named captain, you also identified Davis Love III as your first vice captain.

Do you have any news that you can share with us today in that particular area?

JIM FURYK: Julius, today I want to name two more vice captains. That would be Steve Stricker and Tiger Woods.

JULIUS MASON: So at 51 years of age, Steve, he doesn't know what you're he wants to play. He's playing well on both tours. He played well out in San Diego, in Arizona. He finished tied for second in Naples. Why Steve?

JIM FURYK: Well, first of all, Steve is a great friend, just a wonderful family man, and one of the best people I know actually on the PGA TOUR. He's our past Presidents Cup captain. We had a lot of success last year. I think the players depend on him, rely on him, and he has a great rapport with everyone.

But we've talked a lot, and we've served as vice captains together now for a number of different years, and Steve, he's not the rah-rah, he's not the cheerleader in the locker room, not the cheerleader in the team room.

But he has a knack of being able to look through the room and view different players, different situations, and when Steve speaks up and when he's giving advice to our captains, it's been very useful. I think he's that guy that when he speaks, everyone listens because they know it's going to be important.

JULIUS MASON: And I think we have a video of Steve talking about his appointment that we can check out.

STEVE STRICKER: It's a great honor to be selected vice captain for the 2018 Ryder Cup Team over in Paris. I'm ready to get to work to ensure that this Cup stays in America, and we look forward to keeping that momentum strong and going from what we did in Hazeltine and I look forward to the challenge and helping out in any way that I can.

JULIUS MASON: So we saw a lot of Tiger last week in L.A., and we know that we'll be seeing him here in week at The Honda Classic. Why Tiger?

JIM FURYK: Well, first of all, he's been a part of this process from starting back with the task force and how

The Ryder Cup Committee arguably the best or one of the best players of all time.

So what Tiger really has brought to the table for our vice captains is a great knowledge of X's and O's. I think he's done a really good job of pairing players together in foursomes and fourballs. When you look at our team room and you look at a lot of the youth that we have in that team room now with the younger players, a lot of them became golf professionals, fell in love with the game of golf because they wanted to be -- they wanted to emulate Tiger Woods. They wanted to play against him on the golf course.

So to have him in the team room really being that humble guy that's ready to serve and to help them do whatever he can to play better, it means a lot to them in the team room. It's been a huge asset for our captains the last couple years.

JULIUS MASON: And I believe we have a video of Tiger talking about his appointment, as well.

TIGER WOODS: The Ryder Cup is incredibly special to me. I am thankful to once again serve as a Ryder Cup vice captain and I thank Jim for his confidence, friendship and support.

My goal is to make the team, but whatever happens over the course of this season, I will continue to do whatever I can to help us keep the Cup. I'm excited about the challenge.

JULIUS MASON: Let's quickly take a look at the United States points standings and maybe just get your quick take on what you see, what pops up here.

JIM FURYK: Well, you look at the list, we have 12 guys and you look on that list, folks that have played extremely solid, either in big tournaments or solid for the last 12 months and some folks that have won golf tournaments and played very well as of recent.

So that's exactly what we were striving to do when we set this points list. There's a lot of time to go. We have four major championships, three world golf championships, and an entire summer.

But you know, you look at a guy just recently, Bubba Watson, last week, wins, jumps from 60th to 10th. There will be a lot of movement on this list. But obviously 12 solid players and guys that are playing very, very well right now.

JULIUS MASON: Can we get your take on the European standings currently?

JIM FURYK: You look at it, Europe is going to have a

strong team. You look at the representation they have in the Top-20 and the World Rankings, they are going to have some great veteran leadership. You look at guys like Justin Rose and Rory McIlroy, Sergio García.

Henrik Stenson isn't showing up here but a great veteran leader, and then some unbelievable young players. Jon Rams comes to mind with being ranked No. 2 in the world; Tommy Fleetwood who has won at Le Golf National, The French Open last year; Tyrrell Hatton. They are going to have a good mix of both veteran leadership and also young players that are doing well in the world of golf right now.

JULIUS MASON: Thank you, Jim, Pete.

Q. Nearly 20 years will have passed since the '99 Ryder Cup at Brookline where you weren't on the team. To what extent do you think the captains have managed to tone down it, the rowdy atmosphere that prevailed there, while at the same time retaining the special atmosphere of The Ryder Cup that nobody wants to lose, and do you have any particular plans along those lines?

JIM FURYK: Well, I think that Thomas and I have talked. I think we're both very aware of the atmosphere. I mean, I know that the European fans are great. I know they are loud. They have got their chants. They have got their songs and they are going to support their team and make it that much more difficult for us to be successful there.

But both sides from Ryder Cup Europe to the United States Ryder Cup Team, we want our fans to have a great time. We want them to be loud and vocal and cheer for their team, but there's no place in golf and in this event, really, for misbehavior or misconduct. I know we're striving for the best that we can get, and I would expect that in Paris.

Q. Having played with Tiger as a partner and vice captained with him, if that's a verb; if he gets in pickable range, like, say, 18th or 20th in the standings, do you think he would better serve his country as a player or vice captain?

JIM FURYK: I really enjoyed his answer last week. Was that you asking the question?

Q. Might have been.

JIM FURYK: And he said both. I think Tiger and I have crossed that bridge, especially when I asked him to be a vice captain and wanted him to be a part of this team.

The idea was, is it possible to do both; is it possible to play. I think what we decided at the time was really to do what was best -- I want to do what's best for Tiger

and I want to do what's best for the team and that would be a bridge we cross when we got there.

If he could be valuable as a player, I mean, I'm sure we would want him playing on this team. But there's so much time to go.

I think the good news/bad news for someone like Tiger Woods is he's played now, what, three or four events? His event in December and two official events this year; he had a great finish in San Diego and we're already talking Ryder Cup, right. That's the nature of being Tiger Woods and obviously being one of the greatest players or the greatest player of all time. I'm an husband so see how he plays this year and we'll see how things go and we'll do what's best for him and the team.

Q. Still a good answer --

JIM FURYK: (Laughing) personally thought it was a great answer.

Q. I hate to trust my memory, but did you not credit -- were you credited with the winning point in one Ryder Cup and suffered the losing point in another; and if my memory's accurate, what was that like and how does that help you as a captain, having shouldered both bags?

JIM FURYK: Yeah, I think it was a good experience for me to be in both situations. At The Belfry in 2002, I was on the green and I was playing Paul McGinley. Paul made about a 12-footer on the last hole to halve our match. We both made par. Both got the ball up and he made a 12-footer to halve the match. That was the half-point that got them to 14 to retain the Cup. And, you know, the celebration started right there on the 18th green.

It's disappointing to be in that situation. I guess it's like being at a baseball game and striking out and being the last out in the ninth I think. I understood, and it hurt at the time. I had a hard time looking Curtis in the eye that evening, and knowing it wasn't my fault, it was a team atmosphere, but you hate being in that situation.

I guess the flipside of that was at Valhalla in 2008, I won my match on the 17th hole. That was enough to get to 14 1/2, and the celebration then started on 17.

Again, I didn't win The Ryder Cup, but it was nice to be in that situation. It might have healed a few wounds from The Belfry in 2002. It was unique. I think it gave me perspective, being in that situation in 2002. It gave me perspective. Each and every match we have, someone on either side is going to be in those shoes, and most of the time I've kind of made my way over and shook that person's hand or put my arm around

them and realize how they feel, whether it was on the opposing team or ours.

Q. You have known Tiger a long time. Do you think his attitude towards The Ryder Cup has changed in recent years, or was the perception previously that maybe he didn't care so much for it, was that actually an unfair one?

JIM FURYK: I think it would be best for him to answer that, but I would guess some of it's probably perception. I think Tiger was cast in a position on a team when he was very young, where we had veteran leaders, older players; Mark O'Meara's friend and he -- and Tiger, comes out as possibly a 23-year-old and maybe expected to be a leader because he was the No. 1 player in the world at the time.

Maybe his backseat role and maybe giving those veterans a little respect and letting them lead the team was maybe perceived as a backseat and now you fast forward and he was so animated and anxious to be a part of our Ryder Cup committee and helping mold our future. And now excited about being a vice captain, both for Davis Love in '16 and Steve last year at the Presidents Cup in '17.

You know, I'm assuming that was probably perception. I saw the fire, I saw how excited he was to play alongside him as a teammate and I saw that also as a partner in fourball and foursome matches. I've enjoyed the camaraderie and I've enjoyed working alongside him as a vice captain. So it's great to have him.

Q. I don't know if there's any analytics for this, but we seem to have a problem as you alluded earlier to winning overseas. Can you talk about what exactly you've thought about in that realm and what you think you can do to make the difference this time?

JIM FURYK: If I were to be honest, you look at -- it we had an issue with winning there for a little while, if that's correct. We have got 2016 under our belt, but what we haven't been able to do in '99, and then again in '08, was turn around and go in on European soil. I know Jason from Scouts has got a couple of ideas about that we've talked about. He's sent me a couple e-mails regarding that and what he's seen.

It's difficult. We're playing, again, it's 25 years. So the more that adds up, the more pressure we put on ourselves and the more difficult it becomes. I think we're playing on a golf course that they know and that they love and that they know.

One thing that Europe's done well is they play on courses where they hold European Tour events. Most of their players have access to courses that our players

haven't seen before. They have a home-field advantage, which is very-wise, and here they picked a venue that their players like and it's an event that leads up in a series to The Open Championship, large purses.

It's going to have a very strong field. You're going to see most of their players there playing the French Open and they have a crowd that's been second to none. They are loud. They are boisterous and we've been out played, right. They are going to set the golf course up to their liking to where they think they have an advantage. Those are all obstacles that we'll have to face.

And what I'm looking for is 12 guys that relish that; that enjoy going over there and knowing that it's going to be difficult, knowing that their fans are going to make a lot of noise, and they are going to enjoy that and want to show off for the world. That's the 12 guys I want.

Q. I think I am the only French in the room.

JIM FURYK: Okay.

Q. I would like to ask you if you can tell us any word in French, any dish or any wine?

JIM FURYK: Any word, any dish or any wine? I'm a big fan of Bordeaux and also White Burgundy (laughter). I'm going to butcher the name but I'll go with Chassagne-Montrachet (laughter).

Q. Can you spell it?

JIM FURYK: Really? C-h-a-s-s-a-g-n-e, M-o-n-t-r-a-c-h-e-t. (Applause). It's probably wrong. You all just didn't spell it right.

But favorite dish, I'll go with -- I'm going to butcher again. My French is bad. I have no work on that before we go over to Paris, but we'll go with like a coq au vin. You know, I guess when Tabitha traveled over there, we've eaten, duck seems to be a popular dish, so l'orange, very good.

And what was the last question? A French word? I can't go with "Oui"? (Laughter).

JULIUS MASON: He would have been such a waste in Louisville with all this talent.

JIM FURYK: I was paired with all the Southern folks in Louisville, so I was in the redneck pod. So I had to learn a whole other language there, as well.

Q. You talk about not really being a stats guy, but what was the discovery you might have made that proved valuable that you might not otherwise have run into?

JIM FURYK: I was interested really interested and open-minded and tried to stay very quiet. That's not one of my specialties is staying quiet. But I was interested. I read; Jason provided us a lot of reports, long e-mails, pictures, which is good for me, and charts, and I was really interested. A lot of it was ideas for pairing players together. It was a different look.

This team is -- they are golfers but they are coming from a different perspective than we look at maybe as golf professionals. It was nice to get a fresh look on things, and I think it was very useful. I think it's a part of the puzzle. It's a nice part of the puzzle, a big part of the puzzle. I think if you talk to Davis, he found it useful.

I enjoyed it because it was another way of looking at things for me. Maybe you look at personalities; there's a number of different traits that go into pairings and putting the team together, the four captain's picks, what may be missing on team, what could be needed, analyzing the golf course and just seeing things from a totally different perspective, and sometimes stepping out of the box that we've put ourselves in and looking at things in a different way is very useful and that's what I found.

Q. You mentioned The French Open. I know it's a few months before the actual Ryder Cup itself, but will you be playing The French Open?

JIM FURYK: I don't believe. I haven't inquired about it yet. I'm going to go visit again this summer. I want to play the golf course myself. I have played it this past summer. So I haven't inquired yet about The French Open. I guess I wouldn't -- I'm not saying no but it's not something that is on the plan at the moment.

Q. Just a quick follow-up, I know it's June, but will you encourage some of your leading players who may be going across for the Scottish, the Irish or The Open to perhaps stop off and play?

JIM FURYK: I would like to see that. I think my goal is to respect everyone's schedule and what they have going on with their family, with their sponsors and with the events that they like to play, as well, for the U.S. Taking time out and playing an event also isn't gaining points for us, as well. So for folks to do that, you would probably assume it would be someone that would be high up on that list.

Yeah, I would love to see that happen. Just love to see for course setup, pin placements, get an idea of the golf course and would hope to see some guys -- I would like to see some guys get some rounds around it before we head over there.

Q. Past captains have talked about Tiger being a

proficient texter with ideas and teams. This many months out, how much is he texting you now and does he like digging into those numbers already?

JIM FURYK: I don't think as far as looking at the numbers. We've really kept in touch, the folks that I captained with last year in The Presidents Cup, we've all kind of kept in touch. We had a nice little texting chain going and we've all kept in touch. I've talked to Tiger.

Right now the X's and O's part and the nuts and bolts, it's probably a little early for that.

JULIUS MASON: Mike from Facebook wants to know: Would you mess with the Reed/Spieth pairing or do they keep playing together until they falter?

JIM FURYK: They sure have been strong. I think I'm going to get that Thomas Björn on the European side is banking on the fact that they won't be split apart. But what you're trying to do always is put your four best pairings on the golf course at any given time, maybe not necessarily your best pairing, but your four best.

You know, that's what we'll look into. Looking at it from face value right now, it's hard to split that team up.

JULIUS MASON: Jim from Twitter wants to know if you'll be adding any additional vice captains.

JIM FURYK: Yes, both Ryder Cup Europe and USA have the ability to have five vice captains. I would imagine, and I would think, that I will have five there and we'll name two at a later date this year.

I think kind of seeing how our points list shakes out, identifying folks that will be involved with The Ryder Cup for years to come will be very important and I look forward to naming those two at a later date.

Q. A lot was made prior to Hazeltine with the task force and whatnot and trying to get a little more continuity and success, so to speak. How important is this, obviously Strick being involved and potentially being a guy down the line, and Davis still involved and whatnot, could you talk about the importance of that to keep this chain going and if you're seeing successful results from that, even just from Hazeltine?

JIM FURYK: I think time will tell. It started in this building what was called the task force and then moved to The Ryder Cup Committee. You know, Tiger and Phil and Davis are on the committee as players and Pete and Paul and Suzy from The PGA of America.

I think the idea there was to create some symmetry, to basically have the same offensive coordinator year-in

and year-out and run the same system to give these guys the best opportunity to succeed.

When I look at my vice captains now and look at Davis Love, Steve Stricker, Tiger Woods, they have all been a part of what we tried to accomplish. And you said, has it been successful; well, I think right now, we're getting our feet wet. We've had one Ryder Cup since those committee meetings. We won that Ryder Cup. But our goal, really, was to be more long term. My thought was to, hey, let's play ten Ryder Cups. Let's build on this.

Now we're going to run the same system but we want to build, we want to grow and we want to change and we want to get better each and every year. So I see Davis and Tiger and Steve as part of that to help the growth and to help the change and to get better.

You know, it's an ever-ongoing process. 20 years from now, we can look back and we can see, were we successful, did we win, six or seven. We won more than we lost and if we do that, I think we're successful, but in order to do that, in order to win six or more, we've got to win on foreign soil.

You know, I want to look at it from a long-term, but it's important for us to go over to Europe and be successful in the next ten years.

Q. How will you balance playing an 18-event schedule, while also keeping an eye on the standings and trying to have the best team in what I assume is a full-time job in a Ryder Cup year.

JIM FURYK: Well, I think it's an important one for me to be out on Tour and be out there playing. I have an opportunity to play practice rounds with guys that are high up on the point the list, that are friends of mine. Strick and I are going to play some holes at Valspar in a couple of weeks when he comes back to the TOUR.

So I think it's important for me to be visible and for those guys to see me and talk to me. My players and possible players are going to have some ideas for me, as well, so I think it's important to be out there.

The other part, how do I balance that. I mean, you manage your time, but I have a wonderful team. I three vice captains already and with Julius, Susan Martin and Pete's team here at The PGA of America, Kerry Haigh, I have a wonderful team that I can rely on and they have been a huge help so far. So it's possible.

I need to play. I need to be visible on TOUR. If I didn't play this year, I'd still go out on the road. If I was hurt, I would still go out on the road because I would want to see these guys and I would want to be around them.

Q. Bubba the other day was talking about how he's

been chewing your ear off a little bit. Is that an exaggeration, and if you can speak to him a little.

JIM FURYK: Well, it's an exaggeration maybe of how. Everyone knows Bubba; he's playful. He'll walk by and say, "Hashtag-earpiece" as he's going by. "Just sayin'" as he goes by.

He was a nice addition to our team in '16 and what he did for that team, to be ranked seventh in the world, and he was passed up as a captain's pick and to handle that so graciously, wasn't playing his best at the time. To handle that so graciously and tell Davis: I want to be there, I know you have an open spot, I know you have room for another vice captain, I'd love to do it; I don't know many people that would have been passed over in the position he was in that would be that gracious and that warm and then give his time and all that effort to help his friends do well, and a lot of them, like Snedeker, mentioned how great he was to have in the team room.

I thought it was phenomenal. So duly noted. I've let Bubba know that I think a couple things: I think one, that he's kinda young and really kinda talented. His first and foremost should be to make my team.

We've had that conversation already before we won in L.A.; that I really believe in his talent and really believe in his ability and I love watching him play golf. I'd like to see him qualify for that team and come to Paris as a player and be a veteran leader in that team room.

You know, we'll cross -- if that doesn't happen, we'll cross the VC role and cross that bridge when we get there just like we will with everyone else. I was really happy for him; that he played so well. Looked like he got a little behind on the back nine and then took off, made three birdies and won the event by two. So I was excited to see it.

Q. One of our local guys, Brooks Koepka, played very well as a rookie two years ago and he's sidelined with the wrist injury. Wonder how you'll approach a guy like him that may be missing a few months of golf this year.

JIM FURYK: Yeah, I think first and foremost, any time you're dealing with an injury, any time someone's hurt -- I reached out to Brooks just by text and just wished him my best. I had some wrist injuries myself; went through two surgeries.

So really, I just wanted to let him know that I was really worried about him, cared about him, just wanted to see him get healthy. And I know the Masters is first and foremost on his list right now and I would bet that making The Ryder Cup Team would be, as well. But in order to do that, I'd like to see him get healthy and play

well.

So he's in great position after winning the U.S. Open last year. I want to say he's second or third in points. He's in a unique position where he can withstand a few months away from golf and come back and play well. I'd like to see him, for the team's sake, I'd like to see him in top form in September, but I know in his condition, he'd like to be in top form come April and probably be in good position to play four major championships this year.

JULIUS MASON: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for joining us today, and we look forward to seeing you all in Paris in September.