

Sony Open in Hawaii

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Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Waialae Country Club

Brian Harman

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, we'd like to welcome Brian Harman into the interview room here at to the Sony Open in Hawai'i. You just said it, you love to be here in Hawai'i. You're making 13th consecutive start.

Just get an opening comment on returning to Waialae Country Club.

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, never missed a year. Love it. My family loves coming here; love bringing them.

Beautiful place. Beautiful weather hopefully. The golf course suits me, so excited to get going. Nice to get off to a good start of the year last week. Maui is a great place to start your year.

Q. After some time off over the holidays, like you said, finishing T5 last week, how important was that to get off to a good start?

BRIAN HARMAN: I was as surprised as anyone. Took a lot of time off this off-season, but felt like I got the bug again, ready to work really hard, and see where the year takes me.

Q. In terms of taking a lot of time off, how much golf do you think you played in November, December? How many rounds-ish?

BRIAN HARMAN: Set the over-under at two. Two total rounds. Yeah, somewhere around there.

Q. Is that something like you planned to do that or just happened, you were doing other things?

BRIAN HARMAN: After last year, especially after the Ryder Cup, I was really exhausted. I really needed some time to just completely get away from it.

The only way I'm going to play well at the beginning of this year was to take that time. You have to build in that period. You have to have things you like -- at least I do. I have to have other things I enjoy doing and I can occupy

my brain.

Q. Is there something besides just feeling mentally refreshed after that break? Anything you just notice intrinsically out here that helps because you feel more refreshed, and kind of like at the end of the season?

BRIAN HARMAN: What's interesting is the longer you take off, the harder it is to start when you come back. We're packing up to go to Maui and I can't believe that I still don't want to go play golf right now. I'm in off-season mode.

Once Maui started going and I started preparing I was like, this feels really good. Like I really enjoyed last week.

I loved trying to compete, chase down Kirk on Sunday; all that stuff is why I play the game. So a lot of good feelings and like really excited to keep going.

Q. You ever stayed with Kirk on the road in the last year?

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah. Yeah, he's done a really good job trying to -- we had the greatest time in college. We have the best group of friends. Amateur golf and stuff we would all stay together, and Kirk over the last couple years has done a good job trying to get everybody back together. We have like a group thread where they are trying to --

Q. The bulldog thing, right?

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, trying to organize guys splitting houses. Our kids are getting bigger and they're not traveling as much and we're by ourselves, so he's been kind of the ring leader for that.

Q. Do you feel like you have a big advantage over a lot of the guys in the field, not this week, but just because of your place in the (indiscernible) events?

BRIAN HARMAN: Certainly helps. Helps you build a schedule, but you still feel like the pressure of trying to do well in the FedExCup, because like even though I have a long exemption, which is really great, if you're not in the signature events it's going to be a hard road to get back



into them.

I'm trying to stay as sharp as I can to try to finish as best I can on the FedExCup. I'm already looking at the schedule like, all right, going to have play here, here, so no matter what stage you're at, it's always the same amount of stress as far as like where to finish, how much you're having to play.

There is always like a hill to climb.

Q. It's early, but can you draw a comparison to what you're feeling inside to trying to kind of protect your position and starting out?

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, I keep trying to like remember -- obviously I would've been stoked to start the year with T5. Gives you a little bit of breathing room.

Q. (Indiscernible.)

BRIAN HARMAN: Thanks, man. Thanks for keeping up. (Laughter.)

There is just -- like you just learn our to live with that stress of like either trying to win a golf tournament, keep your job, trying to bump your way up the FedExCup. It's always there. That stress is always there no matter what stage you're at.

Q. Removed from it all from a year or so, sometimes been a trap when a good player takes that huge step and wins a major that you have to live up to being a major champion.

BRIAN HARMAN: Right.

Q. Swing-wise, have you felt that, and if you do, how to you resist that?

BRIAN HARMAN: So I've only won three times. Other two times I didn't really like the way that I responded to winning. It was like I worked so hard. All I what happened to do was win a tournament. I would win and you have to take a breather. Thank God. That finally happened.

The difference I felt after winning The Open was more of like, wow, that was so cool. I would do anything to do that again. I am almost like extra motivated to stay at that level where I know I'm in a place where if I popped off a big week something cool could happen.

I'm super motivated to keep my game in a place where I'm ready to do something else if that makes sense.

Q. Nothing like swing-wise?

BRIAN HARMAN: No, no, I just, to me I proved to myself that I'm capable of doing things that I didn't realize I was able to do, so if I stay in that mind frame and I can execute, then hopefully I'll surprise myself a few more times before I'm done.

Q. I know this was your first start as a TOUR member in 2012. Any vivid memories from that week?

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, I have a funny anecdote from that week. Playing with Matt Every, one of the funniest guys. There is always a couple sponsor exemptions, so we're playing with this kid, and Matt and I, he's very nervous and there is photographers all over the place.

He dribbled a couple off the tee boxes and Matt and I made the comment, don't think this kid's got it. Don't think this guy is gonna make it: Hideki Matsuyama.

Q. So he did make it.

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, so Matt and I would joke about that. Yeah, we missed on that one.

Q. He really did top the shot?

BRIAN HARMAN: He was probably like 16, 17 years old. I'm whatever, 22, 23, 24, however old I was. He's like nervous beyond all belief. Missed the cut. Didn't play good at all.

Q. Ever bring it up to him?

BRIAN HARMAN: I don't think I've ever talked to Hideki about it. Matt and I talk about it all the time. Win some, you lose some.

Q. Did you see any clips of his in the booth last week?

BRIAN HARMAN: I heard a couple. Thought he did a great job. We've got some mutual friends that love golf, and I texted them and they all said he was great. I knew he would. He's a witty dude. He was kind of born to do that I think.

Q. Random, but was what are your thoughts on Fran Brown? I know there is a unique -- the Georgia, who is the Syracuse coach.

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, we're going to miss him. He was incredible for us. He's a great recruiter. I have some Syracuse ties. My wife is from upstate. My father in law is a huge Syracuse fan, season-ticket guy. I'll be pulling on

them. I'm almost positive he'll do good up there.

Q. What's your strongest memory from the Ryder Cup?

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, I just think that that Saturday that Max and I shared where we won two matches and had like this really incredible day. Like we bonded -- felt like we made like eight years of memories in a day it felt like.

We just really, really bonded over that. I got to watch him be as good as he -- for me, like I'll never forget that Saturday at the Ryder Cup. Obviously wish it would've turned out differently. Wish we won and wish we have two more days to play against them.

I feel like I found my partner in any of those things forever.

Q. (Indiscernible.)

BRIAN HARMAN: Max and I really started -- I don't want to say we started being friends because we were always friendly. I didn't know Max that well. Over the last six to eight months we started getting pretty close. Started just cutting up a whole lot. It happened organically. Just a really cool experience.

Q. (Indiscernible.)

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, when we first got there the stats guy said that we were one of the better matchups for Four-Ball. Not Four-Ball, alternate shot, foursome.

When we talked about it we were both really excited to play with each other. I wish we -- we ran into a buzz saw Friday morning and got beat, but all day Saturday it was just one of those special days. Max was playing great, I was playing great. Man, this is so much fun.

Q. You guys are both smart people. What's the difference in your intelligence level?

BRIAN HARMAN: Intelligence? (Smiling.)

Q. In terms of what you know and how your mind works.

BRIAN HARMAN: Well, off the course we probably couldn't be more different people. He's west coast, University of Cal Berkeley. I'm a red neck from south Georgia. On the golf course he's a killer and I love that mentality about him.

He wants to beat you, beat you by a lot, and look good doing it. He is a total competitor, and for me, as a partner,

you couldn't ask for a better one.

Q. Even though this is kind of where it started for you professionally, when did you start feeling like you're a veteran out here?

BRIAN HARMAN: I think when you start showing up to this tournament and you don't recognize anyone that's here. That's when you know you've been out here a while. You're looking and you're like, man, someone letting their kid out there putting? No, that guy is a rookie. Okay, here we go.

Q. Has that hit yet?

BRIAN HARMAN: It's getting there. It's getting there. Yeah, this is my 13th year, so I think it's full on veteran status now.

Q. (Regarding bags.)

BRIAN HARMAN: How many bags? Zero. Zero. How many tournament bags?

Q. Yeah, when you see a guy on the range...

BRIAN HARMAN: Man, I learned a long time ago that people that look up and down that range don't last very long out here. You look down that range.

Q. (Indiscernible.)

BRIAN HARMAN: Well, they've changed the course a little bit. 10 is different; 11 is different. No, it's still really hard to hit the fairways here. Rough can be really thick. A lot of flier lie stuff.

It's all about getting in the fairway, and when you get a day that you're hitting a lot of fairways, you have to attack. That's the day you got to go low.

Q. Feel like people are looking at you differently now that you are a major champion?

BRIAN HARMAN: I mean, maybe a little bit, but all the people that are in my circle, the people that I care about, they give me just as much grief as they always have.

I wouldn't want someone close to me that would treat me differently for something I've done on the golf course.

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