

# FedEx St. Jude Championship

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Memphis, Tennessee, USA  
TPC Southwind

## Brian Harman

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome 2023 Open Champion Brian Harman to the interview room here at the FedExCup St. Jude Championship. A couple weeks since we've seen you. Maybe start with a couple comments about what the last few weeks have been like.

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, they've been a whirlwind. It's nice to get back out on the road. I'm excited for the Playoffs. It's awesome being home. In the back of my head, though, I still wanted to get back to work, and really excited to be here.

#### Q. What did you do with your time?

BRIAN HARMAN: A variety of things. Got on the tractor, like I said, got my place good and mowed. Spent some time with my family up at the lake and probably partied a little too much.

Like I said, nice to get back on the road and get back to work.

THE MODERATOR: You enter the week No. 6 in the FedExCup standings. Just a little about the state of your game.

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, was trending before the Open. Haven't done a lot the last couple weeks so we're going to be knocking some rust off for a couple days, but I'm hoping to be ready to go by Thursday.

#### Q. With your position at 6, is it a goal to win the next couple weeks, or is it to maintain going into the TOUR Championship, try to get closer?

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, I'm going to try to push it as much as I can, try to improve my position every week. Just going to try to play the best golf that I can and see where that winds me up.

#### Q. As we look forward to next year, we've all known



that 70 was the number down from 125, so you knew what you were up against. Does that seem like the right number to you?

Secondly, for the big events next year, there's going to be four exemptions. Does that seem like a good number, too high, too low? What are your thoughts on that?

BRIAN HARMAN: It's hard to know. I'm certainly curious as to how it's going to play out. Obviously 70 is a hard number. Our TOUR is very deep. There's a lot of parity, a lot of talent. There's been several years where I wouldn't have been inside the top 70.

It's just really difficult, and I think the TOUR is in a spot where they're as open-minded as they've ever been as far as being able to change and adjust, and if this doesn't feel right, then I'm confident that we'll get it right.

#### Q. What do you think about four exemptions?

BRIAN HARMAN: Four exemptions, I think you have to keep the sponsors happy. I think exemptions into tournaments are a part of the game. It's part of the way that the TOUR operates.

Do I think -- I wish it would just go right down the list and just be a pure meritocracy, but I understand that there's some gives that you have to give to the sponsors.

#### Q. If they bumped the number from 70, would it be called the Justin Thomas rule?

BRIAN HARMAN: Well, I was very proud of the way Justin stuck it out. You could just see the emotion on his face. He wanted to be here very badly, and that just shows his character in the game.

They might Justin Thomas rule. I don't know. I wish he was here.

#### Q. When you were introduced there as Open Champion, I saw you crack a smile. What's the past few weeks been like as that's sunk in?

BRIAN HARMAN: I will say that life is better as a major



champion than not. It's been a wild ride, man. I've kept the Claret Jug right on top of our kitchen counter. My wife has asked me to move it several times, and it's like, no, that's a hard no, it's going to stay right here.

I've caught myself walking by it looking at it, and be like, damn, man, I still can't believe it happened. I'm very grateful, very thankful. It was a very wild experience.

**Q. Did you get advice from anybody on how to decompress coming off a high like that, or did you just kind of figure it out on your own?**

BRIAN HARMAN: I had a little chat with Scottie Scheffler yesterday. He's always so gracious. Just about how he's dealt with -- I've always enjoyed going out to dinner when I'm on the road by myself, just going to a hole-in-the-wall place and getting dinner, and it's probably going to be a minute before I get to enjoy that again.

There's guys that have to deal with it to a much greater scale than I've had to. I've asked a few of them how they kind of handle it.

**Q. When the season began, what was the number in your head? Was it top 70, or was it 50, knowing what 50 meant?**

BRIAN HARMAN: I had a really good start to the fall.

It's funny what we do as players. It's like, when the cut was at 70, there was always 70 guys, and then when the cut went to 65, it's always 65. You're constantly battling those like fringe accomplishments, I kind of call them. For the longest time, got to get inside the top 50 because it changes my whole schedule next year, and then you get into the top 50, and it's like, well, I've got to get to the TOUR Championship so I can have a two-year exemption or I can do this or do this.

I keep trying to go back to the same thing of what I'm really trying to do is play the best possible golf that I can, and when I do that, I'm very successful, and when I don't do that is when I end up struggling for a top 70 or struggling for a top 50 or struggling for a top 100 or whatever it is.

**Q. You probably can set your schedule pretty much with the signature events and so forth, and I know this is maybe hard to look this far in advance, but do you see yourself not playing in some events that you have normally played in because of these pockets of big events now?**

BRIAN HARMAN: Perhaps. It just depends. It would be more because of rest and me being a 36 year old who's

been out here for a long time and played a lot of golf tournaments.

The weeks that I take off will be because of rest, not because I don't necessarily want to go to a certain place, because I think everywhere that we stop on TOUR has a really special environment.

I've played almost all of them, and I've enjoyed going to all of them. I enjoy my profession. I like playing golf. I've played 25 to 30 events every year I've been on TOUR, and I like it. I enjoy it.

**Q. Do you feel like a better player than you were a month ago?**

BRIAN HARMAN: No. No. I don't feel like -- I definitely didn't yesterday when I was trying to warm up after not hitting balls for a few days.

I'm just really content to try and see what I can do and how good I can get. I felt like when I played my best golf as a junior and amateur that I really wasn't competing against anyone. I was just competing with kind of myself and my standards.

I'm going to keep trying to improve my standards and try to out do them.

**Q. At what point from the time you left Hoylake did it actually sink in what you had done?**

BRIAN HARMAN: There's like different layers of it sinking in. So I go visit my family -- we rented a lake house, and after a few days I started feeling kind of normal, and then I go home and I have this just overwhelming support and a greet-and-meet at the airport. Then it takes a few days for that to sink in.

Then yesterday I come out here to hit balls, and I was seeing all my fellow players, and it's the first time I had seen them, and everyone is congratulating me.

It'll be another few days to try to let all that sink in.

**Q. What's been to you the most memorable moment you've had with that little trophy?**

BRIAN HARMAN: I've had several. We had a moment, my agent and I, Jeremy Elliott, he's been very instrumental to my success. We had a moment together. We got done partying Sunday night and we were getting picked up at 3:00 a.m. for our flight, and it's 1:30, and I'm like, do we go to bed, and he goes, no, we're not going to bed; are you crazy? So it was just him and I and the jug sipping a cold

beer at 1:30 in the morning, just like, man, how cool is this.

Then flying home and having so many buddies and friends and people there to greet me when I got back, just that kind of stuff, just it means a lot.

**Q. Has anyone ever greeted you at the airport before?**

BRIAN HARMAN: I mean, other than like my mom with some balloons coming home from some junior tournament, no. Yeah, my wife and kids, they greet me all the time.

**Q. What happened yesterday? Wasn't there someone at the airport?**

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, autograph guys at the airport yesterday. How do they know?

**Q. Who you were or that you were there?**

BRIAN HARMAN: That I was there. I flew with Harris English's family. He came over from Greensboro and I flew up from St. Simons, and yeah, it's a new experience, people kind of recognizing me.

**Q. Did you ever hear from Kirby Smart?**

BRIAN HARMAN: Yes, I heard from Kirby. He's a hell of a guy, that Kirby. I've always admired successful people that are able to maintain and just keep attacking their success with just total vigor. It's always nice to hear from Kirby.

**Q. Given everything that's happened over the past two months, do you think that Jay Monahan should keep his job?**

BRIAN HARMAN: I think Jay is a very qualified leader for our organizations. Without Jay Monahan, I don't know if we make it through COVID. His leadership and his bravery through that -- we were the only sport operating, and I can remember we were on the range and in Connecticut, and it's peak COVID, and there was guys that were going down left and right, like this guy is positive.

The world was scared, we were all scared, and we hear Jay is flying up, and I'm like, well, that's it, we tried, he's going to shut it down. He gets up there in front of everybody and plows ahead. He caught heat for that. He's like, no, this is the way forward. We have to stay operating or we're going to be toast, and he was right.

I think Jay deserves a pretty long leash.

**Q. If you could make a request or make a change right now, what would that be?**

BRIAN HARMAN: In what regard, to the TOUR or to golf?

**Q. To the TOUR, to the structure of the TOUR, going forward with the proposed deal.**

BRIAN HARMAN: I'd like for us to have access to cold plunges in the locker room. That would be the change I'd like.

**Q. Was that based off of what happened at The Open Championship? You took advantage of that there, didn't you?**

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, they did a really nice job providing some more therapy stuff, so that would be what I would like going forward.

**Q. With the meeting today with Jay, what one question would you have for him, or what one detail would you like to know?**

BRIAN HARMAN: Yeah, I think an important question is I believe that Jay had ultimate authority at all times as far as negotiating and stuff like that, and he knew that his reputation was going to take a major hit if they went forward. My question would just be, why didn't he stop it, knowing that his reputation was going to take a hit.

**Q. Why did he --**

BRIAN HARMAN: Why did he let it continue. In my mind, I think he believed that it was the best thing going forward, and that's why he did it.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks so much for your time. Best of luck this week.

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