

TOUR Championship

Wednesday, September 2, 2020

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

East Lake Golf Club

Harris English

Press Conference

MICHAEL BALIKER: We'd like to welcome Harris English to the interview room at the TOUR Championship. First time back since 2015. It must feel great being back at East Lake and in this event as part of the top 30.

What are your thoughts on have you seen the golf course yet? And just want to get your thoughts on being back here.

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, it's always a big goal of mine starting every year to get back to the TOUR Championship. Kind of a culmination of all the great players, and you have to play well this whole year and throughout the Playoffs to get here.

I'm very excited about how my year has been. Obviously coming off the 126 to 150 category, I didn't really know how many tournaments I was going to get into, and was really prepared and mentally rested when I did get into tournaments and kind of took the bull by the horns and played some really good golf.

Very excited about being here. Practiced a little bit yesterday. Obviously they've had a lot of rain here and the range was soft. Around the chipping green was really soft. I didn't get a chance to go on the course yet, but going to play nine holes today and nine holes tomorrow and get ready for Friday.

Q. When do you start letting your mind think about the \$60 million at stake and the \$15 million first place? And you can't tell me you're going to invest it. So you win, what's the one thing you'll allow yourself to indulge in?

HARRIS ENGLISH: That's a good question. I really haven't thought about that a whole lot. I've just been in the mindset of trying to accomplish my goals this year, trying to keep working up to the top and working up in the World Ranking and trying to win golf tournaments.

I'm sure building a house on Sea Island could be down the road. I've been in the same house since 2013, so it's



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probably time to upgrade a little bit.

So we'll see. I'm not a big car guy. I'll put it on the house. Maybe a house in the next couple years.

Q. I guess you can't really get close to guys now, you can't have much of a bulldog reunion, but 10 percent of the field here are Georgia Bulldogs. What does that say about what you guys have done?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, three bulldogs and no Georgia Tech guys I don't think, so it's pretty cool. I was actually -- I think I'm going to play with B. Todd and Kis tomorrow in a practice round, so it'll be cool getting back with those guys. It's just been incredible the run that Georgia golf has been on really starting in the late '90s, and we've got some up and comers that will probably be on the PGA TOUR in the next couple years.

It's cool to kind of have that fraternity of guys out here that we all went to the same college and have known each other for a long time. It's really cool to have that brotherhood out here with some of those guys.

We're all close and we all hang out, and hopefully we can get on the course tomorrow.

Q. You certainly had your share of struggles, as has Brendon. Have you guys talked much about your journey here?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, we've talked a little bit. Obviously we're very supportive of each other. I played in the final group with Brendon when he won the Mayakoba tournament in Mexico this year, and if I didn't win I was pulling on him to win.

But it's been awesome to see what he's done. Obviously this game, like you said, has some ups and downs, and I definitely went through it, as well. But you definitely learn from all your mistakes and your struggles and you come out a better person and a better player, and you definitely -- it takes some of those lows to figure out what you did wrong and what you can change and how to make it better.

Q. You had a pretty up-close look at Dustin in Boston at the end of that. How tough is that going to be to run him down here?

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HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, obviously he's playing some really good golf. I felt like the last round in Boston I got off to a good start. I think I was 4-under through eight holes and lost ground on him. I felt like at that point I was pretty much playing for second place.

He was in a different gear. He wasn't just trying to win the tournament, he was trying to set records. He had had this goal starting out the day. I think we were walking up No. 17, and he was like, Yeah, the whole day I was trying to get to 30-under, and damn if he didn't birdie 18 to get to 30-under.

It was incredible to watch. He never took the foot off the gas. I mean, he was going at every pin. It was incredible to watch. He had no fear at all, and I guess when you have that much confidence in your game, he had nothing to worry about.

Obviously he's probably the hottest player in the world right now, No. 1 in the world. Him and Jon Rahm went toe to toe, which was pretty impressive last week, and hopefully can do some of that on my own and try to chase him down this week.

Q. I was wondering, is the line between let's say your last season and this season, is it finer than people might think? Does your game feel as drastically different as your FedExCup ranking would imply, if that makes sense?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, I feel like at this level the lines have so small. It's all momentum based. And when you have confidence in this game of what you're doing really in any aspect, off the tee, making sure irons are on point, hitting both shots and putting and chipping, when you have confidence in everything, it helps so much.

Obviously the fundamentals, what I've been doing back home in Sea Island, all the work I've put in, has really helped. That's helped my confidence of knowing I can compete in every single tournament I tee it up in, and I think the stats have gotten a lot better.

But it's all momentum of when I hit a bad shot now I don't start thinking about what I did wrong or my head starts spinning of, Oh, I'm hitting it bad again today. It just rolls off my shoulder. I know I can get up and down or I can hit a good shot on the next hole and make birdie.

It's such small details like that, the fine lines of really good golf and average golf.

Q. And the format is new for you; what's your

thoughts on the format and starting as a pursuer?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, I obviously like my chances this week as opposed to 2015 when I was coming in and really had no mathematical shot of winning the tournament. I like what they did. We can all keep up with it better because it's how we play every single week.

I don't really look at the points that much, and I know that now I'm starting six shots behind Dustin. It's like we all played -- it's like a five-round tournament. We all played one round and we've got four rounds to go. I'm excited about the new format and feel like I've got a good shot.

Q. What do you think the biggest difference is? I know you talked about confidence, but if you could go back a year or a little more, what flipped that switch? Your results have been remarkably consistent all year.

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, I would say I got in a bad habit of new swing thoughts pretty much every week. I was chasing -- watching a lot of video of my swing, chasing positions, and not really playing golf. I was working on my swing way more than I was actually getting ready to play the golf course or figuring out the best strategy to play the golf course.

Working with my guy Justin Parsons down in Sea Island, we really got back to the basics of, all right, where are you aiming, what are your fundamentals, how is your grip, how is your club starting on the way back, and really those are the only things that we've worked on.

We've worked on a lot of distance control, stuff that actually matters, and scoring. A lot of short game stuff. My short game has been really good this year.

He just kind of brought me back of getting lost in this whirlwind of different swings and different mechanics and swing positions that we brought -- he simplified it so much that I can know what I'm doing and it's actually a game now and I'm not worried about how my swing looks.

I'm worried about how I'm scoring and where I'm putting the ball on the course. It sounds pretty complicated, but he's really just simplified everything and got back to really just me playing like I was a kid again.

Q. If you could give yourself advice a year, two years ago, what would you tell yourself, just to kind of get back to scoring and keeping things simple?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, yeah, but I feel like I had to somewhat go through that to know that that method doesn't work for me. It works for some guys. You play with some

of the best players in the world out here on the PGA TOUR, and I play with them every week, and it's easy to get caught up in what everybody else is doing. Dustin hits it further than me. Why does he hit it further than me? That's just how he does things.

I don't do the same things he does, but what I can control is myself and how I can play the game the best I can possibly play. And that's what I've really done, is stopped looking at everybody else of what I can do to be more like them instead of what can I do to be the best version of myself.

Q. When you look at the 18th hole here, what is it about that hole that makes it so unique, such a unique closing hole?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, I think it's way better of a closing hole than No. 9, that they used to have the old 18 as the par-3. You can step up to that hole and make an eagle or you can make a bogey. Really good driving hole of getting it down in the flat. You have to hit a really good drive, long drive down there, and you can really attack it.

I was just watching the highlights of Tiger coming down that hole a couple years ago, and it was just amazing the scene that was unfolding out there on 18. It's just a very iconic hole at East Lake, and you've got the clubhouse in the background, which is awesome. It can truly be a three-shot swing on one hole, and that's what you want to see, I guess, coming down the stretch of the biggest tournament of the year on the PGA TOUR.

It's a cool hole, and hopefully I'm in a position to make an eagle there this week.

Q. When golf restarted, what were your thoughts about the odds of making it this far through the season, just golf being able to survive, and how do you think you all have accomplished this?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, I mean, I had no idea what was going to happen when we had that three-month break. Obviously I played really well the first day at THE PLAYERS and was pretty bummed that we stopped when we did because I felt like I was playing some really good golf and was really going to take advantage of the Florida Swing, which are some of my favorite golf courses.

Being at home, yeah, I had no idea when we were going to start again, and you kept hearing rumors, and then the PGA TOUR would come out with statements every couple weeks. So I was very excited to get back started at Colonial and have been very impressed with how Jay Monahan and the TOUR has done with this whole

coronavirus and the protocols they've put in place.

I feel like the golfers as a whole have taken this really seriously, and it's been pretty incredible that we've made it this far to the TOUR Championship, and I'm very happy to be here and excited about obviously playing this week and getting started with next season.

Q. The first time in your career I assume you're starting the tournament six off the lead, so how does that change your approach to begin the tournament and get after it?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, I wouldn't say it changes my approach that much. I mean, the first few holes of the tournament you're always trying to work into it of feeling out the course, feeling out the firmness of the greens, the speed of the greens and kind of working into it. I know I'm going to still be doing that.

It is kind of weird starting a tournament six shots back, but it's not really changing my strategy per se. My coach and my caddie walked the course yesterday and kind of planned out a strategy for me and a goal pretty much each day, so I'm going to stick to that. I can control what I can control. I can't control what Dustin does and Jon Rahm up at the top of the leaderboard.

I feel like if I do my job this week and play the way I'm capable of, I can be in the hunt coming down on Monday.

Q. Is this a golf course -- does East Lake fit your eye, and is there a hole or pivotal holes, a stretch of pivotal holes on the back nine that you think will be important come Sunday?

HARRIS ENGLISH: Yeah, I've played a good bit at East Lake. I love the framing of this golf course. Played some junior golf here, played some when I was at University of Georgia, so I feel like I'm very familiar with this place. You've got to drive it well out here. Really coming to that back nine you have some really good driving holes.

I get confused with the holes with the different nines, but the downhill par-4, maybe 14 or 15, the long one, and then the par-3 over the lake, which I think is 15, those are key holes.

15 is a long par-3; probably be hitting 5- or 4-iron a couple days in there. It's really just a par hole. You have some really good holes on that back nine where you've got to sack up and make some really good pars.

I'm excited about having the test of that back nine, and hopefully I can be in contention coming down the stretch.

MICHAEL BALIKER: Thanks, Harris, for the time, and best of luck this week.

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