

Sony Open in Hawaii

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Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Waialae Country Club

Kevin Kisner

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: I'd like to welcome Kevin Kisner. Thank you for joining us this morning.

KEVIN KISNER: Thank you for having me.

THE MODERATOR: You've had a good record here at Waialae Country Club. Can you explain what it is about this place that fits your eye?

KEVIN KISNER: Well, I like that it's a shot-maker's golf course. You've got to play to certain spots. I think it's Point A to Point B and make some putts. That's kind of my M.O. on the PGA TOUR. So I appreciate when we get the golf courses that play that manner and it's not really see how far you can hit it.

I appreciate when it's playing firm like this in the fairway. So I think it really brings ball-striking precision into it and a lot of mental game to understand how the ball is going to react when it hits the ground.

THE MODERATOR: Along those lines, the wind is one of the big defenses. Does that play into your hands, as well?

KEVIN KISNER: Well, I think it separates when you're playing well. If you are playing well in the wind, you can really separate yourself from the field because you've got complete control of the golf ball, and the wind can expose you when you don't have control of your golf ball.

So fortunately when it's been windy here, I've had pretty good control of it and been able to have a chance to win.

Q. A couple things for you. On the schedule for the year, do you find yourself doing exactly what you've done previously or having played a ton of golf, as a lot of people did from June onward because of the reconfigured season, have you made any changes?

KEVIN KISNER: I have a third baby due in four weeks. So I'm going to take off after that all the way through the WGC. That's a pretty big schedule change. Although I don't play much on the West Coast anyway. I decided to completely

eliminate the entire West Coast and come back in Florida.

The schedule is a little bit different with Tampa after the Masters, which is normally a frequent stop of mine before Augusta. So I'm still looking at how I'm going to do PLAYERS, Bay Hill, the whole stretch there, if I'm going to play all three of them up to the Match Play.

Q. When is she due?

KEVIN KISNER: She's due February 11.

Q. Which is Monday of Pebble Beach.

KEVIN KISNER: I'm not sure.

Q. I'm not either. I just made that up. So effectively you'd be missing Phoenix and Pebble?

KEVIN KISNER: And Torrey Pines and Riv.

Q. But you never play Torrey Pines anyway, do you?

KEVIN KISNER: No, sir. I don't even play it in the U.S. Open.

Q. When you look at your wins, and even the ones where you almost did, of Colonial, Sea Island, and you allude to this place and some of the courses that fit your game, do you ever run the risk of kind of putting yourself into a corner in your head of where you can win and where you can't? Because you can win any where, can't you?

KEVIN KISNER: Probably not.

Q. You don't think --

KEVIN KISNER: I'm not going to win at Bethpage Black or Torrey Pines.

Q. Why show up?

KEVIN KISNER: Because they give away a lot of money for 20th.



Q. Are there courses you've played this year that you don't think you can win?

KEVIN KISNER: Not many. But it depends on where the majors are. I just don't go to the TOUR events that I don't think I can win.

Q. I understand that. I just wonder if you fall into a trap of convincing yourself you can't win, when you might have to play better or perfect or close to perfect.

KEVIN KISNER: I understand what you mean, but I don't think I can make up enough ground in the areas that I'm great on certain courses. So I just don't attend those.

I think on the flipside, I think I probably put too much pressure on myself on the courses I know I can win at. I have to be cognizant of that.

Q. Just going back to the Masters, curious if your preparation will be any different going into this year with them being so close and obviously the schedule change you just mentioned, taking more time off. And secondly, if there's any adjustments you need to make strategy-wise going back to April?

KEVIN KISNER: Well, I'm hoping in April we can play a more firm golf course with less rough. I felt like the rough was more penal in the fall than it has in the past, and being so wet, I felt like it played extremely long. Even the greens were so wet that it just wasn't the same Masters experience that we're accustomed to, and I didn't do a great job of moving into that type of situation.

So I need to continue to hit fairways. I felt like I missed more fairways at Augusta in the fall than I ever have in my previous four or five attempts. To be able to score around there, I've got to keep the ball in the fairway and keep it on the right side of the hole, which I didn't think was as big a deal in the fall Masters.

Not a lot of difference in the schedule. Not a lot of difference in preparation. Just need to play better when the tournament comes around.

Q. I can't recall what your usual prep is. Will you go up early, as opposed to -- I can't remember if you did that in November.

KEVIN KISNER: Living 30 minutes away, I don't think I went until the Sunday before in November. Obviously they weren't open very long before the tournament. I'll probably go over there sometime in March leading up and see how the course is shaping up, maybe the Honda week or

something that I don't normally play. That will be about it.

Q. Now that we've had a year under our belt, the idea that someone won the FedExCup by starting with a head start at THE TOUR Championship and the guy that shot the lowest score did not get any recognition for a victory outside of the World Ranking, are you good with that, and can you see that being a problem at all going forward?

KEVIN KISNER: No, I'm good with it. I think it makes for a more interesting culmination of the Playoffs. And being that most of our off-course contracts are based on World Rankings, I think that's a huge part that the actual winner gets the World Ranking points. I think we're nailing it both ways and only time will tell. We'll probably make adjustments. That's what we've done through our whole life as a PGA TOUR, and if we see an area that we can improve, we probably will get better at it.

Q. Not that you would care, but if I were to say to you one day, wow, Xander hasn't won in more than a year and a half now, would that register with you, or would you think of East Lake?

KEVIN KISNER: I would not think of East Lake. I think of the guy holding the trophy at the end. They don't hand out a trophy for winning, do they, just the regular 72 holes?

Q. Say that again.

KEVIN KISNER: They don't give a trophy for the lowest 72 holes, do they?

Q. Not at East Lake?

KEVIN KISNER: Yeah, so I don't see him.

Q. Where did you start? Where were you?

KEVIN KISNER: I don't remember. Probably last. Probably where I finished.

Q. Going in?

KEVIN KISNER: No, I was probably about 20th and stayed there.

Q. I guess there's kind of the feeling that even though Xander shot the lowest score, you guys were playing for a certain score and reacting to that score. Can you see that side of it that maybe Dustin doesn't aim for the fat of the green if he's two behind instead of two ahead? Does it change -- does that keep you people from looking back at hindsight, this is what should

have happened?

KEVIN KISNER: No. I would never look back at it that way. But I 100 percent think that we play strategy-based on -- on the way Dustin played it, yeah. And the whole reason is, looking at the leaderboard, we all knew what it was going in. He's to go going to play the fat of the green knowing he's going to win 15 million bucks, and so would everyone in that position.

Q. And if you're two behind, you're taking on flags?

KEVIN KISNER: Hundred percent.

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