

Zurich Classic of New Orleans

Wednesday, April 24, 2024

Avondale, Louisiana, USA

TPC Louisiana

Nick Hardy

Davis Riley

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome defending champions Nick Hardy and Davis Riley to the media center at the Zurich Classic of New Orleans. Nick, we will start with you. How does it feel to be back here at New Orleans defending champs?

NICK HARDY: Yeah, it feels amazing. A lot of good memories from last year, showing up to the course yesterday and playing some holes with Davis, it was a lot of fun getting to reminisce on the great shots we hit on Sunday last year. It's just good vibes all around. I love coming here. I love this tournament, love this golf course. It's in amazing shape this year, too. That's a treat.

THE MODERATOR: Davis, how excited are you to team up with Nick again this year?

DAVIS RILEY: Yeah, obviously it's nice to come back to a place where we've had success, and obviously we've played the last couple days together. It was pretty cool to walk through some of the holes and reminisce on some of the cool shots we hit. Yeah, just trying to repeat and replicate what we did last year, and we're having a lot of fun out there so far.

Q. What would you say the key to success here is at TPC Louisiana?

NICK HARDY: I think the golf course really rewards I think good iron play and good ball-striking because a lot of times when you miss around a green here, you can have some tougher up-and-downs to elevated greens and chipping downhill and on slopes, and the greens can get a little tricky if you miss on the edges. I think keeping alternate shot pretty stress-free is a plus, and then just kind of having fun in best ball and making as many birdies as you can.

Q. Davis, how does this team format play well to you and Nick's partnership?

DAVIS RILEY: Yeah, we were talking with somebody about this earlier. I think we just pair so well together because our games are very similar. We hit it similar distance, both good iron players. Like Nick said, I feel like it's a second-shot golf course. I feel like it sets up really well for both of our games.

It's not like a crazy amount of strategy. We're very similar, so we're both comfortable doing whatever. I think the course fits both of our games, and we're just comfortable around this golf course.

Q. For both of you, where last year did it really come together? I know obviously the final round, but was anything done in the first three rounds that kind of made you believe that y'all would be able to do something like that?

NICK HARDY: I think we just had a good mojo going the whole week. I think we believed in each other.

I remember walking off the green on Friday with Davis, and we were like, man, let's go, we're right in it. I think we were only a few back, and we were like, let's go win this thing. We were serious about it. We said that to each other.

I think we just had good vibes, and we didn't really get down on ourselves. We both held great attitudes, and I think that kept the momentum going. We just jibed off each other really well, and we just had the momentum going and kept it going until late on Sunday afternoon the back nine we really blitzed it.

DAVIS RILEY: Yeah, I don't know if I could put my finger on a particular instance, but like Nick said, after Friday, you kind of really figure out where you are in the tournament after the second day, once you get one best ball and one alternate shot under your belt. Yeah, we were right in the thick of things. I guess now to think about it, on Friday on the last hole, we actually were in alternate shot, and we ended up making bogey to end Friday and we were kind of like, oh, it kind of sucks to bogey the last hole being a par-5, but I remember we turned to each other and we're like, we're playing really, really good golf right now, if we just keep doing what we're doing we're going to have a



really good shot at this and be able to control our own destiny.

Like Nick said, we're good buddies. We kind of feed off each other really well, and there's a really good sense of confidence and mojo about us pretty much the whole week.

Q. Coming off of last year with the success that you had, is there even any question or any discussion about strategy or do you just simply not talk about that and just continue what you finished last year?

NICK HARDY: No, we're not changing anything. No, we made that pretty clear right when we got here. Nothing changes in terms of strategy and what we did. I've got odds, he's got evens in alternate shot. We're primarily playing his golf ball.

Nothing has changed really, no.

Q. In the weeks leading up to this event, in your locker rooms at other PGA TOUR events, is it almost like prom season where you guys already have a date and guys are looking around seeing who's going to ask out who?

DAVIS RILEY: Well, it's kind of nice, obviously we know we're going to be pairing up with each other after last year, so you certainly see guys that are kind of scrambling around to find a partner.

No, the strategy has been easy. We're honestly trying to do everything to a tee as we did last year, and it's nice showing up on site not having to worry about who your partner is or anything like that.

NICK HARDY: I think that's the great part about this event, though. There is a buzz in the locker room about guys, who you're going to pair up with as early as January, first event.

Players are looking forward to coming here and looking forward to finding a partner for this, so I think that's what's the fun of it for us.

Q. I assume you practiced yesterday and you played this morning. What's the course playing like? Is it a little different than last year? I think they told us it was in better shape than last year at this time.

DAVIS RILEY: Yeah, I feel like it's maybe a bit firmer than it has been maybe last year. Obviously wind coming in, things like that, might change that a little bit, but the course is in awesome shape. Every year I've been here, it's been

in awesome shape. Just showing up on-site Monday, Tuesday, I'm like, man, this place is in awesome shape. It's one of the best all year, and it's certainly a track I look forward to playing all year.

Yeah, it's in great shape, and maybe if I could put a finger on anything, it might be a little bit firmer than I had seen it and probably only going to get firmer with I think some expected wind coming in throughout the week.

NICK HARDY: Yeah, the forecast is very similar to last year, and we're getting a southeast wind, which is really similar to three of the days we had it last year. The course, yeah, every year we come here it seems like it's in great shape, and I do think it's going to get a little firmer than last year as the week goes on.

Q. You visited the Saints' facility yesterday. Can you talk about being a Saints fan your whole life, how that was special?

DAVIS RILEY: It was super special. I was just awestruck when I walked in there seeing Coach and getting up to hang out and seeing where all the guys train at, the weight room, the indoor, and we actually got to go up to the draft room and check that out and see where they were going to be making their big pick come Thursday, so all that was pretty surreal. To meet Coach and see the players' lockers and see where they get all their work in and stuff was really cool, obviously being a Saints fan, born and raised pretty close to here. Yeah, it was certainly a treat.

Q. Did you get a picture of the draft board?

DAVIS RILEY: Coach was quick to say no phones and whatever is said in here stays in here. But I'm really excited to see who they choose come Thursday.

Q. Who else did you visit? You visited with Dennis Allen? He saw you?

DAVIS RILEY: Yeah.

Q. Anybody else that --

NICK HARDY: Mickey showed us around, which was amazing. It was such a cool experience. Going to the draft, like we talked about, it's like, wow, this is -- everyone was in there working, all 30 -- about 30 of them in there getting ready for it. It's just cool they were simulating stuff, and they let us in. They let us into their world, which was really cool and neat of them to do, especially at this time. It's crunch time for them.

Q. Did you tell them you were a fan?



NICK HARDY: I did, yeah. I did. I was asking them their opinion on what they should do with 1 and 9. It was awesome. It was cool. I told them my opinion, and they gave me a lot of their opinions. They did say they were on the phone with Nick Saban while they were there, so they were getting the Bama boys scouted.

DAVIS RILEY: Yeah, I would be pretty happy if they took an Alabama guy off the board. That would be pretty cool.

But yeah, it'll be interesting to see what they do, and obviously it looks like they're doing all the things.

It's kind of crazy the process they go through. They had a group of 30 people in there and they've got all these different scenarios they're running. It looks like they're pretty -- they've done all the work and there's no situation that'll come too much of a surprise. Just the amount of team members it took just to prepare for that night and those picks and all the stuff was pretty cool. I was like a kid in a candy store. It was really cool.

NICK HARDY: I think it's pretty funny; they want our job and I want their job.

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