
Nissan Open
Riviera Country Club
Pacific Palisades, California
February 18, 2004

AN INTERVIEW WITH HAL SUTTON

THE MODERATOR: We have *Hal Sutton* with us today. He is not only competing this week but, obviously, is the *Ryder Cup* captain for the United States team for 2004.

Hal, welcome, we'll turn it over to you for some comments.

HAL SUTTON: It's raining outside, we already said that though, haven't we? I'm getting excited about the *Ryder Cup*. Is anybody else getting excited about the *Ryder Cup*?

Ask me some questions, and I will tell you how excited I am about the *Ryder Cup*. There we go.

Q. Hal, when do you start paying attention to how potential players are playing; what kind of form they have?

HAL SUTTON: In Phoenix I played with *Chad Campbell*. Last week I played with *Jonathan Kaye*. This week I'm playing with *Jerry Kelly*. Every week I am watching what everybody is doing.

Q. (Inaudible)?

HAL SUTTON: I don't think anything has been (inaudible) played on *Ryder Cup* teams.

Q. Can you talk about when you are going through your list, the 25 guys on the list we have here, obviously there is more behind you, can you talk about looking at those guys that have not, in fact, played on the *Ryder Cup* team, and what you are looking at from them versus guys that you know have obviously played in the past?

HAL SUTTON: It's early to look at anything other than good play right now. You know, in a round about way, Julius and I were looking at this a few weeks ago, and we happened to notice that 16 out of the top 25 players have no *Ryder Cup* experience. Now I haven't gone down this list to know if it is still the same way because this is changing weekly now. But I thought that was pretty coincidental that there was that many players that had no *Ryder Cup* experience.

So we went down the other side, the *European* side, and there were also 16 players that had no *Ryder Cup* experience.

So I guess what I'm getting around to saying is that I'm not sure that experience is all it's cracked up to be. The younger players don't seem to care about that.

Right now, I watch *Jonathan Kaye* play, I don't think he cares about experience. He is dealing with it one shot at a time, doing the best he can and moving to the next shot. That's the way golf is supposed to be played.

Q. Have you ever heard of Carlos (Inaudible)?

HAL SUTTON: I have not. I haven't heard of him. I probably will hear of him.

Q. If you would have been captain in 1991 or 1995 would you have picked *John Daly* coming off a Major easier?

HAL SUTTON: I wasn't, so we'll never know the answer to that question. I am concerned -- not concerned, I am privy to what *John Daly* is doing in 2004. He has started his year off very well and I am happy for him.

Q. (Inaudible)?

HAL SUTTON: You do not want a guy that hits it 325 yards every time he hits it, relatively straight, and has it around the green like these guys. I have had a bunch of people ask me the question, are you looking at John Daly? If *John Daly* continues to play the way he is, it won't matter whether I am looking at him or not. He will earn his place on the team.

Q. (Inaudible)? Not a great history behind him?

HAL SUTTON: No, I wouldn't be surprised though. You learn a lot of things in life. Sometimes hard lessons are valuable lessons.

Q. Have you had a chance to talk to *David Tomş* coming off an injury, obviously sometimes an injury takes a long time to come back from; did you have a chance to talk to him this week and see how he is doing?

HAL SUTTON: Yes, I talked to him on the range the other day, to see how his hands were feeling and whether he started this week or next week, either practice or playing. If it felt okay, he was going to go ahead and do it. Wait til next week.

And I said, don't play before you are ready to play.

Sometimes when you play, and you are not quite ready (inaudible) six shots back is that bad a shot. He is a great player, very capable. I would like to see him get off to a good start. I'm sure he would like to.

Q. What other things, talking with *Jackie Burke*, after you mentioned him last month, he said he thought his benefit of being part of the team would be to help guys with their game, and that even for the fact that you say hey, why don't you go down in June, go see Jackie and see if he can help you with something that you are working on, because the guy is either going to be on the team through points or someone that you are really looking at, and *Jackie* was open arms in doing that; what are your thoughts about that whole thing?

HAL SUTTON: My thought process was when the officers of the *PGA* of *America* asked me to be the *Ryder Cup* captain, they expressed what we all probably would recognize as the obvious, that they would like to win the *Ryder Cup* too, you know.

And I said, okay, then I'm going to pick the team that I feel can win the *Ryder Cup*. And I have had *Jackie* on my mind from the day they asked me to be the *Ryder Cup* captain. If his health stays good I was going to pick him.

And I think the U.S. *Ryder Cup* team, when *Jackie Burke* told me, yes, you got a real shot. I'm not here as manager. I'm not going to pin (phn) anybody to see anybody. That is their decision to make. *Jackie Burke* is going to be at *Oakland Hills* in 2004, September, if he is available. He doesn't have a psychologist degree but he could be a psychologist. People don't know what a valuable asset he is.

Q. Let's go back to *Daly* for a second. I don't think anybody else has won and not been on a *Ryder Cup* team. You talk about his game, how well do you know him and what are the intangibles he would bring, either pro or con, how does that figure into your picks? Or is that irrelevant if a guy is playing well and does not have things that make him a good choice, or does he have things that make him not as ideal?

HAL SUTTON: Well, in my mind it's a 2-part question because I want to clarify something. I'm going to have to ask (inaudible) in 1983 when I won the PGA, I couldn't be on the *Ryder Cup* team because I wasn't (inaudible). I don't know if that same thing is true when *John Daly* won the PGA in Indianapolis. It wasn't? That didn't keep him off. Personality could factor into bad leadership (phn), but even if it did, I know very few people out here that don't like *John Daly*, so I think it's pretty obvious *John Daly* (inaudible). I think *John Daly* would be an asset to the team if he made the team, or if I pick him either way.

If you are a professional golfer, and you play The Tour for any length of time, you're dying to make the *Ryder Cup* team. Not just *John Daly* but everybody else. I mean that's a barometer of success. I've said that many, many times.

If you look back over the history of the game, and you look at all of the people that played on the *Ryder Cup* team, every great player that you can think of, you can name, they have a record in the *Ryder Cup*. It may not be the record they want, but they have a record.

Q. Now is there anybody that you haven't talked to yet that you are definitely going to talk to about getting in place for the *Ryder Cup*?

HAL SUTTON: Yes, there is a lot of people. Some I know about and some I don't know about it. I'm going to be laying in bed one night and dream up somebody to talk to about it. I think there is a lot of people out there that can lend a helping hand. Something that could be said or done that I wouldn't know about. So I will lean on people and I can't say who that person is, or who those people are yet, but I am not ashamed to ask for help.

Q. (Inaudible)?

HAL SUTTON: These questions, okay. In some people's mind they might be an under achiever. (Inaudible.) And to be blessed with the title of being an under achiever would not be something that anybody would be proud of.

I think that *Jonathan Kaye* summed that up pretty good. I hate to bring his name up but because I did the telecast in Phoenix -- I don't know if you saw that telecast -- but he said that the only people that he really had to make an effort were the ones that loved him, and as far as he knew they all loved him and thought he was

doing okay. And he said that's all I'm worried about. I thought that was a darn, good attitude. I actually commended him on it.

Q. Something has not gone right for us, from your analysis what happened?

HAL SUTTON: The world is turning fast around us. All of these guys are doing other things 40 other weeks of the year. And the other time they are at home being a daddy or husband. Maybe there is not quite enough time.

We might have a little bit different situation this year. I'm having conversations with *Tiger* already about this. I don't know about any in depth conversation. *Tiger* asked me questions about the *Ryder Cup* in February. That's a good thing.

Q. (Inaudible)?

HAL SUTTON: You can't say that, Doug. That's confidential information.

Q. They had a pretty good President's Cup a couple of ^4most ^ months ago. The *President's Cup* is moving forward anyway, compared to the rest of the world, do you see kind of an overload coming from your guys, for the *American* players?

HAL SUTTON: Well, that's been the argument. How many times in a lifetime do you have a chance to play for your country, when you really add it all up, at the end of the day? I played on one *President's Cup*. I was supposed to play on two. My father-in-law passed away. I played four *Ryder Cups*. That's six times in my life. That's six weeks in my life. That's only six weeks in my life. *Tiger*, he is going to play on every *Ryder Cup*. So if he does that for 20 years, that's 20 weeks of his entire life that he had an opportunity to play for his country. Give me a break.

Q. (Inaudible)?

HAL SUTTON: I thought that was a little bit of a strain (Inaudible). I mean now I personally think the PGA of *America* has got the right if we play our hearts out for three days and we battle like nobody else. I can tell you for the most part, most of the time they are all that close. It's going to be a point or a half a point or a point and a half for the most part. I think that's too much pressure put on anyone for someone to have to go out and solve the issue. That's my own opinion.

Q. As a former teammate of *Tiger* on a *Ryder Cup*, and you mentioned that he talked to you, and you were happy about that, is his attitude toward the team a concern or a priority of yours because there has been a perception among the media, and the general public, that his attitude wasn't fully on the *Ryder Cup*, was that a concern, or a priority to you?

HAL SUTTON: Yes. And I made that very clear at the beginning. I am going to do everything in my power to help *Tiger Woods* win five points, and I sure hope that he does everything in his power to win five points. If we come together with that attitude, it would be a ferocious experience, a good quarterback.

Q. The greens at *Oakland Hills* are pretty complicated, are you going to try to get the players there to stop by before the event and try to get comfortable with them because they are pretty wild greens?

HAL SUTTON: They are. I thought in 1985 when I played the *U.S. Open* at *Oakland Hills*, I thought that was the hardest major venue that I had ever seen in my life. But it would be unbelievable for the *Ryder Cup* team, and yet I am going to

try to sway all of the *American* players to get there, and we'll play on a team to get everybody in there together. If it's not all together, I want to go ahead and start that and make this a point. It would be next to impossible to get everybody to go at the same time. And if I can't get all 12 players, and myself, and the two assistant captains, it doesn't mean that somebody that didn't show is not 100 percent dedicated. It's just hard to put 15 people's schedules together for one day. So everybody will be dedicated for the same cause.

Q. The other angle, the *Americans* have won three of the last eight Cups, the *Europeans*, they really played very well almost every time. Have you analyzed the secret of their success and how they are able to rise and play better than they normally play?

HAL SUTTON: I don't think there is any way to analyze that. You all done a nice job. I think you all done a pretty good job of coming up with the answer of why that happens, you know. Homework suggests that they go to dinner all the time. They have a lot more camaraderie with one another. I don't know if that's a real big deal because we all eat lunch together every day at the same time, you know. I can't answer that question. All I can do is say that I hope that we can come together with a team that meets our expectation, not everybody else's expectation. All 12 guys that make that team have high expectations of themselves. All 25 of those guys that are on there, they want to be the best they could be. I'm sure that all 25 of those guys right there were setting around at Christmastime setting goals for themselves. I have to assume that. That's what *Hal Sutton* has done for 23 years. And to suggest that all 25 of them would have said (inaudible.)

Q. Where is winning the Ryder Cup in your list of goals?

HAL SUTTON: I think it's the finest experience I have ever had as a professional golfer when doing something as a team. And when we came together in '99, and I cannot answer if it had more affect because we were 4 points down, but winning the *Ryder Cup* as a team was really the highlight of my career.

Q. So is this now your goal for 2004, is this top of the list as the captain of the *Ryder Cup* team?

HAL SUTTON: That's if I play it. I'm going to play it any way.

Q. So this year, anything you do on the course will pale in comparison of you winning the *Ryder Cup*?

HAL SUTTON: Absolutely.

Q. (Inaudible)?

HAL SUTTON: Yes.

Q. (Inaudible)? Was there any talk when *Tiger* made a statement when they asked him, would you rather win this week or next? He said this week. Why? He said, I could give you a million reasons why? Is there any kind of grumblings when that happened?

HAL SUTTON: I think everybody did the obvious, well, what do you mean by that, you know. (Inaudible.) You know, I will tell you that over the course of a player like *Tiger's* career, people will say some things some time that are (inaudible). And he would probably love to retract it. That's probably one of those things. That's all that I can say about that.

Q. How has the captainship affected the amount of time you are spending on your game? Are you spending more, less? Do you have more motivation to play well when you do play; what's the state of your game this week?

HAL SUTTON: My game is getting better. I have given myself a little bit of an out. I know there is a lot of responsibility of being captain, and I want to be the best I can be, and I can't honestly tell you when I'm playing with players, expected (phn) players on the team, that I'm not watching what they're doing. I can tell you before I was captain of the U.S. *Ryder Cup* team I wasn't paying any attention to what they were doing when they were playing. I was more concerned with what I'm doing. I don't have enough talent that I could play their game and mine at the same time and have high expectations for mine.

I mean it will play havoc probably with my game this year, but that's all right.

Q. Do you have any thoughts on the changes to the golf course here?

HAL SUTTON: I miss *Riviera* I know that. Can I say it any better than that? I miss the eight hole here. I think the 8th hole was such a tremendous hole before. One of the few times in a game that we were asked to do something besides just power the ball out there. Probably the thing that I miss the most in the game of golf is that we used to have to make a decision on whether it was a driver or 3-wood or 2-iron.

Now, when you walk off the green, whatever the green is, when you are walking to a par-3, your caddy might as well give you a driver and say, I'll see you down in the fairway. I miss the decision-making. You know, *Riviera* is -- was one of those courses that required you to think about what you were doing. The 13th hole, you can hit a driver every day. You can hit a good driver every time.

Q. With the four Majors this year, obviously last year, would you more than likely, if you are looking at it today, put more emphasis on those guys in winning Majors in regard to potentially picking them on the team?

HAL SUTTON: It's always been tougher to win a Major championship. You know you got to look at that. There is no magical ingredient. There could be that one guy that plays tremendous all year long and just happens to get it done in the Majors for whatever reason. Specifically say, Major championship winners have the edge; no more edge than they ever have. If you win a Major you done something that most folks don't do. Are you asking me, do they have an edge on making the *Ryder Cup* team if I have to pick somebody, is that what you are really asking me? Is that a backwards way of asking me if *John Daly* wins a Major and not make this team, is that what you're asking me?

Q. It's February, you are reading too much into the question.

HAL SUTTON: I mean, you know, how can I set here in February and tell you what I'm looking for on the team.

Q. (Inaudible)?

HAL SUTTON: Absolutely. And I add to that, too. Absolutely. It's tough to win a Major championship, you know. Every year there is talk about whoever it

is is an under achiever, to coin your phrase, Doug. Make sure that you all quote Doug Ferguson on that instead of *Hal Sutton*. But that's a big deal.

Q. (Inaudible)?

HAL SUTTON: I'm sorry, I didn't hear that at all.

Q. (Inaudible)?

HAL SUTTON: Not really anymore than we already have. We already talked about it. I mean *Bernhard* is a true gentleman, stoic personality. He has a dry sense of humor. He and I have been friends for a long time. Respectful but competitive matches. I will say this again, I said this in *Palm Springs*, we are not going to apologize for trying to win. We are both going to be trying to win. All 24 players that make both teams will be trying to win. It is competitive, a very competitive competition. That's why all of these questions are asked about the *Ryder Cup*.

But I will say that my team, before we play, that I want to do it in a respectful way. I want the team at the very highest level and a respectful and gentlemanly way and I am sure he will be the same.

Q. I was wondering with your TV work, if that helps you to get a look at players, and if that is one of the reasons why you picked up some TV work this year?

HAL SUTTON: Well, I have said before that I don't watch a lot of golf on TV. But being the *Ryder Cup* captain I would have watched a lot of golf on TV this year because it's easier to see what everybody does. But during the telecast is good. I'm watching what everybody is doing. A lot of good things (Inaudible). I even poked a little fun at Mr. Al (phn) about how well informed he kept me on all of the *European* players while we were up there. I don't know if you all caught that. I was always told that you weren't supposed to be pulling for anybody in there, but I swear to God (inaudible) (laughter) thanks guys.
