

# The Walker Cup

Saturday, 7 September 2019

Press Conference

**Nathaniel Crosby**

**John Augenstein**

**Brandon Wu**



**THE WALKER CUP**  
ROYAL LIVERPOOL 2019



THE MODERATOR: Delighted to welcome the U.S. Team into the interview room. Nathaniel, if we can start with you. Just give us your overall reaction to today's performance and score as it stands.

NATHANIEL CROSBY: Well, I think we were a little slow getting started this morning. As they say over here, I think we were a little slow out of the paddock. But we fought hard to get back to where we were, and all square going into lunch. This afternoon I just could not believe the amount of putts GB&I made in the first 45 minutes. It wasn't even the first hour and a half, it was the first 45 minutes. I'm not sure what the first par-3 -- I know they birdied the -- four matches they birdied the par-3, and I'm not sure it wasn't five or six. But an amazing amount of golf that was fantastic. I think John Pak winning that match, we were pretty lucky to be 5-3 down when it looked like we could be 6-2 or even 7-1-down.

THE MODERATOR: Brandon, you had two wins today. What was your reaction to the way that you played?

BRANDON WU: Yeah, I think I just tried to stay patient out there. Obviously the conditions were a little bit different today versus the last few days. But yeah, I had a great partner in Alex Smalley in the morning and we played really well. We definitely kept the pressure on during the match, and then I tried to just do the same in the afternoon, hit a lot of fairways, hit a lot of greens and kind of just apply pressure.

THE MODERATOR: John, a win for you this afternoon. How much confidence does that give you going into tomorrow's matches?

JOHN AUGENSTEIN: I don't think it really alters my confidence. I still felt good after losing this morning. Foursomes is an interesting format just because it's kind of sometimes hard to get into a really good rhythm because you're not hitting every shot and you're not kind of -- sometimes you can hit a ball into a spot that you wouldn't mind hitting from but your partner might not like it. It's a different, interesting format. I really enjoy it. I love playing with Andy, and I think we're both really excited. We learned a little bit from each other playing this morning, and I think we both played some pretty good golf, although he lost this afternoon. So we're ready to go.

**Q. Nathaniel, how important now are the morning foursomes?**

NATHANIEL CROSBY: Well, I paired these guys together because they all love each other. It's like a couples' deal, it's like a dating game, I think. I really paired these guys together with chemistry after watching them play a lot of alternate-shot, and we mixed it up. We played everybody with everybody, and I just sat back about three days ago, and I said, I like these couples playing together. You know, the five couples that I chose, and I wanted to stick with those same teams yesterday and today so I kind of fixed the groups from yesterday afternoon for tomorrow, as well.

You know, I think that these guys are going to truly appreciate winning and the memory of winning with their mates as they've gotten to know them through the last few weeks. They've generally competed against each other, and this has been such a great bonding experience for the team as a whole but also for the partners.

**Q. Captain, obviously these guys earned big singles points today, but Pak's putt to get that third point on the board, talk about the way he battled back birdieing three of the last four.**

NATHANIEL CROSBY: He's tough. I've kind of given him a bad time about starting slow because I've watched -- I think it should be said that I really got the team I wanted. Everybody on the team knows that I've been following them for almost a full two years and kind of picked my horses way back when and nursed them, especially him, because he was outside the window until the Amateur. Andy really was the only guy that was outside the rankings going into the Amateur, and I hadn't really watched him too much, but everybody else I had really focused on.

You know, I just think that these guys have so much fight. I think John Pak in particular started slow in a lot of tournaments. He would have won seven or eight tournaments this year already if he hadn't shot a 73 or 74. So I am telling him to change his breakfast or diet or sleeping habits or something so that he's not 2- or 3-over through five. I've really been giving him a bad time about it the last couple weeks, and he started slow today and then fought back.

It's a pattern, and he is so unbelievable coming down the stretch. It's just unbelievable.

**Q. He didn't make a double or worse until regionals of his sophomore year in college, so he doesn't make big numbers, it seems to suit this course. I know he's supposed to sit tomorrow morning, but does his performance force your hand to change it up?**

NATHANIEL CROSBY: I told everybody yesterday afternoon that this was not going to be a fluid situation. I think there's a par excellence with all 10 players, and there's a little bit of parity with -- Brandon has had an incredible summer, this guy and Andy just got to the finals and had an incredible match in the U.S. Amateur. So obviously those three have the hot hands. Cole's summer last summer was historic. If he doesn't run into Hovland, he's medalist in the U.S. Amateur, probably wins the Amateur, and I don't know when the last time that was done. It's only been done three times in the Western Amateur in 100 years, and he did it at the Western. So that was a really historic summer, and Cole is the No. 1 player in the World Ranking-wise. So you've got a lot of incredible talents.

So I just told everybody there was some -- there was a little bit of steam coming out of ears for two first-team all Americans that didn't get to play in the morning this morning. But they got to look over their shoulders and see that I've got to sit six guys one time. Everyone is going to play three times, and I wanted the pairings to stay consistent with the alternate-shot because I really think that I got that part right and I didn't want to juggle and have a different alternate-shot partnership.

As much confidence as I have in John and Isaiah, I think that I'm comfortable with letting -- I think I did it right by letting everybody know what was going on going into today yesterday, for today and tomorrow.

**Q. Captain, you said it yourself: It could have been 7-1, 6-2, 5-3. Is there any level of -- was there any level of concern during the afternoon on your part? Did you talk to any of these guys out there and say anything, or did you just let them run?**

NATHANIEL CROSBY: You know, I think other than slipping into a little mini-depression, you know, I definitely was -- I think that's the whole thing. Everybody's body language can get down and out, but I didn't see that from anybody. Alex Smalley was 4-down, and the next thing you look up on the board and he's 1-down. Isaiah was struggling, and then the next thing you know he's going to the last hole. So he could have easily tied that match.

You know, I think these guys are adults, you know. Pat on the back, tell them you love them, whatever, but there's no words of wisdom or special secret sauce that I can give them to tell them to turn it around. They're here because they've turned it around in bad circumstances for the last two years on occasion, and they've been great front runners many

times and won a lot of golf tournaments. So I have no Pepsi formula for that. I just told them, you know, just gave them encouragement and told them what was going on out there and told them it would be really great if they'd win three of the next four holes, stuff like that. Simple stuff.

**Q. Seems to be a lot of horse racing references.**

NATHANIEL CROSBY: We're in a little bit of a sticky wicket.

**Q. How big was the team's performance on I guess you would call it the backstretch? Or is that NASCAR?**

NATHANIEL CROSBY: No, that would apply.

**Q. And that momentum, that's got to be momentum you can take even into matches you dropped?**

NATHANIEL CROSBY: You know, it is what it is, right, we're two points down. I think we've solved the overconfidence problem, so we don't have the overconfidence problem going into tomorrow. We know it's going to be a dogfight. I think if there's any advice that I can give the team, it's to just not get distracted and have wasted energy, focusing on your opponent. Sometimes it's good to just go out there and shoot a score and your opponent misses the green and you hit a wedge 20 feet instead of four feet, next thing you know you're walking off with a half, and sometimes it's a wasted opportunity because you're focusing on your opponent.

You know, I think that these guys have tremendous games. They've won a lot of golf tournaments to be here, and if they just play their games tomorrow, we'll see where the chips fall.

**Q. Just wanted you guys to talk real quick about what it would mean to win tomorrow, coming over here, you're not on home turf, they've got the crowd. Just what it would mean for you guys to be raising the Walker Cup at the end of this week.**

JOHN AUGENSTEIN: Yeah, I mean, I don't know if words can describe what that would mean. Not only winning the Walker Cup but also winning it on foreign soil would just be an incredible accomplishment that not many teams have been able to do, or at least in the recent past.

But I think that kind of what Cap alluded to, that's somewhat of a distraction tomorrow, and we're focused on that first point, trying to get the first one and then the second one, so on and so forth. I think we'll be focused on the moment and just kind of on the match and on the hole, and we'll see what happens.

BRANDON WU: Yeah I would say there's a lot of cool things about this week. First off, you're representing the United States. You're playing with a bunch of your

really good friends on a team, and then we're the underdog this week playing away, and the crowd is kind of against us. So I think just all those combined, it's such a special experience, and I think it's an opportunity we all relish as a team. So it would be really phenomenal to pull it off tomorrow.

**Q. This is your last night together as a team with golf not the following day. What do you do to maybe distract yourselves in a good way to get what's coming tomorrow out of your head? Who on the team can lighten things up? Who are the go-to guys in the team room that will put things in perspective and keep it fun?**

JOHN AUGENSTEIN: I'm sure there will be a lot of ping-pong and Madden PS4 played. That's pretty much what we do every night. Some of us need to do homework. Me. Well, I don't know if I'll get around to that or not. I don't know.

**Q. Do it on the plane going home.**

JOHN AUGENSTEIN: It was due Thursday and Wednesday. (Laughter.)

**Q. Did you bring your books?**

JOHN AUGENSTEIN: No.