

26ICUT24 3M OPEN - #24 - MASTER SCRIPT

A1 – OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP WINNER

ANNC: I'm delighted to welcome, Champion Golfer of the Year, Ryan Fox. How does it feel?

RYAN FOX: Surreal to be honest, I mean it's something you dream of.

ANNC: We have a champion golfer of the year, New Zealand's Ryan Fox.

ANNC: The Fantastic Mr. Fox.

RYAN FOX: To be an Open Champion, to be the Champion Golfer of the Year... I don't have enough words in my vocabulary to explain it to be honest.

A2 – TITLES

(NO COPY)

A3 – SETUP: THE OPEN CONVO

AFTER A MEMORABLE OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP, JUSTIN GALLANTY AND MATT EVERY BREAK DOWN THE CHAMPION GOLFER OF THE YEAR.

A4 – THE DROP: OPEN BREAKDOWN

JUSTIN GALLANTY: So Ryan Fox is the champion Golfer of the year. He entered the week in the Official World Golf Rankings. Matt, 57, of the previous 58 major winners, entered the week in the top 50 in the Official World Golf Rankings. So why was that not the case this week.

MATT EVERY: You ran into a guy with a ton of grit and a ton of determination in Ryan Fox, and he took advantage of a good break on Saturday, getting out there in the morning before the course started to firm up, and he goes out and shoots eight under par round of his life in a great spot to do it. And then on Sunday, he looked like the only guy other than Cam Young that wanted to win that golf tournament on the back nine. You talk about fighting through some tough breaks, just some some horrible bounces, ball bearing underneath the face of the lip. He took it in stride. And then it's also encouraging to see to Justin a guy play at the pace Ryan Fox does and close the deal, doing it his way. That's his golf swing. Maybe the most popular win in professional golf this year.

JUSTIN GALLANTY: Wow. Big statement.

A5 – FEC STANDING

THE CHAMPION GOLFER OF THE YEAR JUMPS FROM 59TH TO 21ST IN THE FEDEXCUP STANDINGS AS THE TOUR SETS ITS SIGHTS ON THE 3M OPEN WHERE KURT KITAYAMA WILL DEFEND HIS TITLE.

A6 – KITAYAMA PT1

KURT KITAYAMA NAT: What do you got?

DANIEL KITAYAMA NAT: 130 front, 150 to the hole.

KURT KITAYAMA NAT: I can land a couple short with this one?

DANIEL KITAYAMA NAT: Yeah.

DANIEL KITAYAMA NAT: Nice shot; good swing.

J.C. DEACON: Daniel now caddying for him, he is an employee and I think Kurt treats him like that sometimes on the golf course. But when they get off the course, there's a lot of banter, a lot of laughs.

DANIEL KITAYAMA: It's 1-0, Daniel.

J.C. DEACON: They are the most typical brothers. They're going to fight and battle.

KURT KITAYAMA: Growing up, everything that we were doing, I was trying to beat him. It's great having him along to help me compete with everyone.

KURT KITAYAMA: We're 1-1 right now. Next point wins, right here.

DANIEL KITAYAMA: 2-1.

FROM AFRICA AND ASIA ... TO THE UNITED STATES, KURT AND DANIEL KITAYAMA HAVE WON TOGETHER AROUND THE GLOBE ... BUT THEIR MOST RECENT WIN OCCURED IN MINNESOTA AT LAST YEAR'S 3M OPEN.

ANNC: This could be stride-for-stride, the two brothers marching to victory.

KURT KITAYAMA: This is his second week this year. He's caddied on and off for kind of my whole career.

CLIFF KITAYAMA: Daniel was on the bag in three of Kurt's four wins.

EUNICE KITAYAMA: I think Kurt fired him three times and every time Kurt needs him, he comes back and they're still the best of friends.

ANNC: Kitayama, just getting a little last minute read from his caddie Daniel. Daniel, the older of the two brothers, the gregarious one; Kurt the grinder, the competitive one.

J.C. DEACON: When it comes time to take care of business, they're an amazing team on the golf course.

CLIFF KITAYAMA: Daniel's been, like, Kurt's biggest fan, so, he's going to do whatever Kurt asks him.

ANNC: 20 birdies over the last two days. The most birdies on the weekend by a winner in the last 22 years.

KURT KITAYAMA: This win is going to be extra special having him on the bag. He helped me stay calm out there, make good decisions. Yeah, just helps having family on the bag.

B1 – PUNTACANA WINNER

ANNC: Mazzoli birdie putt... and it drops! Mazzoli posts 20-under par. That putt could be his story book ending.

ITALIAN STEFANO MAZZOLI ERASED A FOUR-SHOT DEFICIT IN HIS FINAL SIX HOLES TO CLAIM HIS FIRST PGA TOUR TITLE.

STEFANO MAZZOLI: We had a lot of fun on the course and just pleased... it's been a dream this week.

WITH THE ONE-SHOT VICTORY THE 29-YEAR-OLD D-P WORLD TOUR ROOKIE EARNED A PGA TOUR CARD THROUGH THE 20-27 SEASON.

STEFANO MAZZOLI: The putt I dreamed of for several years.

B2 - TV TIMES – TV TIMES

AS THE TOURS BRIEF UK TRIP COMES TO A CLOSE - THE ACTION SHIFTS BACK TO THE UNITED STATES WHERE ENGLISHMAN DAN BROWN CONTINUES TO EXPERIENCE THE FINER CITIES THE U.S. HAS TO OFFER.

B3 – DAN DOES: DALLAS

DAN BROWN: Hi, I'm Dan Brown. We're here in Dallas McKinney, and we are about to go into McKinney Hat Co. Let's find ourselves a cowboy hat.

STORE CLERK: All right. Let's try this one on.

DAN BROWN: You want it to be snug?

STORE CLERK: Yeah. And when you put it on, you want to go from your forehead, back.

DAN BROWN: Forehead back. I promise I don't have a large head. It's just a lot of hair.

DAN BROWN: We could have found the one straight away, I think.

DAN BROWN: I like that this might be too sexy for Instagram. Fluid.

DAN BROWN: Did you see the old, uh, waste management pin? Cowboy hat? I cut out this logo and then stuck it on. That is too sexy for Instagram.

STORE CLERK: All right. Let's try it on. A lot of guys will wear it a little bit more.

DAN BROWN: Oh yeah. There's a bit of there's a bit of warmth in there as well. It's like when you put fresh pants on out the tumble dryer. It's cool. This could be.

STORE CLERK: The hat band on it, and we can brand it for you. A lot of guys will bring their initial underneath, so whenever you set your hat down, you know it's yours.

DAN BROWN: Do you do tattoos as well?

STORE CLERK: Yep. Cost extra.

PRODUCER: Where's the first place you're gonna wear it?

DAN BROWN: Probably straight out of the shop. I'm converted. Texas. Howdy, y'all.

PRODUCER: That was pretty good.

STORE CLERK: That's pretty good.

DAN BROWN: Just rolled off the top. Yeah. We're closed. PGA tour content only.

SHOPPER: You're from Australia?

DAN BROWN: Incorrect. I'm a Texan now.

SHOPPER: Okay. All right.

DAN BROWN: Going to dinner in this?

PRODUCER: Yes.

DAN BROWN: I do feel pretty cool right now. I can't lie. So if it couldn't get any more Texas, then what we've done already, We've come to a Texas barbecue. Hutchins barbecue. Let's get it. Looks so good.

WORKER: Here's some sample for you. That's the best part of the brisket.

PRODUCER: Rating out of ten.

DAN BROWN: Am I allowed to swear? That's good bleep* That's unbelievable. I mean, if we're doing a rating out of ten. Yeah, it's no lower than a nine.

PRODUCER: Okay.

DAN BROWN: That's a lot of meat. I'm gonna get my teeth into one of these sausages. It's so good. The flavor is, like, unbelievable. Do you know what these are? There's a jalapeno wrapped. Wow. I won't be touching that. I can't do spice. You can't do the spice. Then I shouldn't be in

here. Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Got you the briskets, like, ten out of ten. And just try a bit of rib. OK the rib might be the best. Sensational. It's gonna be a 9.5 out of ten for me. And I would. I would suggest after the amount of food I've just eaten, probably another 20 yards off the tee tomorrow. So thankful for that. We've got a bit more later if I get a bit peckish.

DAN BROWN: Over and out. See you cowboy.

C1 – REJOIN

IN ADDITION TO HIS BROTHER ON THE BAG, KURT KITAYAMA ALSO BOASTS A SOLID SUPPORT SYSTEM THAT HELPED HIM TO THIS POINT.

C2 – KITAYAMA PT2

MIKE MATTINGLY NATS: Alright, lets see a good swing. Be serious ... atta boy! I'm gonna love when your dad and mom get these up when you're 30 years old. There we go! Ok, now knock it in the hole.

CLIFF KITAYAMA: When Daniel was about 12 and Kurt was about seven, we had joined the club and Mike Mattingly would just say, 'just drop them off.'

MIKE MATTINGLY NATS: Aim straight. Ok, now go ahead and hit it. Atta boy!

KURT KITAYAMA: I would, you know, practice, hang out in the pro shop, drink Cherry Cokes.

MIKE MATTINGLY: They were very friendly, hard working for a couple little ones. Kurt especially, was a very competitive little guy, even at a young age.

KURT KITAYAMA: It was kind of just like a playground for me.

MIKE MATTINGLY NATS: Atta boy!

KURT KITAYAMA: Just do whatever and, you know, get practice done and have fun.

MIKE MATTINGLY NATS: Big swing ... atta boy! Great balance.

MIKE MATTINGLY: Daniel was a very good player, too.

MIKE MATTINGLY NATS: Ok now, hit this one good and then we'll get Daniel.

MIKE MATTINGLY: And Kurt was very competitive and Daniel didn't cut him any slack.

MIKE MATTINGLY NATS: There you go.

KURT KITAYAMA: Growing up competing against my brother all the time, that's how I was trying to get better.

MIKE MATTINGLY: Kurt, he really showed his athletic skill when he went to high school playing basketball.

CLIFF KITAYAMA: Golf was always number two for Kurt.

KURT KITAYAMA: I could shoot. I had good court vision. Felt like I was one of the smarter players on the court.

CLIFF KITAYAMA: He probably wasn't going to grow much more than 5'6", 5'7" ... and that's just not a good height for basketball players. Golf had a lot more potential. You don't expect any kid to be a professional.

CLIFF KITAYAMA: When Kurt was a junior, he did get, get some looks from a couple coaches and the one that was most interested in him was UNLV.

MIKE MATTINGLY: I didn't know the coach down there, but I called him to say, there's a kid here and at our club and he is a very, very competitive player.

J.C. DEACON: When Kurt arrived at UNLV, I don't think I've ever seen a golf swing like this. He was all over the place. As they say, he had more planes than Delta.

KURT KITAYAMA: When I got to college, I was struggling a lot. I had a two-way miss.

J.C. DEACON: A lot of us are wondering like, you know, how the heck is this guy going to ever turn out to be a good player for us? We joked around a lot because his nickname was "The Project".

J.C. DEACON: But a year and a half into his career, he was making a contribution in the lineup all the time. And then his last two years, you know, he was a legit top end college player.

KURT KITAYAMA: I kept getting better. I saw improvement. I think, knowing that I was getting better kept me driven.

CLIFF KITAYAMA: At that time, we didn't have any visions of Kurt going pro. And Kurt said, I'm going to try it.

KURT KITAYAMA: I was on the Korn Ferry Tour for two years. But those two years combined was, was a struggle. Definitely didn't feel like I belonged out there.

KURT KITAYAMA: In 2018, I must've played in multiple tours – Asian Tour, European Tour, Sunshine Tour, Korn Ferry Tour, Asian Development Tour, Japan Tour, China Tour?

J.C. DEACON: He was just willing to play wherever, you know, he could get a spot in a, in a legit tournament. And he was willing to travel across the world to go get that.

FOLLOWING HIS FIRST PROFESSIONAL WIN ON THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT TOUR IN JANUARY 20-18, KITAYAMA EARNED HIS CARD ON THE D-P WORLD

TOUR ... AND BECAME THE FASTEST PLAYER TO WIN TWICE ON THE CIRCUIT, DOING SO IN ONLY 11 CAREER STARTS ...

COLLIN MORIKAWA: He's seen pretty much every aspect of professional golf and that's hard to say about a lot of people's journey. That experience has allowed him to just continue to get better. And obviously, you know, he's got the skillset to be a great player out here.

KURT KITAYAMA: In 2020, played some sponsor exemptions in the U.S. and played my way into the Korn Ferry playoffs, where I eventually got my card.

DESPITE KITAYAMA'S YEARS OF EXPERIENCE, HE MISSED SIX CUTS IN THE FIRST EIGHT STARTS OF HIS FIRST FULL SEASON ON THE PGA TOUR ...

KURT KITAYAMA: It felt like the Korn Ferry again ... struggling to compete and then finally broke through with the third at Honda. And that kind of helped get my confidence back.

KURT KITAYAMA: In 2023, my Bay Hill victory felt like a ... lift off my shoulders.

ANNC: Step aside all you superstars, Kitayama's in the winner's circle, finally, on the PGA TOUR!

KURT KITAYAMA: I'd come so close the year prior. And then to pull it off at Bay Hill, at a course, you know, with so much history and the leaderboard that week was incredible.

J.C. DEACON: That's a top three moment in my life in the game of golf, watching him win that tournament.

CLIFF KITAYAMA: That was a big moment. I mean, to win a big tournament. I mean, he had won some European tournaments, but ... there's never that confidence that he was going to be a success. It's just difficult.

J.C. DEACON: To watch that journey play out. You know, he's lived up to that "project" nickname. And he's just he's just the most special kid you could ever ask for.

KURT KITAYAMA: Everyone expects to go from college to straight to PGA TOUR and I never thought I would grind it out on multiple tours before making it here. But, I wouldn't have had it any other way.

D1 – SETUP: THE CLIMB

FROM XANDER SCHAUFFELE TO SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER – MANY OF THE GAMES STARS ARE BUILT THROUGH PGA TOUR PATHWAYS. AND THREE PGA TOUR HOPEFULS PARALLEL THEIR SIMILAR CLIMB TO RELEVANCE THROUGH THE KORN FERRY TOUR.

D2 – THE CLIMB EP. 3

CALEB VANARRAGON: It kind of surreal over the last couple of years. To get myself to the point where I could actually play in Majors. I could actually be on the PGA tour.

MITCHELL MEISSNER: You look at, you know, JJ Bond or Ben Griffin or some of these guys that have come through the Korn Ferry Tour and have continued to work their way up to be top ten, top 20 players in the world. And, you know, I'd love to to when I get to that level, be able to, you know, compete like they can.

CALEB VANARRAGON: My name is Caleb and Aragon. I'm from Blaine, Minnesota, and I am a pro golfer playing on the Korn Ferry Tour.

JAY CARD III: I'm a Jay Card III from Shelter Island, New York, and I'm a professional golfer on the Korn Ferry Tour.

MITCHELL MEISSNER: Mitchell Meissner, I'm a professional golfer on the Korn Ferry Tour. I live in Dallas now from San Antonio originally.

JAY CARD III: We're in Raleigh, North Carolina. I think I'm like 25th or 27th on the points list.

CALEB VANARRAGON: We are 11 tournaments in so far. This is the 12th tournament of the year and I am 18th on the points list, I believe.

MITCHELL MEISSNER: At this point in the year I think I'm 22nd on the points list. I'm trying to do a better job of not looking as much this year, but I recognize that I'm right around the bubble again. So all year last year kind of start the year I was inside the number. And this year I'm kind of outside working my way back in. So a little different, different kind of year.

MITCHELL MEISSNER NATS: Are you making fun of my black outfit? I mean, I had an interview. I had to look I had to look as skinny as possible. This is my Spurs outfit.

MITCHELL MEISSNER: You know, went through the junior golf scene in Texas, which was really good. Scottie was in my class, Will Zalatoris and a few of those guys. So like, they were obviously kind of highly touted and ended up going to Rice University in Houston. I really didn't prioritize golf as much as a lot of guys did, and was very focused on academics and actually getting a job after college. And, you know, just kind of so happened to work out that I had an opportunity to play professional golf when I graduated. And, you know, I'm here 7 or 8 years later.

CALEB VANARRAGON NATS: My aim point should end up being like close to 20 yards right of that bunker.

CALEB VANARRAGON: I wasn't super heavily recruited in high school. I went to Valpo, which is a smaller Division one school in Indiana. I was never an All-American. I was never, you know, someone who who won a ton of tournaments. And I turned pro after I after I graduated and was lucky enough to make it through Q-School on my first try. I mean, it was more than I ever thought that I would accomplish. I thought that I was just turning pro just to basically give it a

shot and know that I hadn't, you know, let my dream die. I got a master's degree at Valpo, and I knew exactly what I would want to do if it didn't work out for me, but I'm grateful that it did, because this is this is so much fun.

JAY CARD III NATS: I could almost pay for Chili's tomorrow.

JAY CARD III: I grew up in a small town and it wasn't really great. Like in high school. I just wanted to hit the golf ball far, like I was fine. But you know, I wasn't really getting recruited anywhere. I graduated in 2016. I made a US Am and I just missed making match play, and that's where I kind of felt like, oh, like I can kind of do this thing, you know?

MITCHELL MEISSNER NATS: Hey guys, take it easy. Got a Monday qualifier and a guy who putts left of your playing against. Don't be mean.

MITCHELL MEISSNER: I tried a lot of different things and my coach and I, he was like, you know, let's think about maybe try and left-handed putting. And that was kind of when I had a pretty good idea like, hey, like I don't think that I've hit my peak yet with this lefty putting. It was so pretty new. And I was like, I definitely feel like I have enough talent to play and compete with these guys.

JAY CARD III: I'm so much more nervous singing in front of people than I am playing golf in front of people. But like, it all started from just kind of like singing in choir, doing musicals in my small little town. And then, um, you know, opera was just something that kind of, like, fit my voice. It was like musical theater without the dancing. So I was like, all right, it's kind of cool.

JAY CARD III: Yeah, I think doing something like that socially where like you're putting yourself in a situation where, like, all eyes are on you and like, it wasn't something that I ever enjoyed. Like, I didn't really enjoy the spotlight musically. Um, like, I loved being a part of the group. Like, I thought that was, like, so cool.

CALEB VANARRAGON: I'm happy with the consistency that I've had. I'm happy that I've made all 11 of my cuts so far. Last year I made about half of my cuts. So obviously I'm really happy with the with the improvement that I've had in that regard.

JAY CARD III: I got off to a good start in the beginning of the year. I think I finished 19th in Nassau, so I was just good to kind of get some points because I knew I was exempt for the first three reshuffles. You know, after that, it kind of felt like I was making cuts, but I just kind of had like one bad hole or it just wasn't like really finishing out tournaments.

You know, it's nice to make cuts, but at the same time, you're not really racking up points that you need to keep your job until LECOM where things kind of went great for me there. I ended up finishing tied for second, got a bunch of points and made a huge climb up the leaderboard.

MITCHELL MEISSNER: I was so focused on just making cuts last year, making any kind of points, and instead of like trying to contend for a tournament, win a tournament like, that's way

more fun than trying to make it cut and, you know, get ten points at the end of the week. So at this point, I kind of look at it like, hey, like you got one more year down here. You got X amount of years down here. Like keep learning, keep getting better. And once you get there, like you'll be ready to play.

ANNC: Caleb Vanarragon playing solid today. Nice approach there. Just over the top of it.

CALEB VANARRAGON: My coach Luke. Then why I owe him so much of what I have in golf. Because he. I was not very good at golf at all when I started playing, going to him when I was about 13. And he's the one who's taught me everything that I know about how to play golf. Well, basically. And I remember even back when I was in high school, he was telling me that I had what it took to play on the PGA tour. He was telling me I had what it took to be top 50 in the world, and back then I didn't believe him, honestly, but I kept working at it and I think if I were to somehow get there. It'd be a testament, first of all, to my parents and my coaches and Luke and everyone who's who's helped me get there and who believed in me. Honestly, when I was just some crummy high school golfer in Minnesota.

JAY CARD III: My dad still found time to be like, you know, my high school golf coach or like, you know, growing up, he coached Little League and, like, made all those, like, sacrifices to, like, be there to like, I think kid like me in the world to like, celebrate like that crowning achievement. Like with them.

MITCHELL MEISSNER: You know, there was a point in there for probably 2 or 3 years where I just I didn't think pro golf was it for me. And I kind of resigned myself to that fact. And eight years later in professional, professional golf, I do think professional golf is for me. And, you know, getting my PGA tour card would really be a dream come true. And I do think that once I get there, I'll be able to compete and then I'll be ready to, you know, I'll kind of be battle tested with what I've been through on Latin American tours and Korn Ferry tours here, and I'll be ready to go.

D3 – COURTESY