

Reed Smith and Pro Golfer's Caddie Forge Unique Sponsorship

By Roy Strom

Jason Day will tee off at The British Open on Thursday as the No. 1 ranked golfer in the world and with some of the best odds to take home the Claret Jug.

Lawyers at Reed Smith will be paying attention to his tournament play. If Day wins, the Am Law 100 firm might make a cameo in that Kodak moment when the Australian embraces his longtime friend, swing coach and caddie, Colin Swatton, on the 18th green at Royal Troon in Scotland.

As a sponsor of "Col" Swatton, a deal announced in an exclusive to The Am Law Daily, Reed Smith's logo is stamped on the side of Swatton's hat.

While the victory hug would be a great "brand moment," the firm is hoping its sponsorship nets more than a flash in the eyes of the more than 3 million viewers expected to tune in to the early morning final round on Sunday. Reed Smith is betting the uniquely close relationship between



L-R: Col Swatton, Bradley Schmarak, and Jason Day.

Swatton and Day, whom Reed Smith has worked with for the past six years, will resonate with its clients.

"As a caddie and as a lawyer, we both work in the background to give our clients the advice, resources, assistance and support to help them

accomplish their goals," said Bradley Schmarak, a Chicago-based vice chairman of the firm's business and finance department. "Col doesn't seek the limelight at all. Quite the contrary. And we're the same way as a law firm."

Day publicly credits Swatton with helping pull him out of a tailspin as a poor 12-year-old in Australia who had just lost his dad and turned for shallow comfort to alcohol and fights. The golfer-caddie duo met at an Australian golf school that Day's mother sent him to as a way to get her son back on track. They've been together ever since, and Day has been effusive in his praise of Swatton. Day has called his caddie his right arm, noting that he can't play golf without his friend and mentor at his side.

"My father had passed away of pancreatic cancer that same year I met Jason," Swatton said in a phone interview from Scotland this week. "It was almost like synchronicity that the two of us were brought together on this journey to become the best golfer in the world."

Reed Smith's relationship with Day and Swatton formed from sheer chance.

Schmarak met Day's wife, Ellie, while walking the course at the PGA Championship in 2010. Day was dealing with an illness at the time

and Schmarak offered his card and a connection to a prominent doctor in Chicago.

While that connection wasn't needed, Schmarak's offer led to a phone call from Day's agent, Bud Martin, a few months later. He offered for Schmarak to meet Day and Swatton and play a round of golf together at Oakmont Country Club near Pittsburgh, Reed Smith's hometown.

"I'm not going to say he's the best golfer in the world," Swatton joked of Schmarak.

For his part, Schmarak says he lost a \$5 closest-to-the-pin bet with Day from the sand at Oakmont.

"He put it to about two feet, and I bladed mine about 100 yards over the green," Schmarak said.

Some months after that round, Martin asked Schmarak if the firm could represent the Days and help set up a charitable foundation. Today, the firm is counsel to The Brighter Days Foundation, a Wexford, Pennsylvania-based organization that provides funding and resources to families in need.

Some of Reed Smith's clients will see a benefit from the sponsorship deal, too. Swatton will attend Reed Smith golf outings with "key clients," Schmarak said, and offer a swing coach session in the morning, play a round of golf and hold a Q&A session after the round.

Despite its customers being a niche group of legal services purchasers, Schmarak said he is confident the unique sponsorship will be successful.

"If clients see this and then piece together the story on why we're doing it, it will reinforce how the relationship between Jason and Col is unique and deep," Schmarak said. "And if they think of that in terms of how we approach the relationship with our clients, I think we will have a lot of success."

Day, meanwhile, is shooting for success in Scotland this weekend. Swatton said the course was in good condition but was unsure how the weather would affect the scores. He was certain about one thing, though: "I'm happy to be wearing the Reed Smith logo on the side of my hat," Swatton said.

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