



United States Maintains Lead Over Great Britain & Ireland after Day 2 of the PGA Cup, 9.5-6.5

*Rookie American tandem of Frank Bensel Jr. and Jesse Mueller
combine for 1.5 points*

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SURREY, ENGLAND (Sept. 17, 2022) - Rookie tandems. That's what has the United States Team ahead of Great Britain & Ireland, 9.5-6.5, after the first two days of the 30th PGA Cup at Foxhills Club & Resort in Surrey, England.

Teeing up together for the first time on Saturday - the rookie U.S. Team of Frank Bensel, Jr. and Jesse Mueller- picked up 1.5 points to help maintain a three-point lead for the Americans heading into Sunday's final day of singles matches.

Bensel, a PGA Assistant Professional at Century Country Club in Purchase, New York, and also a resident of Jupiter, Florida, came up with a pair of birdies on the back nine helping rally the pair in the morning Fourball.

Mueller, the reigning PGA Player Professional Champion, and a PGA General Manager at Grand Canyon University Golf Course in Phoenix, played solidly in both the morning.

Fourball contest and afternoon Foursomes.

The final morning match proved to be pivotal. Bensel and Mueller rallied from two down through the first 11 holes to tie the match against Great Britain & Ireland's Daniel Whitby-Smith and Ashley Mansell. Bensel made birdies on Nos. 12 and 15 to knot things up.

The match went down to the wire with Whitby-Smith hitting his third shot out of play, leaving Mansell under pressure to make birdie, which he did to tie the match, earn half a point and make it 7-5 heading into Saturday afternoon's Foursomes.

"A loss of a point there would have definitely brought things a lot closer, so a two-point lead definitely sounds a lot better than one," Mueller said. "It was a fun match. To hit all of those shots under that type of pressure, Frank made some really nice putts on the back nine to help us get through."

Michael Block, PGA Head Professional at Arroyo Trabuco Golf Club, Mission Viejo, California; and Larkin Gross, PGA Assistant Professional at Springfield (Virginia) Golf & Country Club, teamed up to pick up two points for the Americans on Day One.

On Saturday, they followed up by starting things off strong for the U.S. Team in Fourball. Facing GB&I's Simon Lilly and Paul McKechnie, Block and Gross raced to a three-shot lead through six holes. A birdie at the 7th and 10th by Lilly gave the GB&I duo hope, as they twice reduced the deficit to two, but the Americans ran away with the win on the back nine, 5 & 4, to extend their lead to four points.

The U.S. Team brought its lead back to three during the afternoon Foursome contests, exactly where it started the day.

Bensel and Mueller kept their momentum going from the morning. They teamed to post the largest margin of victory recorded through two days of the PGA Cup, defeating GB&I's Daniel Hutcheon and Whitby-Smith, 6 & 5.

"This morning, just grabbing a half point and grinding that out was key," Bensel said. "It kind of relaxed me a little bit. We did well in the afternoon. Tried to eliminate a lot of mistakes, that's pretty good in that format. That's what you have to do. We kept it down the middle, and it worked out pretty good."

Texan Omar Uresti and Nebraska's Ryan Vermeer defeated GB&I's James Ruth and Mansel, 2 & 1, for the final point on the day for the Americans to extend the lead back out to three points.

"They had to work hard for it today," U.S. Team Captain Suzy Whaley said. "GB&I came out to play and hit some unbelievable golf shots coming down the stretch. In fact, I thought we were going to get another half a point. But they literally played so great on 17 and 18, it ended up just being another half point and not a full point. The competition was incredible. I'm proud of the team. They played their hearts out. We're going to start again at zero tomorrow. They just have to focus on their own individual match, nothing else and get their job done."

The PGA Cup concludes with Singles on Sunday.

"They're not going to make it easy for us (tomorrow)," Whaley said. "Great players right out the gate. We need 13 points to retain the Cup, and 13.5 to win it. I'm going to think about that. All I want my players to think about is their match, make the hole their own and try to win every single hole they're playing. If we do that, I'm hopeful that we'll have a great outcome. If not, I'm going to be proud either way."

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Media Contact:

Michael Abramowitz, PGA of America, 561-389-4647, mabramowitz@pgahq.com



1916 PGA Parkway
Frisco, Texas 75033

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