

U.S. Open Championship 2023

Thursday, June 15, 2023

Los Angeles, California, USA

The Los Angeles Country Club

Max Homa

Flash Interview

THE MODERATOR: Max Homa, 2-under 68. Max, can you talk us through your round a little bit out there today.

MAX HOMA: Yeah, it was just I tried to make it as easy as I could on myself. I did everything pretty well, made some nice long putts. Didn't make too many mistakes.

So it's kind of, I mean, I guess I dreamt up something like Rickie did, but as far as tee to green and as stress-free as it could be that was about what I would have dreamt up, so I was pretty proud of that one.

THE MODERATOR: Was the course playing any differently than the practice rounds today.

MAX HOMA: No. I thought when we got on the first green it sure did seem a lot firmer and a lot faster, and then as the round went on it never really got any crazier than that. I didn't think the greens were too firm.

I'm sure after Rickie did what did he they will make it quite a bit harder for us tomorrow afternoon. But, yeah, it was just like we played it the last few days.

THE MODERATOR: I know you're out early but did you feel the L.A. love out there today.

MAX HOMA: Yeah, it was awesome. Just walking couldn't the first hole, it didn't quite feel because you don't have a lot of people around you on furs tee so it didn't quite feel like a maim and I was still nervous but it wasn't quite as heightened at Oak Hill a few weeks ago you walk over that bridge and it's a lot.

This one wasn't, but right when we started walking down that fairway it started to feel like it I guess it's supposed to and it was quite cool hearing all the go bears and yelling out my hometown of Valencia, it was awesome.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up to questions.

Q. You've talked about how Thursday can be the hardest day of a tournament in some ways just getting off to a good start. Is that accurate, and did you feel --



do you feel -- some relief I guess that today went so well?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, I'm just so bad at Thursdays because I just I feel like I expect so much and I almost look at it as a barometer for how the week's going to go. So it's a lot of pressure.

And I don't just get to go play my kind of golf and I felt like today from the first tee to the last putt I was very accepting and just looked at today as just a round of golf that will set me up towards the rest of the week.

Yeah, I think that they have the old cliche that you can't win it the first day, you could lose it, and I lose a lot of these things on the first day. So it's nice to just good out there and treat it like a round of golf and not put too much on it.

Yeah, I think that's what you're supposed to do in majors, you're supposed to kind of just play your game and see where that puts you Sunday afternoon.

Q. There's been a lot of chatter this week about your familiarity with the course coming here. Wondering what was different about showing up today?

MAX HOMA: I'm older. I have a beard now. Not a ton. I guess just looking back it's just you -- 10 years ago, as much as I probably saw the expectation and hopes, it's just so much less I guess important than a U.S. Open. At the time the PAC-12 Championship felt like the biggest thing in the world and this is quite a bit bigger.

But I guess we're golfers and we treat every event like it's a major, especially in college. So I guess not too much has changed. A few more people following our group. But, yeah, it actually did feel, it felt very comfortable.

Q. With this being your home U.S. Open, was it an advantage going out in an early group maybe compared to the afternoon or later?

MAX HOMA: I'll tell you after tomorrow. I always worry when you play a course that can get firm you can typically see Thursday morning plays very soft, Thursday afternoon



obviously a little bit firmer, but nothing crazy. Usually by Friday afternoon it can be nuts. So I'm not sure.

It was nice though I guess or advantageous to get going and kind of not feel like I had to wait around until 1:30 to peg it. So I would say that was an advantage. But I, that one's you know decided for now.

Q. Your knowledge of the course, have you found even approaching this week that some of the golfers were asking you questions or could you see their curiosity about the course where you're much more familiar with it than almost every golfer here?

MAX HOMA: No. You look at the best golfers in the world and you give us three or four days to learn a golf course, I mean I had only played it a sum total of seven times in the last 10 years, and the last time was probably in 2016 or 2017.

So I probably wasn't the right guy to ask. But they were also wise not to ask me. I probably wouldn't have given them a straight answer.

Q. So this idea of familiarity with the course can be over exaggerated sometimes you feel with good golfers?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, I mean, especially in a major. I mean, no pro am this week. You spend a lot of time on the golf course. I imagine people have gotten tons of reps on this place and know it like the back of their hand in a way.

So I do think it's probably a bit overstated, but if it were something like we played a normal tour event and we had maybe a day to get ready it would probably be a bit more of an advantage.

But the majors we get so much time and people are so diligent about it. I'm not sure it's -- the advantage I have is that I'm very, very comfortable in this city and I'm with friends and family and it just is a short trip and all that.

Q. You mentioned walking up 1 and kind of the limited crowd and stuff like that. I guess that kind of goes on throughout the course. There's not these massive galleries and stuff. So can you -- is there any difference in the feel of what typically is that kind of U.S. Open energy versus like this setting and I'm sure you still feel it because it's a major that you're playing in, but just that kind of versus the actual crowd and the vibe and like the noise and things like that?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, a little bit. There's definitely spots and it's still -- I think the golf course gives it a championship feel

because it's such an amazing place. The crowds are great or hefty in certain areas, but we're also coming last year from Boston where they're just louder there.

Their decibel is just higher than ours is out here. People don't wake up quite as early I guess to get going. So I imagine by the afternoons and especially the weekend it will get nice and rowdy. But it definitely was a bit of a more subdued morning, which was quite lovely.

Q. With your sort of course history and even having played it this morning, how surprising is it that one and maybe two guys are about to shoot 62 on this course today?

MAX HOMA: I mean, no one really surprises me out here. It's a great round. But the greens just aren't very firm. And if you drive the ball well you have a lot of iron shots. And I just feel like softish is, that's -- I mean, I guess I learned it the best at Caves Valley at the BMW a few years ago, it was the longest golf course ever and it was soft and nobody shot over par. So I guess you can, it makes sense, but I imagine it's going to get harder. I kind of like this trend it seems like at U.S. Opens lately where the first round they kind of, they trick us into thinking we got it and then as the weekend goes on it gets quite hard. So, yeah, it's very impressive, but they're tree tremendous golfers. So I guess it's impressive, not surprising.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports