

Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions

Wednesday, January 29, 2025

Orlando, Florida, USA

Lake Nona Golf & Country Club

Blake Griffin

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Blake, welcome to the Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions. 2011 Rookie of the Year. Making your rookie appearance here at this golf tournament. Is there a similar level have nerves that you might have?

BLAKE GRIFFIN: Yeah, definitely. There is always some nerves playing golf in front of people. I like to think that I'm a little bit more settled in now, but you never know.

I felt like the first tee is the first tee. You just kind of get up there and you figure it out.

Q. Yeah. In terms of your golf game specifically, what shots are you going to be the most nervous about making this week or taking this week?

BLAKE GRIFFIN: Like anything -- I don't even want to say it. Once I say it it's going to put it out there. Anything like an 85 to like 65 yard shot. I worked on to yesterday. Felt good about it.

You just never know. Every day you go out there can it's like all right, let's see what I'm doing to do. I don't know what kind of player I'm going to be today.

I think that's probably it.

Q. Have you played in any other tournaments that are similar setup?

BLAKE GRIFFIN: I played in the Tahoe -- I don't know what it's called. The Edgewood tournament. That was like 20,000 fans a day. Day one I was so nervous. I was like shaking over practice putts, you know. Like I knew I wasn't about to hit the ball and I was still nervous.

Day two and three I settled in and I was a little more comfortable, so hopefully I carry a little bit of that over to this. You never know. The first tee shot is always the first tee shot. We'll see.

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Q. In terms of the overall field for the celebrity side that your participating in, is there anyone specifically you're looking forward to playing with or had the chance to play a prosecute round with this week?

BLAKE GRIFFIN: Honestly, yeah. There is a ton of guys. You know, I've known Ray Allen forever. He was in the Tahoe tournament. Mardy Fish won Tahoe. Bunch of guys. I couldn't really say one guy in particular. Larry the Cable Guy is pretty cool. You know, maybe get to hang with him this week.

Q. We talked about the celebrities. We have the best women golfers, some of the best women athletes in general here playing this week. They all had to win to be in this tournament.

BLAKE GRIFFIN: Uh-huh.

Q. What has you most jazzed about interacting with them of them? Is there anyone that you're really excited to see play?

BLAKE GRIFFIN: Yeah, honestly, man, I tell everybody this but I love watching them play golf. I think their swings are just so -- they're like as close as you can get to perfection I feel like. They're a efficient. No wasted movement. You can watch the PGA TOUR and you can see some guys with a little different swing or something.

They just like crank it and try it use their power. These girls are so precise with what they do. Just being able to watch is pretty awesome. Nelly Korda videos on Instagram I don't ever skip her swing. I save a lot of them.

Q. Yeah.

BLAKE GRIFFIN: So just being able to watch them up close will be pretty awesome. Also just to get out drove by them, just out played in general will be pretty fun.

Q. How long have you been playing golf and how much time do you commit on a weekly basis to the game of golf?

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BLAKE GRIFFIN: About three and a half years. I would say I always try to play at least once a week. There is some weeks where I get more in. Some weeks where I don't.

I should be practicing more. I just love playing but I don't take enough lessons. So I don't know, in a week I think I dedicate like one round in like maybe hitting balls one other day.

I wish it was more than that, but, you know, things happen.

Q. In 2011 you dunked over a car.

BLAKE GRIFFIN: Yes.

Q. Are there any trick shots we might be seeing on the golf course this weekend?

BLAKE GRIFFIN: The only trick shots I have are the ones that I did not intend to do. Just, you know, if you -- listen I can skull one on command. I can hit one fat. I can do all those if you consider those trick shots.

Q. What do you think is the best part of your game?

BLAKE GRIFFIN: Usually I would say like an 8-iron feels very comfortable for me. Probably shouldn't say that out loud because that's going to go bad. I don't know. That's just the club I feel pretty solid with, like 170.

Q. I know you said you've been playing only three and a half years. Do you carry a handicap?

BLAKE GRIFFIN: I'm an 11.4 right now.

Q. That's pretty solid three and a half years in.

BLAKE GRIFFIN: I'm ashamed to say how much I practice, or try.

Q. Where do you play?

BLAKE GRIFFIN: I'm in LA, so I play Lakeside. Also at Brentwood. Yeah, mostly play Lakeside now.

Q. What's been your favorite course you've played so far?

BLAKE GRIFFIN: You know what? There is a course in Colorado called Ballyneal. It's probably 20 miles from the border of Nebraska and it's legitimately like there is an air strip and just the course. There is nothing else around. They have lodges there. I haven't played a ton. I haven't

been to Bandon Dunes, some of the other courses. Just the whole experience of flying in, playing 18 holes, you stay the night there, you wake up, play 18 more. It was pretty cool.

I don't know it was a tough course. Probably like one year into playing golf so as you can imagine ever course was tough. But, yeah, just a fun experience.

Q. That's awesome. And what do you make of Lake Nona and have you played Lake Nona before this week?

BLAKE GRIFFIN: Never played Lake Nona. Only played nine holes yesterday so no clue what the back looks like. Hopefully I'm figure it out today.

Just like just trying to not get outside myself this week. Just like be who I am. Take your medicine and keep going.

Q. Two basketball questions. What do you make of the NBA this year, especially watching from a retired player?

BLAKE GRIFFIN: I think we're in like an interesting time for the NBA, right? There is still the LeBrons, Stephs, KD, James Hardens. Look at Oklahoma City. No. 1 in the west; Houston, No. 2. I don't know if anything changed last night. Boston won last year. Cleveland.

Looking at all these teams with younger talent and you're seeing these teams that are very, very good. It's not for the first time in a long time it's not LeBron's team. It's not KD's team. Steph's team. None of those teams.

I think we're in a very interesting time in the NBA where there is a shift. All these young guys that are dominant and going to be good for a long, long, long, time. Obviously we still have the older guys that are good.

But there is a shift happening right now. For me it's exciting to watch because we're ushering in a new era.

Q. Last one. If you had to pick an MVP in the NBA at this point who you going with?

BLAKE GRIFFIN: Listen, I think Jokic is doing things that are absolutely unreal, his numbers, production. Having said that, I know there is like sort of like a voter -- people get tired of voting for the same person.

I think what Shay is doing in Oklahoma City is unbelievable. They're the best team, best record in the league, is and Chet's been hurt. He's done it with guys in

and out of the lineup. He's averaging I don't even know.

I would say right now I think it's got to be Shai.

Q. If you could come up with your ideal foursome of a couple basketball players, couple LPGA players, who would be the other three in your group?

BLAKE GRIFFIN: Current LPGA?

Q. Current or past.

BLAKE GRIFFIN: I think I would go Nelly and Annika. And then basketball, I probably go MJ. He's pretty fun to play golf with.

Q. Would you take money from MJ on the golf course?

BLAKE GRIFFIN: I would try to. I don't know what his handicap is right now. Yeah, he's no stranger to throwing down a little cash.

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