

Sanderson Farms Championship

Friday, September 30, 2022

Jackson, Mississippi, USA

Country Club of Jackson

Mackenzie Hughes

Quick Quotes

Q. Mac, how would you characterize the round today?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: It was really solid. I didn't really have much stress, and had a nice groove going with the irons. Hit a lot of close shots. Yeah, just really in control with that. Being in the fairway was important, but when I was in the rough I controlled it really well in the rough and gave myself looks. Felt good with the putter, which is normally a strength, so if I can start hitting it close and give myself good looks, then it's going to turn out pretty nice.

Q. Have you been working on something in your game recently that sparked a little bit today?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Just been working really hard. Yeah, I started with a new coach a couple weeks ago in Napa and working on a couple small things which have been kind of showing on the golf course, and I've been putting in a lot of work in the gym and on the range to increase my club head speed and ball speed, so that's been showing up, as well. Just a combination of a few different things, but been working hard at it, and it's always nice when you put in hard work and you get some good results.

Q. Are you working on everything with Josh Gregory?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: It's mainly we're just doing full swing. Felt like I was in a pretty good place with the short game the last few years, and just wanted to be a little bit tidier tee to green. We just started and kind of see how things progress, but so far liking the stuff we're working on.

Q. You've been trying to get a little bit more speed over the last year or so. What more have you kind of been doing in the gym or with your swing to hopefully pick up a little bit more?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: I think just kind of lifting on a more regular basis. I think it's easy to go through a tournament and say I'm not going to train this week, but



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I've been up in the gym here at the club and been putting in work up there, just even during the week, which normally I wouldn't be doing. But trying to push a little bit harder, and also on the range, it's just a commitment to doing it pretty much every other day, hitting drivers as hard as I can.

I know I've probably gotten a few looks on the range because it looks sometimes crazy, but it's definitely helped, and I feel like I've picked up a little bit of speed, which always helps in this game.

Q. How much do you think have you picked up?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: I'd say -- I think last year I averaged, I want to say, like 170.5 in ball speed for the season. I think I'd say so far for two events I've probably been closer to 75, which is pretty significant, and adds up to some decent yardage.

That's kind of the game plan is to just keep pushing that and hopefully be pushing 180 soon.

Q. Did you watch the Presidents Cup, and if so, was it motivating knowing that was in Charlotte?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, I watched. I had some family in town that week, so we didn't make it out, but I watched and was keeping tabs on the boys and pulling like heck for them to pull it out. Yeah, it was motivating for sure. I wanted to be there really badly, and it was something I had kind of marked on my calendar for the last year and a half. Once I knew it was coming to Charlotte, that was -- I wanted to be on that team.

It hurt, but that's the way it goes in this game sometimes. I'll work hard to be on that team in two years in Montreal.

Q. Starting off with I think it was four birdies in five holes, how much momentum can that give you throughout a round when you start off that well?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, it's important to get off to a good start, and I think especially given the round I had yesterday, I was kind of stuck in neutral and didn't get much going, so to get that fast start kind of felt like, okay,

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I'm making my way up the leaderboard, and you can kind of put the cut line out of your mind a little bit and kind of push forward.

Yeah, the great start was a huge bonus and got me rolling.

Q. How hard is it to kind of be patient and make yourself play with that -- like you say, when you get the cut line out of your mind you free up a little bit. Is it hard to play like that all the time?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, there's just days no matter what you're doing, you're just going to feel better than other days. I certainly had a good day today feeling good, and those days you have to really kind of be almost extra aggressive and put your foot down and say, look, I'm going to go out there and be on the attack versus kind of being more conservative. That paid off today, and I made a bunch of birdies.

Q. Is it pretty nice when you birdie the last two? Does it make you sleep a little bit better going into tomorrow?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah. Finishing -- no matter if you're going to shoot 72 and you birdie the last two or shoot 63 and birdie the last two, it's always nice to finish that way, finish strong, because those are the holes that you typically remember the most. Even though I had a great start, you want to finish a round off. To finish it off that way was pretty cool.

Q. I know a lot of players have been talking about the greens out there and saying they're some of the best on TOUR. Do you agree with that, and what makes them good?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, they're some of the best surfaces that we play all year. They're really fast. You come downgrain, downhill, they're some of the fastest greens you play all year. It's really fun to get on a roll with the putter when the greens are this good because you feel like you get it on line, it's going to go in.

Yeah, it was a lot of fun today, and the greens are fantastic.

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