

# RBC Heritage

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Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, USA

Harbour Town Golf Links

## Ludvig Åberg

Press Conference



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THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome Ludvig Åberg at the interview room here at the RBC Heritage. Making his first start here at Harbour Town and coming off a runner-up at last week's Masters Tournament. Ludvig, coming out of last week, what positives did you take out of that experience in your first major championship and into this week?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, last week was unbelievable. You don't really know what it's going to be like until you actually play in your first major, especially it being the Masters.

I felt very, very privileged to be able to walk those grounds (audio feed interruption).

...oh, Tiger hit this shot and Phil hit this shot and all these iconic moments, and I felt very fortunate to be a part of it.

THE MODERATOR: Coming into this week, this is your fourth consecutive Signature Event getting off the Aon Next 10 thanks to your strong play this year. What are you looking forward to most in your first start at the RBC Heritage?

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, I've heard a lot of good things about Hilton Head, the trickiness of the golf course, the angles you've got to work. It's a real Pete Dye golf course where you've got to place your tee balls and place your approach shots in the right spots, and I think that'll be a challenge, but I'm up for it, and it'll be really fun to play.

**Q. You're playing a lot of new golf courses this year, and you seem to be very well. What is it about your makeup and your intelligence that allows you to see a golf course for the first time and go in there and get it?**

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, definitely. I think over the last year, most tournaments that I've played it's the first time I'm also playing the golf course. It's a challenge. It demands a little bit more of your time and effort Monday through Wednesday, I think. You have to make sure that you know the angles, especially on a golf course like this where

there's a little bit more to it.

But I also -- I trust my team. I trust my caddie a lot in those instances. He's been around here quite a lot, and I'm leaning on him for all those kinds of informations.

He tells me where to hit it, and I try to do that as good as I can.

**Q. I'm curious, did you have a debrief afterwards with Hans and Peter? I'm curious what your team said to you about the way you finished up.**

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, we had some conversations of reflection the last couple of days. Overall I think we all really enjoyed the week together. It was cool to have everyone there and to spend the week together. Obviously Augusta is a special place.

But we felt like we did a lot of good things, and frankly very proud of the way that we handled all those things. Like I said before, you don't really know what it's going to be like to play your first major until you really play it, and all those things, I felt like we handled that really well, and it makes us really excited about the next one.

**Q. How did the nerves compare to a regular TOUR event, a major, versus how you felt at the Ryder Cup?**

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, obviously I was super, super nervous. I think I was nervous the whole week, even when I was about to tee off in the practice rounds. I think those are always going to be there, which is okay. It's all part of being a human, I think, to feel those nerves.

But yes, it was a little bit more than a normal TOUR event because you know the magnitude of the tournament, everything that comes with it.

Then I'd say it's a little bit different from the Ryder Cup because the Ryder Cup is a little bit of a different dynamic, as well, where you represent so much more than just yourself. You're representing your teammates and your captains and the continent and your country whereas here it's just me and my team.

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It was almost -- it was a little bit different dynamic, but obviously super nervous anytime I tee it up in a tournament, I think.

**Q. On the broadcast, coming off the 11th green, I'm not sure if you're aware of this, but you were smiling. Did you realize you were smiling, and why would you smile after making that costly error?**

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, I didn't know it at the time that I was smiling, I guess. Obviously it wasn't ideal to dump it in the water. I think we all know that.

But at the end of the day, me and Joe and my caddie, my team, we've talked a lot about just keep playing, just make sure that the next shot is your best one. That's all you can do. That's all you can try to focus on.

Obviously looking back, that was probably where I lost the tournament a little bit, but I didn't know it at the time. All I tried to do is just keep pushing forward and keep pushing forward. You never what's going to happen, especially on a course like Augusta where so many things can happen.

I felt very fortunate to still be playing a major championship Sunday back nine in contention is what I've dreamt of for my whole career. Even though I made a dumb mistake on 11, I was still in the hunt, and I still felt very fortunate to be in that situation.

**Q. Just wondering if you feel like you learned anything in particular about how to attack major championship golf course. Guys will say they've learned different things. Maybe they don't have to be perfect, certain things about when they play in majors. Now going through your first one, did you feel like you learned something?**

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, I think so. You can't really force it around Augusta National. I don't know how it is for other major championships because I've never been in one, but I know I can speak for the Masters, where it's very difficult to try to force things. It's very difficult to try to make up for mistakes. Most times you just take your medicine and be okay with that.

That's one of the things that I felt like we did very well. We kept the discipline, never really tried to -- because the golf course is so smart and it's so good where it tries to put you in corners where you don't really want to be in and it tries to make decisions that might not be the best.

But I felt like that was one of the things we did very well last weekend is just tried to stay disciplined, stay on the right side of the pins and keep giving ourselves chances.

**Q. A bit off topic, but your last year in college, how much do you treat that as a year of kind of being a pro golfer but in college, just the way you've dealt with stuff, and do you feel like that was an ideal buffer to get you off on the right foot on TOUR?**

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, I think so. I think once I did turn pro, I felt like I was quite ready for those things because we've deliberately trained and practiced and played a lot because college is great, but it is a little bit different in terms of the amount of golf you play. The schedule is a little bit busier. I felt like we could use that -- I was fortunate to get a few exemptions, too, where I was able to play API, I was able to play Valspar, and to kind of test the waters and see how it is, and then I could use that in my training and in my preparation, and then whenever we got done with NCAAs last year, I felt pretty ready to turn pro.

**Q. There was a report that the television ratings at the Masters were significantly down in the U.S., and the idea might be even though people were together maybe there's some fatigue among fans. I wanted to ask from the people you know, whether it's your friends, your family, people in your personal life that follow professional golf, have you noticed a change in their attitudes over the last couple of years because of everything that's been happening?**

LUDVIG ÅBERG: I haven't really noticed a change. All I try to do is play golf. Like I said before, I haven't been around the setting for that long. It's just my first year of professional golf. I feel very fortunate to be able to play these PGA TOUR events, and I guess it's not really in our hands what those ratings are looking like.

All I try to do is try to have fun on the golf course, try to entertain the fans as best I can with some good golf and then see where that takes us.

**Q. In terms of people you know, you haven't noticed friends or people that aren't playing golf, you haven't noticed that they're less likely to watch golf or becoming fatigued with certain elements of it?**

LUDVIG ÅBERG: I almost feel like it's the opposite because I've got so many friends that normally they don't play golf and now they know me and they watch golf. Yeah, I don't really know anything about that.

**Q. Is this as great a contrast in golf course styles as you've experienced week to week on the PGA TOUR so far? And what do you think about playing two totally different golf courses in back-to-back events?**

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, definitely. It's a very big change. Augusta has got the big greens with the big slopes and semi-wide fairways, and here you've got some tight chutes in the fairways and smaller greens. I think it's a big change, a big difference. That's what's so cool about these courses. That's the cool part about being a member on the PGA TOUR and being able to play all these different golf courses, different grass types. It's really cool. You don't get to see that a ton. But I'm excited about the week.

**Q. Is there a gap right now between Scottie and everybody else?**

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Seems like it. (Chuckling.)

**Q. How do you close it?**

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, I just keep being me, keep making sure the things that I'm working on, they're good, and I think as a golfer, it's always going to be an endless challenge of trying to get a little bit better, whether it's your putting or chipping or short game or hitting balls or whatever it is.

I think I'm always trying to make sure that the things that I'm working on are going in the right direction. Obviously I can't do anything about Scottie. He's an unbelievable player and a person, and I respect him so much.

I think it's good to have him here because he's pushing everyone else to get a little bit better, as well.

**Q. What's the one area you're most concerned about in your game to get to that No. 1 in the world spot?**

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Concern I don't think is the right word. I think there's no really part of my game that I'm concerned with. I think obviously I'd say that for me, if I look at the tournaments when I'm high up on the leaderboard, it's usually when my putting and chipping is pretty good, the scoring clubs, because you're not always going to hit it perfect. You're not always going to hit 16 greens a round, and when you do, putting and chipping can save it up for that. So I think getting a little bit more consistent with those things, getting a little bit sharper I think will help me in the long run.

**Q. What does your schedule look like for the next couple of months? Have you planned it out yet?**

LUDVIG ÅBERG: Yeah, I think we have a provisional plan. I'll play Wells Fargo, PGA after that, and then I think I'll play -- is it Memorial, U.S. Open, Travelers, and then I'll go back to Europe for quite some time.

**Q. When did you first meet Scottie?**

LUDVIG ÅBERG: First time I met him was in Rome.

**Q. Interesting first time to meet him. What do you remember thinking?**

LUDVIG ÅBERG: I think I actually had the question the other day, someone asked me who's my favorite player on TOUR, and I said Scottie, not only because of the way he plays golf and hits the golf ball, but the person he is and how he handles a lot of those things.

I'm very -- I'm admiring him as a person because of those things, and I think that's pretty cool.

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