

# RBC Heritage

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Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, USA

Harbour Town Golf Links

## Max Homa

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome Max Homa to the RBC Heritage, making your third start here this week. What are you looking forward to most at Harbour Town?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, I love this golf course. It's a shame this is only my third time here. The golf course is so unique. It's a lot like Colonial in that we play a lot of big and far and hit it as high as you can and here you're really working it, and it's maddening. There's trees off the sides of the fairway when you're in the fairway that are in your way, so I enjoy the challenge of that. Playing different golf courses is one of my favorite parts about getting to travel around on TOUR. This is definitely a treat for all of us.

**Q. A few days have passed since you earned your best finish in a major championship. What are some positives that you can take away from the week at Augusta?**

MAX HOMA: Yeah, a lot of positives in that I handled my nerve really well. I dealt with a lot of expectation and didn't let that affect my golf game too much. I had never been in a position of being in contention going into a Sunday -- a Saturday, any of those days really. It was fun to wake up for a couple days and think, there's a pretty decent chance I might be wearing a green jacket on Sunday and to still excel and feel good about my golf.

Yeah, just a lot of good stuff to take from last week, and just in general what a memory. If I never play another golf tournament, it's pretty cool to have that seared into my brain.

**Q. You talk about memories being seared into your brain. Is there a lasting image you have or a moment from last week?**

MAX HOMA: Yeah, walking on Sunday from 11 to 12. 11 green to 12 tee. I had a good buddy of mine remind me going into Saturday that I need to look around and smell the roses and appreciate what I get to do because I've seen some not-so-great parts of professional golf. So I was very aware on the weekend to smile. Joe kept



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reminding me this is the most fun we've ever had. Appreciate that and then get back to work.

I tried every day to walk up to that 12th tee with my eyes up and look around and scan the crowd. I got basically like a standing ovation walking to that tee, and I just tried to stare at it as long as I could and enjoy it. We got it on Saturday, as well. Just something about walking to that 12th tee is pretty amazing feeling.

**Q. I know you talked previously about your major championship record not being quite what it was. What does this do for you now? Does it reinforce something in you about yourself, or does it teach you something you didn't know?**

MAX HOMA: Yeah, I guess it reinforces that my golf game is good enough. I think most anybody who plays a major, it is. But until you get to feel that, you don't know.

I did absolutely nothing special on the weekend and had a very good chance, minus a bad bounce on the 12th. So that's kind of what I've taken going into the other ones, that I didn't have any magic on the weekend. I didn't chip in. I didn't make a putt outside of 12 feet for two days, and standing on 12 tee I'm about to be one back of Scottie, best player in the world and one of the best players I think we'll ever see.

So I think that just physically I take that with me, that my physical golf game is good enough.

Other than that, it's just, again, going back to handling myself when the heat is on, playing with Tiger for two days and leading the golf tournament after those two rounds. That's a challenge in itself.

I hadn't had a good major finish prior to the Open last year. I got 13th at Southern Hills, but was miles back and just kind of played well in spots to maintain that but never really had any hope to win any of them.

I guess now maybe a little bit of the monkey is off the back. I know I can, and the work I'm doing is right. It just comes down to the mental for me. I didn't change anything about my golf game last week. I just really changed my head and



got out of my own way and just played some golf.

**Q. You just referenced Scottie as being one of the best we'll ever see. How big is the gap right now do you think from Scottie and the rest of the field, and from your perspective, do you look at that as daunting or more challenging, facing him?**

MAX HOMA: I mean, the gap seems to be quite large. He's gone first, second, first. Three of those events are the best fields we've got. One of them is another good field on a really difficult golf course.

I think we've seen people do this over the years as far as excellence for time, over a little bit of time.

His seems to be sustained a bit longer than I can remember from a lot of people. The Rorys of the world, the Tigers, the Jordans, these guys have done this for a while, but the way Scottie -- I played with him two -- I played with him in the Masters and the U.S. Open. I think it was last year on Thursday and Friday, and he hit it unbelievable. I just kept thinking to myself, man, must be nice, that's just incredible, and then he's done it for a year. Those are like great weeks that you like harken back to. He does this every week.

It's definitely unique what he's doing.

Is it more daunting or challenging? More challenging, I would say. I think it's inspiring. It makes you look at your game even more closely to figure out what you would do to get on his level.

I think because of the Tiger era when he was just running through golf tournament after golf tournament and just annihilating everybody, it was probably more daunting because we had never seen anything like that.

Scottie is tremendously talented and a hard worker and sadly, a better person. I wish I could hate him. But it's not utterly shocking what he does. He just does it over and over and over again. That's amazing. I feel like he almost makes it seem very realistic that we should do that. He just seems like he's playing on the driving range every day.

I don't know, it looks more challenging than daunting, and it's really amazing what he's doing. I can't believe how good he is week in and week out at going through his process and just being so committed and invested in it. Obviously it's showing in the results, but I imagine it's harder than it looks, and he's just making it look so easy that I think it gives us some hope that maybe one or multiple of us can start to do something like he's doing.

**Q. Would you be in favor of a mandatory three-month paternity leave?**

MAX HOMA: No, I want to beat his ass pretty bad at some point, so I'd be lying if I wasn't thinking a little bit about last week if Meredith did go into labor.

No, the beauty of this is you want to beat the best when they're at their best. It's fun, and it's hard. That's the cool part about the opportunities provided us right now is that if you beat Scottie Scheffler pretty much any week, you've had a good week, and I think that's a pretty cool part of where our sport is at right now.

**Q. After an emotionally draining week like that and especially an emotional Sunday, can you just run us through what do you do on Monday, the day after that?**

MAX HOMA: I hopped in the car and drove three hours here, called a bunch of people just to have them break up my drive, so shout-out to DJ Piehowski. He helped me out for about an hour and a half to two hours of that drive. Reminisced a little on the drive when I didn't have service on how the week went, what I thought I could have done better, what I thought I did well, stretch and keep my body kind of loose.

Then I went and got some food and tried to go to bed as early as I could because I was pretty worn out by the end of the drive.

Yeah, I don't know. Appreciate things a little bit. Like remember the cool stuff. Talk to other people about the cool stuff. Then, like I said, have a little bit of introspection on what I could have done better and what I would like to see going forward.

Like I said before, not every week, even great weeks end with a win, and that does sting in our game, but long-term wins are a bit different than just week to week. I hope to be back there again, and if I'm not there there I'd like to be back there somewhere else in a pressure moment like that, so I'd like to continue to learn from all these weeks that I do have a chance to win.

**Q. Where did you get the food, and what did you get?**

MAX HOMA: I absolutely demolished Chick-Fil-A on my way down. A sweet woman paid for it, actually, in the drive-thru line, and then when I got to town I went to Giuseppe's and got a pizza. I never really eat pizza. Cheese doesn't sit well with me, but I'm all by myself this week, so I decided to splurge a little.

**Q. Can you give us maybe two or three big takeaways**

**you got from playing with Tiger that you could apply to your game, like I want to learn how to do that?**

MAX HOMA: His short game is otherworldly. The array of shots he has is more than I've probably seen anyone have. That was just over a two-day span. I find that to be something I would love to somehow figure out how to do.

His commitment to each shot he hits, that's something I think Scottie is tremendous at. I would like to be able to do that, as well.

**Q. I read a story yesterday about how the TV ratings at the Masters were a little bit down. Very hard to analyze that stuff or to know what it means, but I did want to ask you to whatever connection you have with what you consider an average fan or people who watch golf who aren't players, do you sense that their attitudes have shifted over the past two years? Is there any fatigue because of the LIV stuff? What are you seeing?**

MAX HOMA: In person, no. I've actually been pretty amazed this year with the fatigue I have from all of this garbage going on. But each event on-site has felt amazing. The Masters was incredible. Bay Hill was awesome. THE PLAYERS was awesome. All these events I've been to have been great. Today was incredible how many people were out there for a Wednesday, yet on the internet and what I'm seeing with those numbers and all that, it does seem like yeah, I would imagine fans have fatigue. They probably should have fatigue. I don't know why they'd want to care about how much money we're making and how much more money we want to make. It's quite nauseating.

Yeah, I have been told probably not to look too much into all those numbers because these things happen and there's trends and things and whatever. I'm not going to go into that because I really don't know anything about it.

But yeah, I can only speak on what I know we're trying to do. We had a really great PAC meeting yesterday. I was really inspired by the hope and plan to make it better for the fans. I think we hit this year-and-a-half- or two-year rut as both golfers and golf leagues that was just about making the players happy, and unfortunately and quite obviously the fans were not benefitted by that.

I'm very hopeful that at some point here soon, we've been shown that we are nothing without those watching us, and they can stop watching us whenever they'd like. Hopefully more innovation will go into making their viewing process a lot more engaging and fun because that's why we get to do this.

**Q. What did you and DJ talk about?**

MAX HOMA: Man, I missed him. I got to see him recently, so we just talked about -- we fixed the world's problems every time we talk, so we talked a lot about the LIV Tour stuff. I asked him what it looks like when we were playing a tournament because I don't have much of a feel. I said, did it ever look like Scottie wasn't going to win? Things like that. It's nice to get a viewer's outlook on a golf tournament here and there.

**Q. You mentioned you also spent a lot of that drive reflecting and stuff. Is there anything specific you wanted to change from maybe last week to this coming week in your strategy or anything specific you thought about?**

MAX HOMA: Yeah, as much as I thought I did my best job mentally last week, one thing stuck out to me at times throughout the weekend is I just wish I would have backed myself on certain golf shots a little bit more. Had a wedge on Saturday on 7 that Joe made it quite clear that we were not missing left of that pin, and I didn't trust that I could aim two yards right of it and hit it two yards right of it. I tried to make sure I was right of it.

Similarly on my tee shot on 13 on Sunday, I just made the double, so I'm going to give myself a little grace. My brain was kind of moving fast. But I needed to hit -- if I hit a good 3-wood and hooked it I could get there in two pretty easily and kind of halfway back I didn't want to make another mistake and hook it in the water, so I hung it way right and couldn't get there in two.

I think just the progression of the mental kind of typically starts with the attitude and then it gets into being very present, and then I think that hopefully the next step for me is to trust how good I am, especially when I'm playing good and take some things on, not necessarily strategically, just literally once I stand over the golf ball, just trust this is what we're going to do, and it might work and it might not but let's put the chips behind ourselves a little bit and then go see what my golf game has got.

**Q. What do you gain from doing some lighter fun things that maybe expose you to some fans?**

MAX HOMA: Oh, I don't know.

**Q. What do you enjoy about it?**

MAX HOMA: I guess I just like doing them. I don't do it to gain anything. I really enjoy Bob and the boys. I enjoy all those people, so it's more so when they reach out. It's

more like they're asking me to play some golf. So it's just fun. I like beating them. I guess that's what I gain at times.

But yeah, I don't know. Golf is fun. They're really fun. They make it fun to play with them, and I like what they do for the sport. It doesn't have to be more men's professional golf. It's just for the game. I love golf. I want golf to continue to thrive. As much as to Shane's question about people watching golf, that doesn't mean golf is going down. It's actually going way up. More people are playing. That's cool.

Would I like people to do both? Sure. But I'm just glad that golf is continuing to gain popularity because it's pretty cool how many of my friends nowadays are talking about going to play golf on the weekends and telling me about their rounds. That's been fun. That's what I really appreciate about what all those people you mentioned are doing for just golf at large.

**Q. It seems like more and more TOUR pros are doing that type of stuff maybe just to have a little bit more fun outside of the game?**

MAX HOMA: Yeah, I would think so. Like I said, they're very kind people. They're fun. They're entertaining just to be around. It's just cool to be with them. We have such high-stress situations in our daily lives as far as week to week goes because starting tomorrow, Thursday through Sunday is, just blinders on and try our hardest. There you can kind of talk some trash and make some jokes and hit some cool shots and there's really not a massive consequence. I don't know, it's enjoyable. I was going to play golf anyway, so might as well play with those guys who make me feel a lot better about what I do.

**Q. What was your biggest takeaway from (indiscernible)?**

MAX HOMA: There's light at the end of this tunnel for the golf fan. There's innovation, possibilities. It's not nearly that this is just what golf looks like and we need to hope people like it. There's ways we can manipulate it a little bit in a good way to gain fan engagement, make it more fun for them to watch. It was truly all about just what we need to do better as a TOUR for golf fans to be more inclined to watched. I think at times it's easy to say this is just what golf looks like, and I think it was nice to see that people have other out looks on that that are a lot more optimistic.

**Q. I wanted to go back to Chick-Fil-A for a minute. Who paid for your lunch? How did that come about?**

MAX HOMA: It was cool. I was in the drive-thru by myself and I went to order and the person taking the order told me

that the woman in the row next to me had paid for whatever I was going to get. She said that her son is three or four and I'm his favorite golfer, so it was pretty cool. I don't know, those kinds of things I still pinch myself. I'm not quite sure --

**Q. She was next to you in line?**

MAX HOMA: Yeah, it was a two-line Chick-Fil-A, you know, busy. She paid for it, I rolled my window down, we chatted for a minute or so, and then I ate it.

**Q. Paid for lunch for the guy who just won 640,000 or whatever --**

MAX HOMA: Yeah, it was kind. I just pinch myself at times with the kindness people have given me just because I play some golf. I feel very fortunate for that.

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