

John Deere Classic

Thursday, July 6, 2023

TPC Deere Run

Silvis, Illinois, USA

Jonas Blixt

Press Conference



Q. Jonas, incredible start, 9-under 62. Did you feel this coming?

JONAS BLIXT: Oh, absolutely not. I had six weeks off and worked a lot with my swing coach back home. I had struggled a lot I feel like a few months there, and I think I found something this week after playing the Korn Ferry last week.

At this point when you don't have that much confidence in your game and you find something, you just kind of go out and see where you swing at it, and that's what happened. I mean, 62 doesn't happen very often on the PGA TOUR, at least not for me.

I'm very happy about it. Extremely happy about it.

Q. Could you explain the pressure you're under then when you come in because you haven't been able to play very often either, to come in and make something happen right away?

JONAS BLIXT: Well, yeah, certain weeks you feel like that; certain other weeks you don't.

I kind of came to the point in my season where it's so late that I don't feel any pressure anymore really and just kind of go out and swing at it.

I feel like I did a lot of putting this week, which kind of worked out today. Then I found something in my swing on Tuesday with my swing coach. I don't know.

Golf is weird. Like, tomorrow I can shoot 100 I feel like, but today was a great day.

Q. Does it feel repeatable to you, what you have done today?

JONAS BLIXT: Yeah, absolutely. But when you go through swing changes, sometimes there's a little bit of doubt in there. Today I got into a really good rhythm.

I spoke to my swing coach. I mean, I feel it back there, and he said he never seen me swing this well. He has been with me since my college days.

So that gives you a little bit of a confidence boost as well. You know, I'm just trying to go out swinging right now.

Q. You talk about the swing changes. Was it a massive rebuild or just a little tweak, or what was it that you were working on?

JONAS BLIXT: Well, starting in mid-May it was a lot of small tweaks, a little bit everywhere. So they worked out today. We'll see how they work out tomorrow.

Q. I want to take you back to March. We're standing on the putting green at Valspar. You were hitting the ball splendidly on the range. You were sinking a lot of putts. It got to be about 11:40, and I asked when your tee time was, and you said, I'm an alternate. What does it mean to have capitalized on this opportunity you have here thinking back to how tough it's been?

JONAS BLIXT: Yeah, it's been -- I had a back surgery in '19. Since then, I haven't really gotten back to where I want to be.

I feel like I've been making small strides one at a time. You know, some weeks they work out. Hopefully this week it will, but it's just the first round, so I have three more to go. Anything can happen.

Q. What's your mindset the rest of the day and heading into tomorrow? You'll spend some time on the range today and keep working at it, or what's the plan?

JONAS BLIXT: I got a little -- I'm going to do a couple of drills pretty quick, I think. Probably take me like an hour.

Then behind Henrik Norlander and I talked about going to the zoo later with his family. I'm a big fan of zoos. I can't even really say it, but yeah, we might do that.

Q. What's your favorite animal?

JONAS BLIXT: Oh, God. I don't really have one.



Q. What are you most excited to see at the zoo today then? How about that?

JONAS BLIXT: I don't know what they have. I haven't really looked it up. He came up on the third hole, and he is, like: Hey, I'm going to the zoo today. Do you want to go?

I was, like, yeah, let's go.

Q. I know things haven't quite gone the way you wanted to this year. When you come out and do this and you said earlier that you don't feel a lot of pressure this late in the season, but if this is the hold-up, you're going to be right on the border, if not inside the cut line, for the FedEx Cup playoffs. Does that add extra pressure now that you have a shot if this keeps up or still just keep swinging it and go as you go?

JONAS BLIXT: Right now it's really easy to say no, not at all. But if you ask me if I would be in this position coming down 17, 18 on Sunday, yeah, absolutely.

Pressure builds during the tournament, but by now first round I've done this for so many years. Am I happy about a 9-under first round? Absolutely. Stoked about it.

But does it really mean anything? Not really. Not for us. What matters is the back nine on Sunday.

Q. I know you haven't really been in contention a whole lot since you've had your back surgery in 2019. How excited are you for the weekend and for tomorrow for a shot to go out there and get yourself back in the mix again?

JONAS BLIXT: Extremely. Every time you get in the mix, you know you're doing something right. If you don't, you learn something. So no matter what happens, I will learn something. I will take the experience with me. I also got to thank John Deere for putting on such a good tournament. Everything from the food, the Big Dig that we had yesterday, to the golf course is in great shape. They do such a good job.

Q. Mentally how strong do you have to be over the last couple of years with the challenges that you've been facing?

JONAS BLIXT: Not really. Not too bad, actually. I'm not a rookie. I think it would have been different if I was in my 20s.

I played a lot of years on tour, and I'm very thankful for it,

and I got to play with a lot of good players, a lot of good golf courses, a lot of good sponsors.

Sometimes you just have to be grateful for what you have and what you experience as well and not always think about what could have been. So I kind of lean on that a little bit.

Obviously I'm still hungry. I'm not saying that I'm quitting, but you know, sometimes when you talk to a friend and you hear him say I'm really happy about what I'm doing in life and how my life is right now, that's the best thing you want to hear as a friend.

Yeah, not too stressed, to be honest with you.

Q. You haven't had many opportunities to play this year. I think this is your eighth start or eight tournaments. Is that just status situations where you haven't been able to get into tournaments?

JONAS BLIXT: Yeah, yeah.

Q. How frustrating is that knowing that your game can be there and not have that opportunity?

JONAS BLIXT: Not at all, actually. I believe golf is -- elite sports is very competitive, and if you don't perform, you shouldn't be playing.

I think there should be a cut in every tournament. I mean, that's part of golf. That puts pressure on you. I think if you don't play good enough, people don't want to see you play either.

I haven't played well enough, and I don't think people want to see that. So I think there's better players for that.

No, I just have been really working to get better so I can be that guy that people want to see on TV.

Q. Last year J.T. Poston opened with a 9-under 62. Never got caught. Do you let that possibility even enter your mind at this point?

JONAS BLIXT: No, no. No, I only play 25% of the tournament. There's 75% to go.

I always feel like the back nine on Sunday is where it really matters, so we'll see where I will be on Sunday. So I don't know.

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