

The Memorial Tournament Presented By Workday

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Muirfield Village

Max Homa

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Max Homa to the interview room here at The Memorial Tournament Presented By Workday. Max, what do you enjoy about coming back to Jack's place?

MAX HOMA: I really love this city. Now with a kid, it's great with the zoo and there's tons of park, they have a library, all these great things, so my family loves it.

But I don't know, I've just played pretty well here, and it's a really tough test of golf. But it's just a historic golf course. Tiger has thousands of highlights from here, so I just feel like you've seen it as a kid growing up so many times. It's always fun to come to a place like that.

THE MODERATOR: Do any of those moments stick out to you as it relates to Tiger, some of the memories he's made here over the years?

MAX HOMA: Yeah a lot. It's very hard to picture around here. The rough's really thick and the greens all run towards one direction, towards the other side of the green off the rough and into the water, and he's holed out, like, 700 times. So, like, I just don't -- I'm just not that good at aiming.

But yeah, just the - yeah, there's just tons of those kinds of highlights. The 11th hole, he's had -- you know, everyone's seen the 2-irons and all that, so it's just crazy.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions.

Q. Do you feel like the golf course is playing harder this year than other times you've been here?

MAX HOMA: It is always hard. It does feel like that. It will be interesting to see the scores the next couple days to measure it because the last few years I've been here, I feel like it's just been incredibly firm, and that's been the test. With such difficult greens, it's been impossible to leave the ball in a good spot at times.



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But this year, the rough feels like a U.S. Open a bit more. I had a couple lies today that you are just trying to get it 70 yards down the fairway. Then you have to deal with -- the greens are still relatively firm. So I'll be interested to see. Usually when it gets -- we get rain and some kind of soft. It isn't -- it's a birdiefest. I don't believe it will be, but you could see somebody, I think, if they drove it really well for a day, you could get hot. I just don't know if you could do that for four days. But that will be interesting to see.

Q. Can you talk about what this tournament means to a lot of players, why it's so special, and how you got to know Jack over the years and seen what this means to him as well?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, I think everybody has their, as a kid, favorite tournament, whether it's in your hometown, that's how mine kind of started, or an event you've gone to a lot or one that you just happen to watch with your parents or whatever.

But then there's three that stick out amongst -- above them all, in my opinion, and it's the three with the three legends of the game who have tied their name to an event. So obviously, having Jack Nicklaus's name on an event, as they call it Jack's Place, is a massive deal. I think even if you're not an historian of the game, like, that name speaks loudly or volumes. It's been a venue that I think all of us on TOUR have just seen hundreds of times on TV. It's always had just incredible finishes or incredible winners, and I just think those three events in particular just stand out because of who is tied and, obviously, when you have the greatest major champion of all time, it's pretty awesome.

Like I said, the city shows out for this tournament. Like, today is crazy out there. The weather's not very good, so it's impressive. So I think all those things combined make it such a desirable tournament to compete in.

Q. When you talk about all that he's accomplished and legendary status, like you say, now that you're playing it and you're going through it and the grind, do you kind of grow to appreciate more what guys like him and Tiger have accomplished? Like, do you kind of sit there and be like this is really hard to do now that



you're living in it?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, for sure. The one I usually use is, like, Tiger's 142 cuts. Not to say before I didn't think that was incredible, but I played one year on TOUR and realized that that is, like, an impossible feat, nearly. It didn't seem real after getting to experience it.

So, like, Jack Nicklaus's 18 majors is incredible. I couldn't obviously never picture that one. But I think he's had 19 seconds. So 37 top 2s in a major? I mean, that's -- I think that's more top 10s than I've had on TOUR in my whole career. And not to say I've had this illustrious career, but that's just hard to fathom, and that's just in majors, four chances year.

So there's things that stick out more than just, like, the wins. It's, like, the longevity and consistency of that is -- I mean, that's what you see with great, great players, but then there's a couple -- or a few, like, legends and you see why.

Q. You just mentioned Tiger and Jack, two of probably the most mentally strong players who have played the game. Is golf more of a mental or physical challenge, would you say? And for you personally, which one's harder to master or try to master?

MAX HOMA: The physical is much harder to master. There's a blueprint on how to, like, mentally approach a week and to put yourself in the right head space. I do think that people like a Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods, rightfully so, get dubbed as the mentally toughest and strongest and all those things out there, but I do think it helps that they're really good at golf.

Webb Simpson sticks out in my mind. He's had a really good career. He's never going to be talked about in the Jacks and Tigers of the game when he ends his career, but that's one of the most positive people I've been around.

Peter Malnati is like that. You wouldn't know what they shot. If you followed them the first eight holes, they could be 10-over, and they would be doing the same stuff. So I think you do get more credit for it when you win a bunch majors. Not to say that that's not a massive part of why they dominated.

I do think it's very impressive when it's people like them two, you see what Scottie's doing, what Rory's doing for his career, that they -- I think Scottie and my generation is the best I've seen at it. He's really amazing. You can watch it -- I think it's almost -- it's more impressive in a way because he could give up a lot of weeks and just -- like, last week he did not need to grind for whatever he got, 4th

place. We all know he's good. Life's good.

But he does. And I think that, to me, is the most impressive. Not to say other people don't have that, but, like, just where he is in the game and where Tiger has been and where Jack's been, to keep doing that year after year is amazing.

Q. The event that you did last night with the Chipotle, what does it mean to be able to collaborate with your favorite thing, and also give back to some high school kids who want to be like Max Homa?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, that was a super pinch-me moment. Very lucky. Two people sitting behind you have helped quite a bit. It's a dream to play on TOUR. It's probably a bigger dream for me to be friends with the CEO of Chipotle, to be quite honest. Since college, on Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley I have been going to that place just religiously. So it's crazy to think that we're doing things, you know, together. But, yeah, then you add in all the volunteers were there, which was really cool -- or most of the volunteers were there which was really cool to get to put a face to all the hard work. And then, yeah, getting to meet -- any time you get to meet up and coming golfers, high school especially, just, it's awesome. Because, one, it gets -- you put yourself back in their shoes, and just like you realize now how much there is to learn and enjoy with golf, whether you play it professionally or not. Then also just to feel like, you know, it's just -- still, like, makes me laugh that that kid will be excited. Especially like, I mean, you know how it is, it's like 16 year old's are too cool for school, so when they get excited to get Chipotle and take a picture with me I have to pinch myself a little bit.

Q. Where are you at with your golf game, and I guess general vibes going into this week? I know there was a lot of good stuff at the PGA and probably some other stuff too?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, I think since Philly Cricket Club for the Truist, my thoughts have been a lot more organized about what I'm doing with my golf swing. I don't feel like I have this disaster golf. I played really poorly the weekend at the PGA, but it didn't feel like I left there thinking that I needed to fix a whole lot, it's just there's little things -- Saturday exposed me in the wind, but it wasn't like a some major overall. I left most weeks this season being like, what do I fix, what do I fix. The last event I just felt like I just needed to clean a lot of things up, it didn't feel as bad as the score did, which most weeks have felt worse than the score was, and the score was very bad.

So it feels good. I hit a really good 5-iron yesterday on 17. So it feels much better. Feels really like -- it looks and



feels a lot like my old golf swing, like my favorite version of my golf swing, so it's, with some time I'll get more comfortable with misses.

I get on tees, like No. 2 here has never suited my eye, not even when I was playing like the best golf of my life, so it's kind of nice to get on that tee and still feel that discomfort, but have a plan of what I'm going to do, instead of just hoping that the ball goes straight.

So it's definitely been a -- it's not been fun, but I do see fun days ahead, which gives me, you know, just makes it a little bit lighter, I guess. I guess a lot of weeks early in the year I felt like, If I don't play well this week, like then what. The last few weeks have felt more like, Okay, if I don't play well this week it will be another week. So I think that's been a big change.

Q. What do you make of the new TOUR Championship format?

MAX HOMA: I like it. There's a ton of things you could do to it. I have hated for a while how so much of it is tied into the money, and I mean that for on the fans side. Like it's just, I just don't know why you would care. So, to make it about the competition and to make it about winning something and not cultivating it to like make sure that the guy who had the best year is going to probably win. Like, I just -- it never made a lot of sense. I'm a fan of so many other sports, and I know we're not exactly like them, but the story lines that come with the Warriors losing after having the best season of all time. The history of the Patriots losing to the Giants after being undefeated. Like those are things that we tie, like we hold on to. And it's not to take away from their season, it's you just got to keep earning it.

So I really like everyone starting at even. It's still incredibly hard to make it to that final 30. It is the sign of an amazing year. So if you're there you know you should have a chance at the title, in my opinion. So I like what they have done. Again, there's a million different things you could do, but just starting at zero is easier to digest. I don't know, it just felt like before if you got to the TOUR Championship at even or 1-under -- one year I played great all year and I think I started like six back of Scottie -- and it's like it just is not a, didn't feel hyper competitive, and it just feels like every year you would end up with two or three people on the weekend that had a chance, and that's not exciting.

So I'm just glad we're back to golf as we kind of know it, and I think that it will produce a lot more excitement at what should be our most exciting event.

Q. Barbara is about to be honored as the honoree, can you speak to the inspiration that Jack and Barbara are

to families on TOUR, as a husband and a father yourself, and is there any advice that you and Lacey have ever received from either of them?

MAX HOMA: We have not. I've never been -- I'm not a Florida guy, so it's hard to get close to Mr. or Mrs. Nicklaus. I've gotten to speak with them, but just about golf. But I think it's amazing. The tournament takes a village. That starts in, at least in my life, in this game, with my wife. Especially when you have a kid. Like today, for instance, I woke up very early, got to the course before everybody was up. So that means she's up with my son, and a three-hour time change, you know, getting him dressed, getting him fed. She brought him here. He came here, wanted to putt, wasn't allowed to putt, had a fit, she gets to take him away, and I just go back to work. And work is different in my world, work is my dream, like this is what I like to do. And she's, you know, loves to take care of my kid, but I imagine that gets exhausting at some point all by herself.

So to see, you know, the -- obviously we all get to see what Jack Nicklaus has done, we all admire him, his career is incredible, him hosting this event has been incredible, what he's done in the sport designing golf courses, incredible. But there's a very important person standing right next to him that it feels very fitting that she gets honored, because I don't think it happens quite as often as it should. And I'm sure she is hopefully having a great time with that, and a great day and week with that, because it's well deserved. And again, as someone who doesn't even know what they go through on a day-to-day basis -- obviously I know ish what it's like, and she has done a ton and his career is amazing, but she's been amazing as well.

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