

BMW Championship

Saturday, August 19, 2023

Olympia Fields, Illinois, USA

Olympia Fields Country Club

Viktor Hovland

Quick Quotes

Q. How would you assess the day?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: It was good. Obviously got off to a great start, eagling the first hole and making another birdie on No. 3. Then I think I made another birdie on 7.

I was 4-under early, and just hit it really straight, hit a lot of greens and made a lot of putts early on.

Yeah, just played really solid and putted well.

Q. Did the conditions get a little tougher as the wind picked up maybe midway through your round?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: It was windy out there. I don't think it hurt me too much right now, to be honest, because I've been struggling with my irons just not spinning enough.

The ball is just going really, really far for me, so whenever there's wind, I can almost just take the same club and just hit it normal and it just goes straight through the wind. It almost made it less complicated in a sense with the wind.

No, just hit it straight and made putts, so it was a good score.

Q. What's causing your irons not to spin as much?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: That's a great question. Trying to figure it out.

Q. When you think about having made every cut this season, what does that mean to you as a player in general, and what do you attribute having that mark to?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I think that's really cool. I've won once this year and been in contention at a couple majors. But I think that's also another thing that's been very cool to see this year, that the consistency has been very high.

I've hit the ball well tee to green, and now with my



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improvement around the green, even on my bad ball-striking days, I can kind of scrap it together, maybe shoot around even par and then have a good day the next day.

I feel like I'm never out of the tournament because of me cleaning up a couple things that haven't been so good in the past.

But still plenty of room for improvement.

Q. Obviously a lot with TOUR Championship and Ryder Cup, but when you're thinking about the team and the standings, do you keep a close eye on that and who's qualifying and who the contenders are?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I think among the players, we talk about oh, this guy is playing well, and how about this guy. We see for the most part who should be on the team, and then the last couple spots will be exciting to see who grabs those.

It's a crazy game, so you never know what's going to happen week to week. Some guy might surprise and play awesome, and yeah, we'll see what happens.

Q. You've talked in recent months how you've switched your approach to being more conservative and going for less pins, maybe focusing more on bogey avoidance and double bogey avoidance than having a birdie fest. Going into something like East Lake where you could be five, six, seven shots back going in, how do you balance the dichotomy of not being overly aggressive while also knowing you may have to shoot a sub 65 to be in the hunt?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I would say I'm just as aggressive off the tee, it's just kind of into the greens I've been playing a little hyperaggressive, especially when the greens get firm and we're playing hard golf courses, so the penalty for short-siding yourself is a lot more severe than other weeks.

East Lake is another one of those great golf courses where they tuck the pins around there and you can be aggressive and go for a couple of them, but if you short-side yourself, you're going to get penalized.

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I think just for that week specifically, we're probably going to -- unless something happens tomorrow, but we'll probably give someone a couple shots of a head start, and I think as long as I just focus on playing good solid golf and if we're in a position on Sunday where we can win, then that's maybe when the decision making comes in of okay, I'm going to go for this pin that I normally wouldn't have, if that makes sense.

Q. Mentally going into days where you start as a deficit, how do you approach that going in? Like if you go into a day four or five shots back, how do you take a day like that?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Again, it depends on the course a little bit. This is a hard golf course. It's not really one where you can chase birdies. You're going to make some birdies if you just hit some nice iron shots and make some putts, but it's not one where you can just go after everything and make seven, eight birdies on demand.

It's one of those you just try to play a solid round of golf and then see what everyone else does.

Q. You and Wyndham have been pretty neck-and-neck the whole time. You were in the same group the whole week. Has that kind of felt like a Ryder Cup at all?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Didn't think too much about that. We both went to Oklahoma State, although we weren't there at the same time. It was just cool to kind of friendly play against each other and give each other some fist pumps when we both made birdies and stuff like that. We had a good time.

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