

TOUR Championship

Friday, August 26, 2022

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

East Lake Golf Club

Max Homa

Quick Quotes

(In progress)

MAX HOMA: I felt like I deserved to play well, and I wasn't even letting myself in the first place. I get over, hit a great drive, a great 9-iron to 10 feet and think, I have to make this. You just did two great things. Why don't you just see what happens and trust that you've put in the work.

It's just stuff like that really.

Q. Did you come to all this yourself or have you spoken to specialists about this?

MAX HOMA: I don't want to put a specialist -- make them have to lay on a couch. No, I talked to my wife about it yesterday a bit. Man, she knows. This is how I am, unfortunately. But I think a lot of us are.

But yeah, had a nice conversation with my wife on the car ride home yesterday and had a great talk with my caddie, and then a really good one -- I asked my coach if we could just talk five minutes before we warmed up today and just get some advice. Because I think I know what I do. I just needed advice on how to not do it.

Q. I think you had more feet in made putts by your seventh hole today than you did in your whole round yesterday. What changes in a day with just the feel of the putter --

MAX HOMA: It's been like that for two months really, month and a half. Just feels -- first round at The Open Championship I hit the ball amazing and made absolutely nothing.

Last week, even though I played well on the weekend, I didn't make a ton. Just felt like the ball was afraid of the dark.

I think it's a small sample size today. Sometimes the ball just wants to go in. But I do believe I've been putting good work in with the putter and it feels really good in my hands, and I deed feel today like freed up and just trying to, like I



said before, just try and trust myself instead of trying to make the ball go in the hole.

It doesn't ever listen, so I tried not to talk to it as much today and just roll it.

Q. What's the general feeling when you figure it out and have a great round? How do you square that versus the scoreboard and the format?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, I had a goal going into today of what I wanted to shoot for three days. At some point with the way this format works, I started eight back yesterday to the No. 1 player in the world, so it's not like the greatest spot to be in.

However, you could still do absolutely -- you could do what you need to do and then at least put pressure on him. So I had my goal in my head of what I was trying to get to, and took care of it today and going to try to take care of it the next two days.

It's obviously a tall task. I'm not out here thinking if I just go out there and play perfect I can win. I still would need some luck for Scottie not to play great and then Xander and Cantlay.

So it's a tall task, but at some point this week especially you have to just kind of go out and just do your job and see where that gets you.

Q. Is there a kind of a fine line between not overly pressing because you do have so many shots to make up versus playing good golf?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, I actually think this is the easiest week to go out there and just try to play good golf if you start eight back, because it would be crazy to think, oh, I'm going to go force my way to 10-under really fast.

This is a hard golf course. You actually are almost coaxed in a good way into just going and playing and seeing where you stack up with a day or two to go.

Q. Does that change the competitive feel any?

MAX HOMA: No, it actually doesn't, because I think it helps you because you almost get more competitive with



yourself and get locked into each round by round, hole by hole. It actually keeps me from staring at the leaderboard because I kind of know what it's going to look like.

Q. What's been impressive about Scottie this year? What do you think has allowed him to have this career-changing season?

MAX HOMA: I talked Colt Knost about it. He's known him since he was a kid. He's just says he's always just been really good. I think we all know he's really good. I played with him for the first time at Sea Island this year and I was really -- I don't want to say shocked because it's not like I wouldn't have believed it, but I was really impressed by how solid he hit golf ball, like the noise and the way it flew.

He obviously has a great short game, has a beautiful putting stroke, but to play that well that consistently is pretty remarkable. I know he's had a couple missed cuts, but like when he plays well he's right in the mix. Last week was a testament -- I didn't feel like from the coverage I didn't see him do a whole lot great and he's like a few back.

He's just a really good golfer. You watch people like him and Rahm have a similar feel where you don't think they're doing anything special and they're right in the golf tournament. So I don't know how to quantify that one, but I would like to try and feel that one day.

Q. Sea Island was the first week with Ted on the bag. Did it seem like they had kind of clicked already?

MAX HOMA: Everybody clicks with Ted. He'll talk his way into clicking. He's a funny dude. Scottie is easy to get along with and Ted is obviously easy to get along with, so I just feel like that was a pretty good match. Not to take anything away from Ted, but if you can't caddie for Scottie, you might need to look yourself in the mirror.

Q. Max, even if it gets boring on the weekends for golf fans (indiscernible) World No. 1 and presumptive Player of the Year wins this thing going away?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, I don't know. We talk a lot about it. I listen to a lot of what you guys say about it. I think it's a -- I've been saying this lately. I don't think it's perfect. I don't know what the answer is, so I'm not going to complain about it.

I think that we're not football, we're not basketball, we're not baseball. Just because the Patriots are undefeated do we need to then start them with a two-touchdown lead? Because it feels like that year they should have won the Super Bowl; they didn't.

That's football.

But golf is different, and I don't think this is awful -- and I talked to Justin Thomas and he's mentioned it before. Like when he started the tournament 2-up on Rory I think it was, he said he got in the middle of the fairway on the first hole and hit a 9-iron to 35 feet and was like, why am I protecting a lead? There's 72 holes to go.

So I actually think Scottie is just making this look remarkably easy. I don't think it's as easy as -- I mean, you look at most leads going into Sunday, 2-up, that does not mean a whole lot for anybody not named Tiger Woods. I think it's just -- yeah, could get boring, but it might have been boring regardless because Scottie is pretty good.

Q. When you ask for advice like you did from your caddie or your wife, who is toughest on you, your swing coach, your caddie, your wife? Who comes at you with, Max, you're really, really good at this?

MAX HOMA: Joe probably. Joe is the harsh -- I was frustrated on Tuesday and he knows I've been frustrated for a few weeks even though I've been playing fine. It's just pressing. He's the one who just says it to me straight.

Lacey, my wife, is definitely the most in tune, I think. She is incredibly aware. She obviously says it with a bit more of a loving tone because we live together.

Then Mark is the easiest on me, but he's also my -- he seems to be my biggest cheerleader. Anytime I seem to be getting down he tries to tell me what he thinks I can do in this game, and that always seems to bring me pride, I guess, and joy.

Q. Why are these two par-5s so defenseless right now, and are you almost playing it like a par-4?

MAX HOMA: Never play it like a par-4. It's just because it's soft, but it also makes it long. But like 18 today, it's a shade of a tricky tee shot only because the wind is slightly off the left.

But if it were to blow 10, that tee shot would be tricky. But in past years, again, I haven't been here when it's firm, but I would imagine it's pretty hard to get the ball into the fairway and stay in the fairway, and it's kind of similar on 6.

When it's soft, it just makes it a little more defenseless, but at the same time, they're probably the only two holes that you feel real comfy on because now some of the holes Joe was telling me they would hit wedge into, we've hit 7- and 8-iron.

Although it's soft, it's still going to be harder to hit it close with an 8-iron.

Q. Is there any pressure? Is it Presidents Cup related at all?

MAX HOMA: Everything. I -- just everything. It's just golf. Any steppingstone you get to you just feel more pressure. You hear Jason Day talked about it, I think, back in the day about getting No. 1. You think that's the end, and then you think, no, I have to hold on to this.

It's just the game of golf. I think it's athletics. Might just be life. You get to a new stage and you think, if I can just be here everything will be good, and then you get there and you realize, no, I want to do better.

Mark asked me on Monday if getting to the TOUR Championship lived up to the feel, and I said, no, not at all. Wins do. Wins always do. But being here, now I'm 15th going into the first day. There's just never a satisfaction in this game.

But I don't know. A lot of pressure, yeah. Presidents Cup has been my biggest driving force, but I think at times, regardless of what it is, I'd be frustrated if I was playing at home and I just didn't feel like I was producing good scores, and that's just how it's felt for a little bit.

Q. We haven't talked to you since Wednesday with the TOUR announcement. Just curious your thoughts on the PIP focus; I know there's been quite a bit of talk amongst players.

MAX HOMA: Yeah, I think the TOUR is doing their best to be creative and provide like a different stream of income to the 20 guys now who are driving the revenue for the TOUR. Part of it's silly in my opinion, but also part of it's not. It makes a ton of sense if someone is out here and there's the reason -- I always use this example. I tied Tiger Woods two years ago, three years ago at Torrey Pines, and I realize we got paid the exact same amount of money and I provided zero dollars to that event and he provided I can't even come up with a number. So you would think, man, Tiger should get a bit more.

So I like what they're doing with that. It's a tricky thing. It's like -- it's ambiguous, but the TOUR is just trying to make the TOUR better and benefit the guys who are helping drive everything for the rest of us. So I think that's good.

Q. Do you think you're a generally aware player? Do you think people are generally aware of you?

MAX HOMA: I will say this: I would win this PIP if it was about who gets yelled at in the weirdest ways possible. I could be Tiger, I think. I don't know, people seem more and more aware. I am aware myself that I'm getting a bit more popular, but I don't know. It would be cool for the money if I could be in the top 20, but I have always wanted to grow the game of golf whether I got paid for it or not. I love this game. I would love more kids to get involved. I'd like it to be more diversified.

I think the game is in a good place, and I hope to be a part of just making it continue to go that way. I'm just going to try to use my PGA TOUR status as kind of the catalyst for that.

Q. Going forward what do you see as the difference or the difference in value between a limited field 78 players versus a fuller field?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, I don't know. That's a really good question, because I think last week is 70, but it's the 70 best players of the year, right, so it's a limited field, obviously. I felt like it was really good competition. I don't just mean at the top. I just felt like the average score was really good. Obviously you add 70 more amazing golfers and it would probably get more competitive. I don't know if it takes away too much. I actually think it might build some because --

Q. More would build some, if there were more?

MAX HOMA: No, I think it's possible that less could keep it like very similar and maybe build more of the -- we are an entertainment product, so it really isn't about like the perfect amount of competition, and I don't know what that number is. Like I was talking to Xander about this, I said, I don't care how good you are at golf, I don't care how good I am at golf, if people aren't watching, we're just telling people in a bar we're really good at golf. It's like at some point it is about the product and what makes people want to watch us play, and there has always been 144 people or so playing the golf tournaments, but I don't know if that's the perfect amount of competition. That's one you'd need to ask somebody who works on an Excel spreadsheet or something, not me. But I thought last week was a pretty cool testament that we had 70 of the best guys of the season. It was a really exciting tournament at the top, and I felt like even the middle, where I kind of ended up, right in the middle of the top third, it still felt like a fight to pass people because you're playing against some guys that are playing really good golf.

Q. Going forward do you think it's important for a tournament to have a cut no matter what the size is?

MAX HOMA: I definitely think it's something to think about. I don't know. We're selling a golf tournament to a sponsor or to a city. This one is a big city. Atlanta is an amazing city. You want to know that Rory McIlroy is going to be here on Sunday. Unfortunately we had a guy, Tiger, that made that just seem like it was way too easy to guarantee.

I think for the entertainment it would be good, but I do think that my favorite stat in sports is 142 cuts made in a row. I think it may be -- missing that would be tough, but I also don't think anyone is going to get anywhere close to it, so maybe we could just check that one off.

Q. As it relates to the entertainment value of telling people in the bar and the whole nine yards, how long has it been that way do you think?

MAX HOMA: How long -- ooh. I think --

Q. It obviously starts with television.

MAX HOMA: I think just since television got popular and so prevalent. That's a good question, too. But I would say last 20 years since Tiger came along, 30 years since Tiger came along and golf has become so much more popular, it's become like just -- there are common fans of golf. I think probably before it was some sickos and now we still have those and now we have common fans, so making sure it's really interesting because there's a lot going on, there's TikTok, Twitter, Instagram. There's a lot of little ways to watch spurts of things. We need to keep it interesting for kind of the grand scheme of golf.

Q. Do you have the common guys or the sickos? Who follows you?

MAX HOMA: Oh, man. I don't know. That's a great question. I'd rather not think about that.

Q. How did you feel at the start of the day versus the end of this round and how do you keep that going?

MAX HOMA: I just felt lighter and free and just more ready to show off, less worried about what was going to go wrong, and I'm just going to try and keep that as best I possibly can.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports