

# TOUR Championship

Thursday, August 24, 2023

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

East Lake Golf Club

## Viktor Hovland

### Quick Quotes

**Q. Thoughts on the day? Obviously cutting into the deficit. How do you feel after today?**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I feel like it was a solid round. I didn't make too many mistakes. Obviously bogey-free is always nice, especially around this track. But I did feel like I left a couple putts out there and -- yeah, I felt like I played a little bit better than the score, but hopefully that comes tomorrow or the rest of the week.

**Q. What did you expect it to feel like kind of being in the final group and already being 8-under and ahead of a bunch of guys and how did that compare to what you thought it might?**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, it's a little strange, but I just didn't try to pay too much attention. Obviously, there's some guys that had really low rounds and they have played themselves up the leaderboard. But the last thing you want to do is be in the last group and feel like, oh, I need to shoot 7-, 8-under today to maintain whatever lead I had. But just trying to play every shot at a time and play smart and, yeah, I'm not making any bogeys. I'm pretty happy with that.

**Q. Did you feel extra relaxed out there? You had sort of talked about that earlier, that being in the position you were, you could be relaxed. I mean, you went out and didn't shoot any birdies on the front nine.**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I did feel really relaxed. Even though I kept on hitting great shots and didn't really get rewarded for it, I didn't freak out or lose my mind or take a chance that I wasn't supposed to take. I stayed patient and -- yeah, I would have liked to have kept making a few birdies, especially with that start I had on the back nine there. Just didn't keep it going. But I felt like 68, bogey-free, again, it's pretty nice.

**Q. I'm sure there's a lot of tournaments during the season that when you teed off in the afternoon on Thursday you were already nine shots behind. You know, somebody posted something early, so it's not**



**unusual to see like a five-shot deficit. But was it at all weird being in the last group on a Thursday in a short field and seeing a guy do that?**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, it's a little strange, but as you pointed out, sometimes you tee off Thursday afternoon and someone's already shot 9-, 10-under, so it's like, well, I'm nine or 10 shots back, and I guess, yeah, reversing that I'm a few shots ahead of everyone. So it's a little bit weird. You feel like you're kind of getting chased from the get-go.

But, again, trying not to think about that too much. Just trying to shoot the best score that I can and feel like I'm in a very good spot after today.

**Q. Was there anything today that either got you excited or gave you anxiety?**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: (Laughing.) I mean, I think everyone gets a little anxiety when they step on 15 tee box. But that was the shot of the day for me, so I handled that pretty well. Yeah, I mean, it's exciting playing this golf course and for this tournament, so there's going to be some emotions out there.

**Q. In a hundred degree heat.**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah.

**Q. How surprised were you to see Scottie back up and let so many guys back into the tournament?**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, obviously, I was expecting him to keep going after that start that he had, but that's just this golf course. It's not easy, especially that 14, 15, corner there. As soon as you miss a couple fairways, it gets so much trickier. Even if you're hitting nice shots to 6, 7, 8 feet in there for birdie, it's not -- those are not gimmies. You have to hit 'em so soft and there's grain on the greens and they slope so much. It's just a lot of things that can happen.

Obviously, yeah, he didn't have the best of stretch on the back nine there, but he's definitely not out of it either.

**Q. How important is it to avoid mistakes like this even though you already are 8-, 10-under?**



VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I mean it's just, you obviously want to make a lot of birdies and separate yourself. But that's not always so easy. So it's a lot easier just to make a lot of pars, keep it stress-free. And then suddenly, when the putter starts getting hot, then you can feel like you can put four, five, six birdies together in a span of nine holes. That's definitely doable out here. But it's so easy to go the opposite way as well. It's just, that's what makes this place such a great golf course.

**Q. You mentioned 15. Like, that's an island green. How do you approach that and not get super nervous? Because I don't think I would even get it to the green.**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I mean, I think you're just nervous regardless. So you just, instead of trying to suppress that, you just go, Okay, this is a hard tee shot. But I feel pretty confident. I think it's a 5-iron. Take a little bit off of it. Just make sure it gets a little bit in the air. You just got to step up and hit it.

**Q. Are you going to make any adjustments moving into tomorrow?**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I don't think so, no. Just more of the same. Hopefully, we get a little bit more out of the round.

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