

The American Express

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La Quinta, California, USA

PGA WEST Pete Dye Stadium Course

Max Homa

Quick Quotes

Q. Nice playing the last couple days. I want to talk about the good stuff and try and leave as much bad as I can out. 17 birdies the last two rounds at the Stadium Course. What is it about this golf course that you like?

MAX HOMA: I don't know. If you hit the fairways, you have a lot of good looks, I feel like. There's obviously a handful of very daunting holes. I've been fortunate enough to play here a ton, so I have a pretty good feel for the place.

But I've been driving it great on a lot of the holes where you're going to have a wedge or short iron in. I've been playing the par-5s really well because of that too. So I've just been able to kind of put myself in a position to have good looks for birdie and I've been putting great, so it's just something about these greens, it feels like home.

Q. Unfortunately, you have given a lot of strokes back. In saying that, how big was that par save at the last hole for you today?

MAX HOMA: It was nice. I think without it, it's not like I would look at the round too differently. I probably only made three or four bad swings all day. This course will get you here and there and it happened on 7. But it's hard to ask to be flawless for an entire tournament. I'm going to make my mistakes here and there.

But I'm making a ton of great swings, obviously making a lot of great putts, so kind of focusing more on the great swings. I made a really good one on 17, which is a daunting hole. So it was nice. And then, yeah, getting to finish on 18, even with a bad swing, is always kind of a positive feeling.

Q. Is that going to be the key to tomorrow, should you go on to win, is just thinking more about the good instead of what could possibly happen out there? Because there's a lot of times this golf course can bite you.

MAX HOMA: Yeah, I guess I've already gotten some of

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the bite out of the way, so I like my chances. Just going to keep taking good shots. I'm hitting a lot more good shots than bad shots, so that's usually good when it comes to tournament golf.

Q. You made eight birdies yesterday. That was a much more volatile round of golf. Nine birdies today and just one blip on the card. What was the big difference, because you shoot a 7-under 65?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, I got the big numbers out of the way. I guess I made one, but I only had 1-over par hole today, which is great around here. It's great anywhere, really. Just hitting a lot of good shots. I was a little bit cleaner overall today, which was nice. Something to build on going into tomorrow.

But all week so far I've just hit a lot of great shots, a lot of great iron shots, and my driver's been good. But the putter's, it's saved me when it's needed to, but I've just been able to give myself good looks for birdie and I've holed a lot of them.

So the greens are perfect out here, so if you keep getting uphill straight looks and you're putting it well, it's actually fairly fun for a course with this much water.

Q. You mentioned your putting. I think it's 112 feet worth of putts today alone for you. What's, just got a great feel on these greens? Why are they dropping for you?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, I mean, this, these green complexes, the grass is exactly how I putt at home in Arizona, in Scottsdale. This just feels like kind of a home week. I've been out here a ton before. I've played here since high school. So it's just a comfy feel on the greens. I have a caddie who is a green reading savant, so that helps too. So I just have to get the thing on line.

Q. Thoughts on tomorrow. You are going to need a lot of birdies, I guess, again. This is going to be an interesting leaderboard to watch. I don't know if you paid any attention to it today, but it should be fun tomorrow.

MAX HOMA: Yeah, it will be fun. It's always fun playing

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around the lead. I'm just going to keep doing what I've been doing. I've been playing like this since Mexico, which feels good. It feels comfortable. I would say yesterday was kind of the most rocky round I've had in months, so that's kind of cool to get out of there in a tournament without really ruining my chances, which is cool. I feel like I only made it cleaner today. So I feel comfortable.

But, yeah, you're going to have to play well. I don't really typically think too much about a score. But making a lot of birdies, I'm probably going to keep trying to do that.

Q. Statistically, strokes gained putting, this week you're No. 1, well above what you were averaging. Did you change anything this week or does it just feel good?

MAX HOMA: No, I think I'm a great putter. I kind of realized that around PGA Championship last year. I had a couple weeks where it wasn't great. I also putted it the best in Mexico and there was no Shot Link, so it's not exactly helping my statistical average.

Q. I think we asked you about this yesterday. Being a California guy, is there also some sort of familiarity with grasses in the greens?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, absolutely. This is exactly like where I play at home in Scottsdale. It's just like TPC Scottsdale, Whisper Rock, and Silver Leaf, which are the courses I play at. So it feels comfortable. It's got the same coloring. It's got the same types of kind of subtle slopes. But, yeah being from California, we're used to putting on poa annua, so whenever we come here, we figured this was about as easy as it gets because it doesn't bounce around.

So definitely comfortable on the greens. And like I said, I do a pretty good job of starting the ball on line and I've got a caddie who reads the greens great, so it's typically a pretty good recipe.

Q. You mentioned yesterday reading some positive affirmations. Can you give some examples?

MAX HOMA: No, I just tell myself positive affirmations. Especially like when I wake up, when I'm nervous, on a certain tee shot, where I feel like I might be getting antsy I just say three things I'm grateful for, it kind of calms me down. I feel like a lot of people are going through a lot harder stuff than me standing up on 18, so I'm grateful for that. For one of them I got my wife here, I got my dog here and I'm pretty grateful for my caddie Joe as well.

Q. How many time did you do it today or this week?

MAX HOMA: Probably six times a day, seven times a day. I just do it a lot. It's just a good way to stay happy. Golf is my life, but I don't want it to consume me. I want to win, I want to be the best player in the world at some point one day, I want to be the best me I can be and all that kind of comes with being a happy dude. So I'm just trying to be a happy dude, I guess.

Q. Is this one of those days where it's just easy to make birdies? Like it's just, it just felt easy for you?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, it didn't feel easy, but I've been working real hard on everything, but the biggest jump I've seen is in my wedge play and my short irons. I've been -- my bugaboo like a year ago was my driving would be sporadic and for the last three, four months I feel like it will be a strength of mine going forward.

So it's fun when you come out on a golf course like this and you do drive it well, when you feel good about the wedges. So it's cool seeing the work I put in on my wedges pay off these great drives. Because like I said, I've been driving it well, even since Augusta.

So I wouldn't say it's ever easy to make birdies, but I've given myself a ton of looks, I think we only missed a few greens today, which is good, you just want to keep staying in that rhythm on the greens when you're rolling it well.

Haven't really thought too much about my putting stroke, it just feels good. It's felt good since Mexico. And you kind of just try to ride that out and build on it. And I feel like I just get a little better at putting every day; wedges I feel like I'm still just continuing to get much better at; and the driver I'm just leaning on. So it's been a, it's been nice when you come to a course like this, because it's not particularly long you just need to make sure you're in the short grass.

Q. Given your personality, it's hard to believe you wouldn't be happy on the golf course. But given what you just said, were there times were you weren't happy on the golf course?

MAX HOMA: Oh, yeah, I've seen some lows, but I'm very grateful not to be dealing with it. I had a 2017 year where I would say I was not particularly happy to pick up a golf club, but I am now. I'm thankful that my golf game's back, maybe better than ever.

Like I said, I really enjoy working really, really hard, that's kind of my MO. And I realized for awhile I wasn't spending enough time working on my brain. And that can get you out here. It's a grind. We have an awesome job, but it is, it's very lonely in your brain at times on the golf course. You hit bad shots and you start kicking yourself.

And I met some people, talked to my wife and caddie and they have just been helping me just kind of focus on the good and make sure that I'm working on -- if I'm going to work as hard as I do on the range, on the chipping green, on the putting green, I need to be putting that time in on myself and that's been cool, because I feel like I'm just walking around enjoying my opportunity to compete. I think that's a very cool thing to get to do out here.

Q. What made you pick the tattoo on your arm?

MAX HOMA: Relentless? In college I found it -- again, like I said, I'm a pretty resilient dude, I did not know the lows I would see in golf, I guess in a few years. But I always, that word just always like rang true in my head. I always told my college teammates about how you have to be relentless, you have to be a bulldog, you just got to be tough.

And I had to kind of put myself in those actual shoes where I had to be tough and it's just always been a word that just meant a lot to me. I don't know, that's how I see a lot of life, I just feel like everybody should just be as relentless as they can in pursuit of whatever they want. Whether it's just to be happy or whether it's to be the best at what you do.

So I've been relentless in trying to be the best at what I can be out here on the PGA TOUR and I'm trying to shift a little bit of that focus towards being a great me.

Q. When did you get the tattoo?

MAX HOMA: Right after I made \$18,008 I think it was in 2017, because I had to remind myself that when I brush my teeth with my right hand I see it every morning in the mirror, so...

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