

Waste Management Phoenix Open

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TPC Scottsdale

Brooks Koepka

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Brooks, congratulations. We'll just start off. You're winning your eighth PGA TOUR title today and your second win here in Phoenix.

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I love this place. This golf course is always fun. Just happy to make a cut. Put it that way. It feels good.

THE MODERATOR: Yesterday you had said a lot could change on Sunday, and that certainly seems to be true. At what point in the round did you believe you had a chance to get to the top?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I always thought I had a chance. I felt like the front nine I was just hanging in there. I think 2 kind of woke me up a little bit on 3 three, helped me there. I think on 12, Ricky said something to me about, We're right there. We just need a little bit of momentum or a putt to go or way. Never know what's going to happen.

I like the way I finished that off. Hit a lot quality golf shots down the stretch. I haven't been in contention in God knows how long, so to actually hit golf shots like I'm accustomed to seeing when the pressure is on, it's a good feeling.

I miss that pressure, I miss the atmosphere, the fans. I mean, my best results come with fans, so I'm excited to have them back.

THE MODERATOR: Go ahead and open to questions.

Q. So you had I guess 18 months or so of being injured, and then you had no fans. The injury was worse, but then the no fans was sort of adding insult to injury, I suppose. Do you feel like now you're 100% and you've got fans you're sort of back to being BROOKS KOEPKA?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, I do. I feel -- I mean, I felt good the first two events I played. I don't know, I struggled



without fans to get momentum. I like feeling like you got to show off in front of people.

I don't know, I struggle with just getting my head wrapped around everything. There is just no energy. I've struggled with it a little bit, so I need to figure it out. Who knows how long we'll be playing like this. It was nice to have fans back. I do feel like I'm back. I felt like I've been back. Been in some dark places for about a year and a half, so it's nice to finally come and see some results.

Q. And then secondarily, did you feel like once you got a sniff of the lead that you would respond the way you did today?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Deep down, yeah, I did. I don't know, it's what I live for. I live for those moments where you got to close, you got to hit some quality shots, quality putts. I don't know, I just like showing off, I guess.

Those last few holes were -- it was nice to see that again.

Q. Congratulations, Brooks. You mentioned dark places and those tough times. Can you share some of what that really was like?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah. A lot of -- I mean, I questioned my -- there was a period maybe for about two months where I just questioned whether I was ever going to be the same, whether I was even going to be somewhat remotely the same golfer that I ever was.

My knee, no matter how much work and pain I was doing with Derek, my trainer, it just felt like it wasn't progressing. And that's the frustrating part, when you feel like it's not going anywhere.

But we stuck with it. Those dark places, a lot of tears, questioning yourself, and in dark places mentally. You've got to come out of that. I spent so much time in La Jolla with Derek where I kind of used it as refresher to reset things.

I'll tell you what, it takes a lot of effort just do get out of those places.

Q. Do you remember a low point, the lowest moment?



BROOKS KOEPKA: I think the lowest moment probably was Memorial for me. I was in excruciating pain. I was being told that my knee was still the same. The frustration of just trying to play and knowing I'm not myself, knowing I'm not even close to what I'm capable of doing, I can't compete. I'm trying to compete, but I just can't. I can't swing the golf club like I want to.

I'm sure it was frustrating for everybody, Claude, Ricky, everybody on my team. I'm sure it was frustrating to watch, but I didn't want to take the time off. I've done that a couple times where I tried to play through. I guess that's the heart. I just don't like to quit. Just battle through it and I figured it would go away, to be honest with you, and I was completely wrong.

Q. You have such a focus around the majors. How good does it feel to win a PGA TOUR title again?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I mean, it feels good. Feels like it's been forever. I don't know when it was last time. Memphis?

Q. Yeah.

BROOKS KOEPKA: It's a good feeling. It's been so long to me. Yeah, there has been a lot of days between, but last year in my head I think part of that reset process and getting back to where I want to mentally, physically and all that stuff was having to put last year -- or in my mind pretend like it never happened.

Q. Two quick things. Just on the knee, walk us through how that affected your swing, kind of like what point or what that was like, I guess?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Like what do you mean? Like the actual MRI? What do you mean?

Q. Yeah, just where it impacted you in the swing, how it impacted you. You obviously tried to play through it. Where was it really...

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, it was a lot worse than I probably let on. If I had an uphill shot I couldn't get onto my left side so I'm just hanging back flipping it.

Bunker shots, anything where my knee is really flexed and I've got lost of tension in my quad or my butt, in the glutes, everything pulls on it. Being in a bunker was horrific. Bending down. I remember bending down just to put the ball in front of the quarter, and that was painful enough.

But it was just one of those things where I felt I just tried to get through it and figured eventually it would get better.

You just got to -- the hard part is you just got to load it and fight through that pain a little bit.

Q. Second thing was you mentioned it feels like a long time. In golf terms hasn't been that long. Guys go through ups and downs. Did it feel like a comeback of sorts to you?

BROOKS KOEPKA: No. I think in my mind I can compartmentalize things. I always felt like I was here. Always felt like I was capable of winning. My body wasn't letting me. Everything that was going on I wasn't capable of doing it.

So mentally, yeah, I was always there. I'm like, Okay, if I put myself in somewhat of a chance, I'll finish it. But it's nice to be able to do the things I want physically. Be able to go in the gym or even wake up. It doesn't take me 30 minutes to get going where the knee's kind of numb sometimes and you can't bend your leg and all those different things.

So now where it's healthy, it just makes it a lot easier.

Q. Congratulations on a great win. When you work with Butch, I know it's partly (indiscernible). How much have the two (indiscernible - cutting out.) Do you still carry with you now on this Sunday when you're trying to get it done?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I heard half the question. I think I know where you're at. Butch, I mean, I think in my mind he's the best swing coach to ever live. Him and Pete Cowen, the two best. That old school, that generation, I've always admired them for being very blunt, honest. What makes them so good is they know exactly what to say at the right times, how to motivate you, get you going, whether it be getting on you -- I've had Pete yell at me before. Quite a few times.

I know at Erin Hills on Tuesday I got a nice ass chewing from Pete. Told me I would never win. That's part of it, too.

But what they see, I don't know how their brain works, but everything Butch has said -- I saw him right before Vegas, and I have been texting with him constantly. I couldn't have done it without them.

At the same time, a lot of work that I've done with Claude. I can't throw Claude out, just forget about him. A lot of this is what I've done with Claude as well.

You know, all three of those guys have basically changed



my career, I think.

Q. Brooks, you had the big birdie string to end the round yesterday to get you to within five. How much did you think you really were going to have a chance today, and then as things started to progress with Xander and Jordan at the top of leaderboard but them not doing anything, when did it start to feel like, man, this could be mine?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I thought if I got a good tee shot away on 13 I thought I was going to have a chance. Hit a great shot in there and just left the putt short. I think that tee box got me going. I saw where everybody was. There was a leaderboard. I didn't really pay attention from when I left 9 until I got to the green on 12.

I thought the lead was just going to keep going. I didn't realize -- James had I think a two-shot lead at that point over everybody else. I just figured if I could get somewhat close to James I might have a chance, you know, being par-5s, being able to hit it far.

17 was a good chance. I mean, I don't know, I thrive on 16. Just the atmosphere. I love that, so I like my chances even though I was well back. I never felt out of it.

Q. Did you feel like you could win with 65, or did you think you were going to need a 61 like Jordan?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I was texting my boys last night. Thought 20 would be good enough; 21 definitely was going to get; 20 was good enough. Wasn't that far off, I guess.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks so much Brooks, congratulations.

BROOKS KOEPKA: Thank you.

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