

AT&T Byron Nelson

Friday, May 12, 2023

McKinney, Texas, USA

TPC Craig Ranch

Mackenzie Hughes

Quick Quotes

Q. Another bogey-free round for you today; what did you like out there?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, I just did a lot of nice things. I was pretty efficient off the tee and didn't put myself in too many difficult places. Then when I was out of position around the greens, chipped and putted nicely.

Yeah, it was a pretty complete day. Obviously the winds were difficult and kind of gusty, so to shoot the round I did was very pleasing.

Q. Was it more impressive to you that your round yesterday was in somewhat calm conditions versus the windy conditions of today?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, I mean, only one shot separates the two rounds, but it was playing a fair bit harder this afternoon than it was yesterday morning.

Yeah, was very happy with that. Kind of starting the day, I thought shooting 3-, 4-under would have been a pretty solid effort, so to shoot 7-under and to do it bogey-free was pretty nice.

Q. What did you see on the birdie there at 16, pitching in there?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, that was fun. I kind of blocked my tee shot and I had kind of a pathway to get it left of the green there, and that was kind of my best option. Put it in a great spot and kind of had the whole length of the green to work with, so I felt like it was a good spot to get up-and-down for par and did one better.

Hadn't done that in a while, so that felt pretty good, and the crowds were pretty big at that time, so it was fun to hear a nice little cheer.

Q. You're not normally considered one of the top drivers of the golf ball, but I think you're top 15 in strokes gained off the tee. Anything tweaked to the driver or anything in particular this week that feels



good?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Well, I did put a new Ping G430 in the bag starting last week, and I actually drove it great last week at Quail. The rest of it wasn't very good, but I did drive it well last week.

I've also been taking a bit of a different approach off the tee as far as like I'm just trying to hit it harder. I speed train and I do that sort of stuff on the range, and on the course I tend to gear back and don't hit it as hard as I probably could. Focusing on a bit of a longer backswing and hitting it a bit harder has actually helped me hit it straighter. It's been a good combination, and yeah, I've been feeling pretty good.

Q. Is that a mental thing, getting yourself to swing that hard?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, kind of letting go and kind of being okay with what happens when you go ahead and just rip it. But yeah, I hadn't been driving it that straight to begin with, so I was like, I might as well go ahead and rip at it. It's been going straighter.

Yeah, trying to keep doing that the rest of the weekend.

Q. Did it take a moment for you to be like, all right, I'm doing it now, or kind of build up over time?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: So actually Friday last week at Quail, I kind of came off the course Thursday and I thought -- I drove it okay, but the speeds weren't where they should have been and I kind of went into Friday thinking, hey, this is the day to kind of test it out and go ahead and kind of send it a little bit. I drove it great on that Friday, and I thought this week it was like, hey, just keep doing the same thing. It works, trust it.

At the very least you're going to feel better doing it that way than trying to steer it in play or kind of hitting like a little second-serve shot.

Again, a little bit of a mental hurdle, just telling yourself, hey, it's okay to go ahead and hit it and we'll go find it and



try and do it again.

Q. How are you feeling about game 5?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, I don't know what time it is, but I need to get back and get some food, get a shower and go watch the game. Feeling pretty good. We're going home. I liked the effort in game 4, so hopefully the boys bring the same kind of work ethic and skate hard like they did in game 4, and hopefully we'll force another game 6.

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