

RBC Canadian Open

Saturday, June 1, 2024

Ancaster, Ontario, Canada

Hamilton Golf and Country Club

Mackenzie Hughes

Quick Quotes

Q. Really solid round today. Yesterday you spoke about the importance of shelving the pressure and just being present in the moment. What did that look like for you today?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Well, starting the day I knew Saturday's harder than Friday and Sunday will be harder than Saturday. So really going into it knowing that I kind of prepared myself to be in the right mindset. For me it was not trying too hard, not forcing things. For the most part I would say I did a pretty good job. There was a few things I would like to do over again, but, yeah, for the most part playing near the lead in your National Open I felt like I did a pretty good job handling everything and kept myself within distance for tomorrow.

Q. You said on the radio that you can't remember the last time you had fun like this on a golf course. Can you explain why?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Not that I don't enjoy playing every day, it was more just the fact that I never get cheered for like this before or really ever, because when I'm playing in the U.S., I mean, I'm pretty much a nobody, so being here at home you feel like they're really pulling you across the line. Like I said on the radio, on a lot of the tees and greens -- I made a putt on 10 and it was just like, it was like chills. The putt went in, the crowd went nuts, and just some of those moments and things I felt I'm remember for a long time. I know tomorrow will be even more special and hopefully we can put up a low one.

Q. Once again you wore Bill Bath's jersey on the 13th hole on The Rink to honor your family friend. Why is it so important, especially, like, I mean it's moving day, it's an important day of golf for you, why is it so important to you to continue to honor him?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: I just feel like he was a huge part of my life and my journey to this point. We walked these hills the last time I was here and it's just nice to kind of keep him out there with me, if you will. Yeah, I know we're in the midst of a lot of chaos and competitiveness on that



Rink hole and it's actually a super hard shot with like a 6-iron or 5-iron, but there are bigger things than golf and he was a really close friend of mine and I'm thinking about him a lot.

Q. You mentioned The Rink hole and you mentioned the crowd cheering for you. Describe walking on to that Rink hole today.

MACKENZIE HUGHES: That was pandemonium. I was, we were talking, kind of walking off that tee, and then on the next hole with David and his caddie, and just how loud that really felt. I mean, because they're like on top of you. When you go to Scottsdale, everything's pushed back, so you don't feel like it's like right on you. I mean, on that Rink, there's like no space. It's just like the boards are right there on the tee and they're banging and they're screaming. Walking on that tee, again, just a total hair-raising moment where, I mean, I'm trying to play it pretty cool, but inside I'm thinking this is really, really cool.

Q. But you embrace it, clearly. You were embracing it.

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Yeah, yeah, I want 'em to be really loud and get boisterous and cheer me on and, you know, if I can play to that crowd a little bit and use it to my advantage then I will.

Q. Four back, what's the game plan for tomorrow?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: You know, obviously a lot of it will depend on what Robert does. I mean, if he plays a great round of golf tomorrow he'll be almost impossible to catch. That's why we play four days. You never know, weird things have happened before and, I mean, four shots can be gone in a matter of three or four holes. He might come out and shoot 30 on the front nine, you just don't know. For me, my game plan won't change, I'll just try and get as many looks as I can, get the putter hot, get the crowd going early and see if I can make a charge.

Q. Was there a time earlier in your career when maybe you wouldn't have relished the chaos at The Rink hole or maybe known how to harness the energy?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: You know, I think from early on, I



mean, I'm just thinking back to my rookie year playing Scottsdale, I wore the Matthews jersey and I made a putt with the Matthews jersey on, I was egging on the crowd. I think it's a lot of fun. Now, I think I've learned over the last eight years being on TOUR how to manage myself in those moments a little better, but I think that's a cool and fun aspect of golf and getting the crowd involved and getting 'em loud, especially here in Canada is kind of fun to do.

Q. To your knowledge of this golf course, is it kind of like an Augusta thing where you know where not to miss out there sometimes? You weren't a member here, but you did play enough.

MACKENZIE HUGHES: You know, it's funny, because I actually feel like a bit of a rookie into some of the greens because of all the runoffs. Like knowing which runoffs are good and which ones are bad. I haven't played enough and I didn't get more than nine holes this week, so I was kind of relying on Jules a few times to be like is long right okay or is long left okay. There was a few times where it's like, oh, no, this is okay or this is not a great spot. So, I feel like there's definitely some familiarity that I can lean on, but at the same time there's some new things that I'm still learning even as we're getting into Saturday and Sunday.

Q. Is there anybody you saw out there today or heard something somebody yelled that stuck with you?

MACKENZIE HUGHES: Not really. My family, I guess, I heard them quite a bit. They were just, they kept telling me that they loved me, so that was pretty funny, made me laugh a few times. I saw a lot of familiar faces out there, a lot of Go Mac, Go Mac go or, Mac, you're the man or anything like that. I heard a lot of those, which is really cool. Like I said, anywhere else I'm not getting that and here I do, so it's pretty neat.

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