

Hero Dubai Desert Classic

Tuesday, 24 January, 2023

Dubai, UAE

Majlis Course at Emirates Golf Club

Victor Perez

Press Conference



A Rolex Series Event



CLARE BODEL: Let's get started, so Victor. Welcome here to the Hero Dubai Desert Classic, and you join us as a Rolex Series Champion. How does that feel?

VICTOR PEREZ: Yeah, it feels fantastic to sit here, obviously, a week into the season for my personally because I haven't played in December.

Yeah, it couldn't have been a better start. I think after The Hero Cup, I was, you know, feeling pretty good with my game, but to be able to back it up in a 72-hole tournament is a complete different, story, and I was just really happy to carry on that form and eventually get the victory.

CLARE BODEL: And does it help coming straight into another big tournament like this, you can just keep it rolling?

VICTOR PEREZ: Yes and no, I would say. The balance is always difficult because you know how hard it is to win. You want to enjoy your performance. You want to enjoy and celebrate with your team but you also know that the next event is equally as big as the one you played.

So you want (to be) doing things in a certain order that have allowed you to get the best chance of winning and you want to try to replicate that the best you can the following week which is never easy.

Q. Congratulations on Sunday. You talked then about obviously the last Ryder Cup campaign, there were things that you can sort of learn from in your bid to make this team. Can you maybe expand just on that whole process, was it disappointment you felt, missing the last time, and how you can use that?

VICTOR PEREZ: I think disappointment for sure because I think everybody is a competitor. I think everybody wants to qualify. Everybody wants to make the team. Everybody wants to contribute in winning.

But I try to look at it more as a little bit, a holistic view as it's part of your journey if the chips ended up falling that way,

and it goes for what it is.

I think I've learned that the only thing that matters in making the team is you just need to be in the points the week before, because I think I was in the points for the longest time and ended up not being in the points at the end which was obviously disappointing, because you talk about it for so long and there is also the upside of it was I've been asked those questions about The Ryder Cup for, you know, the entire extended COVID period. Because through 2020, I was obviously in very good shape to make it for the end of the year and it was delayed a year, but the questions were still the same and you get used to being in that, you know, oh, how would it feel to be the blah, blah, blah, and how would it feel to do this and that.

So I think you can take a lot of lessons from that. So yeah, I'm excited for the next one. It's as good of a start as I could have hoped.

Q. Just to clarify, is it Edinburgh-based, not Dundee?

VICTOR PEREZ: Yes, we're upgrading. (Laughter).

Q. Obviously you're based at the Renaissance Club as well, a tremendous facility obviously, to play year round practise down there?

VICTOR PEREZ: Yeah, Jerry (Sarvadi) has been fantastic, and I think helping me but helping a lot of the Scottish lads go out and practise and being able to play on that course, week-in and week-out, to practise, because of the magnitude of the event, you know, you're playing a Rolex Series. They have obviously had the events for a few years and I think they hopefully have it for the next few.

It's great. It's a really great club. It's not far from where I live now and just drive across and you know feel really at home. I think playing on such a high-calibre golf course all the time forces you to play a certain level. You can't really hide that much at Renaissance. The wind is always up. There's things that are going to make it challenging, and yeah, it's been great for my game.

Q. Could you please tell us about the congratulations



you had from French players, federations, if you could expand on that.

VICTOR PEREZ: Yeah, I've received a lot of messages throughout. Thankfully I'm not in charge of my social media, so I wasn't, like, too much into it.

But yeah, it's been great just seeing a lot of the French guys this morning sending me texts personally or through the social media and seeing them in person. I think it's opening, the floodgates for French golf, and it will continue. It's already great. We've played three events in South Africa. The event in Mauritius, and this was the first event, and Antoine, we have won two of the first five, which is great.

I think it's the best start for French golf for the rest of the season and I hope we can just keep going and get as many as we can.

Q. How many times have you watched the bunker shot back?

VICTOR PEREZ: A lot. A lot. I think, yeah, it was just -- it's interesting, actually, that, you know, we were just talking about how this shot is going to end up being the defining moment of the performance. But it was just one shot. It just so happened to be at that time with three 72 holes, there's other good shots you've hit along the way that you're going to remember that meant just as much.

But any time someone is going to talk about Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship 2023, "remember he holed that bunker shot." So yeah, I've seen it plenty of times now.

Q. Are you playing in Saudi next week?

VICTOR PEREZ: No.

Q. Were you on the entry list?

VICTOR PEREZ: I was on the entry list for a fair bit. It was kind of like a split decision because I knew that my thinking at the start of the year was, the goal was to get the PGA TOUR card, to get those ten spots and qualify for The Ryder Cup.

Those were the two goals, and I said to myself, depending on how I start, you know, there's going to be RAK, and it's obviously a bigger purse than Saudi, so there's going to be a difference there also.

But if I can get off to a good start, I just need to pile on and get as many points as you can. Just as much as we all hope for consistency and Top 5s every week, it's not

realistic. Every time you play well, you try to get as many points as you can, and obviously last week gave me a bunch of points, and I'm hoping to continue this week and next week and maybe take a break.

But the goal is 100 per cent, you know, to get the top 10 right now.

Q. You played really well in the Hero Cup 3 1/2 points out of 4. How important was that confidence-wise going into last week and obviously the rest of the season, just to show what you were capable of in that platform?

VICTOR PEREZ: I think we are very fortunate that, you know, the Tour and Dr. Munjal were able to put this event so quickly, because it was such a massive, you know, advantage, I think for the 20 guys, I think when we had the dinner on Sunday night after the event was finished, and I don't know who I was talking to, I said it's very likely that one of the 20 guys is probably going to win next week. So it happened to be me, which I'll take.

But because you feel like it's always difficult, like you've had a break, you worked on your game, you did X and Y, and you are going into the season with you're always a bit hesitant like, oh, I worked on this and that, and I don't know exactly how it's going to translate into performance when it's under the gun and 72 holes.

All of a sudden, with only three days playing match play, best ball and foursomes format. So you're seeing enough of where you are under pressure, because obviously you want to win, but it's a little bit more, I would say, relaxed than 72 holes. Every shot doesn't maybe weigh as much in match play, because you can make a triple and it's not really going to hurt you. It's like one, you just lose the hole.

So I think it gave everybody a great opportunity to see where they were with their game and then maybe make a little tweak Monday to Wednesday, and then you're able to actually start on Thursday which was for me a massive help.

Q. You said a lot of nice things about Hero Cup. You know, before The Hero Cup, and before maybe Dr. Munjal gentlemanly, had you ever heard about Hero, the Hero Indian Open or the Hero World Challenge, some of the other events that are part of the golfing landscape?

VICTOR PEREZ: I've obviously watched the Hero in the Bahamas on the PGA TOUR because I was able to see. I was never able to go to India to play the Hero Indian Open. It never quite fitted the schedule, and the way like my

previous seasons were built. Because my first year, I didn't go, and then for 2020 and 2021 during that time I was able to go to the PGA TOUR and play some events there.

So I was never able to go but I mean, I think everybody knows how big Hero is, and how much they have supported golf and obviously speaking Dr. Munjal during the week, he takes a lot of pride in how much he helps developing golf and other sports as well. And they have been a massive help, and I think, I don't know if I would have won last week without The Hero Cup. That's, I think pretty much a guarantee now.

Q. So does that mean Hero Indian Open gets onto your list on your schedule?

VICTOR PEREZ: It might be. Again, I don't know.

Q. It's a few weeks from now?

VICTOR PEREZ: Yeah, I know. I know (laughter). Like I said, I'm going to focus on this week with the Hero Dubai Desert Classic and try to put on as good of a performance. Go to RAK next week and reevaluate a little bit my schedule because I've gained a few spots on the World Ranking that could put me on that line for the Match Play or try to get some invites to the PGA TOUR. It's very 50/50 what the schedule might look like in the next month, but as I said, right now I'm trying to play well this week, play well this week and go from there.

Q. You realise you could make it a big story for me.

VICTOR PEREZ: I'll try then.

CLARE BODEL: Thank you, Victor.

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