

DP World Tour Championship

Tuesday, 15 November, 2022

Dubai, UAE

Jumeirah Golf Estates

Viktor Hovland

Press Conference

TOM CARLISLE: Thank you for joining us in the Media Centre at the DP World Tour Championship.

Viktor, returning to Dubai, T-3 last year, and you come here with a chance to finish first on the rankings. How much are you looking forward to this week.

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, it's good to be back here. Last time I was here was COVID year, so not a lot of grandstands. So it's cool to come back and see the place a little bit differently. I think the course is in great. It's in great shape. I feel like my game has been trending in the right direction.

So looking forward to the week.

TOM CARLISLE: You've had really good form recently and your game is trending. Is there anything in particular that you've been working on recently?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, it's just trying to simplify things a little bit. I feel like my short game and putting has been very consistent through the last couple months. I just haven't, frankly, hit the ball well enough to be quite there in contention.

Yeah, just basically trying to minimise the curve a little bit so I know exactly where the ball is going to curve. I might not hit it exactly where I want it to, so at least I know the dispersion of the shot pattern. I'm not trying to hit a cut and suddenly there's a pull-draw and you lose confidence where the ball is going to go. I'm just trying to keep things simple.

TOM CARLISLE: Great position on The Ryder Cup race that's started up again. How much is in a playing on your mind and how much are you looking forward to hopefully putting on a Team Europe jersey again?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, obviously Ryder Cup is the big goal and you want to make the team every time. It's not something that I think too much about each week. Obviously it's a year from now.



It's more about controlling the things that I can control day-in, day-out. If I play the golf that I know I'm capable of playing, I should be on that team, so it's more about thinking about, yeah, just my game every day and trying to get the best out of every single day.

Q. Obviously you've won up the road here in January; took down Mr. McIlroy. I wouldn't call it, he didn't have anything like a slump after that. You finished second at Arnold Palmer but then you had a little -- where you maybe wobbled a little. Is that fair enough?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, it was, I guess golf is a little frustrating sometimes where you know, certain weeks, hit the ball really, really well but then haven't putted it very good or lost some shots around the greens. Been working really, really hard on the green and around the greens, and that has gotten a little bit better.

But then the ball-striking hasn't been as good. So it's just kind of the nature of the game. I would have liked to have played a little bit better throughout the summer. But yeah, I feel like I'm kind of getting back to the same old ball-striking base.

I'm hitting a little bit further but I'm kind of getting back to a little bit of the predictability of the shots instead of trying to shape it too much or overthink about where not to miss it or where to miss it. It's more instinctual, more reactionary, and I feel like I'm in a way better spot right now than I was a few months ago but it's just the nature of the game.

Q. Sunday St Andrews, did that affect you at all?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Not really. It was just one of those days. I think I shot 2-over par but it was like I hit a lot of good shots. I just didn't quite get close enough to the pins, especially with how St Andrews was set up, you had to birdie the easy holes, and then basically just par a lot of the holes where the pin was tucked. You couldn't really get close. You had to make 1-putts to make a birdie.

So I actually felt like I did a pretty good job. I feel like if this would have been a couple years ago, I would have maybe started firing at pins that we weren't supposed to be firing at. I just didn't get any momentum going on early and



didn't birdie the easy holes. It's just one of those days.

Q. There's a strange coincidence that three you, Matt, Collin and you turned professional right almost at the same time. All three of you played so well, and then there came a period where all three of you were struggling a little bit, even Collin has been struggling a bit, at almost the same time that you have and Matthew has. Have you guys ever discussed something between you as to what's happening or do you talk to each other? I know Collin is a very good friend of yours.

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I mean, it's not -- I think that's kind of the last thing you want to do when you're with your other competitors and friends. No one really wants to hear about the other person's game. You're just there to hang out, and we kind of know how everyone else is playing. Again, it's just the nature of the game. Sometimes you're playing really well and sometimes you're in a little bit of a slump.

I think it's just the nature of how things go because you want to try to get better all the time. You don't want to do the same things every single day; you want to try to improve, and then sometimes when you improve, it's kind of a new territory. And sometimes it's hard to predict, even though you've gotten better, it's not necessarily that you're going to get everything out of that on the golf course and in a tournament.

I think it's a little bit, you take one step forward, one step back, one step forward, one step back. But then you hope at the end of it, you're still a little further forward than you were before. So yeah, it's just one of those things.

Q. Have your clubs turned up yet?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I got them last night. It was nice to play with them in the Pro-Am.

Q. You were saying yesterday it's not the first time it's happened this year. How disruptive for you and other players when your clubs turn up in terms of preparations for a big event like this?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, it's a little bit annoying. I remember the first part, or first time it happened this year was in Hawai'i, Kapalua and I had spent 3 1/2 weeks in Norway. Basically didn't touch a club. And then I'm supposed to fly halfway across the world and play golf against the best players in the world, and you haven't really seen the ball fly in months.

So I decided to get there a week early to get some practice

in, and then you don't get your clubs for that whole week. It feels like you're showing up to an exam and you haven't studied for it. It's not the best feeling.

You kind of have to look at it as a challenge, I guess. Similar to what happened in México when I broke my driver and I didn't have my driver and I borrowed someone else's. It's not ideal but you can kind of turn it into a challenge and see how well you can do, and yeah, sometimes it might work out better than you think.

Q. This is an off-one and I don't even know where I'm asking it really. Have you ever met Erling Haaland ?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I have not met him.

Q. What do you know about him? Do you know much about him?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I don't follow football very much. We've exchanged some messages online. Obviously keep up a little bit in the media. Obviously what he's doing is pretty incredible. It's cool to watch from that perspective, but I don't follow football too closely but I know he's a big, big deal.

Q. And he's a keen golfer himself, did you know that, and is that what the messages were about?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: No, I did not know about that. I know he's a big watch guy. So we were talking about watches a little bit back and forth. But no, I didn't know he played golf.

TOM CARLISLE: On that note, Viktor, thank you very much for your time.

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