

U.S. Adaptive Open

Monday, July 18, 2022

Village of Pinehurst, North Carolina, USA

Pinehurst Resort & C.C. (Course No. 6)

Jake Olson

Quick Quotes

Q. Probably not the score you wanted out there, but can you talk about the experience being on the course and playing in this event?

JAKE OLSON: Yeah, it was very cool just to be around the competition. There was a seriousness in the air, and obviously the spectators and just the people that were cheering us on, it was really cool. You could tell everyone knew something special was going on.

Q. How rewarding is it to share the course with so many other inspiring athletes with similar stories?

JAKE OLSON: Man, it was crazy. I was telling Brian who who I played with, with one leg, I'm a strength and conditioning coach, and we always try to train athletes unilaterally. It's a great way to train. That's how he lives life. That dude by swinging on one leg probably does more athletic movement and more incredible movement than I'd say any athlete bilaterally on any major sports team in the country. It's just crazy to see.

Q. How do you think this championship will help amplify the adaptive community, just stories similar to yours? There's 96 of them. How do you think that will help the community as a whole?

JAKE OLSON: Well, I just think it shows anyone who's in similar situations that life is worth living. There's fun, there's competition, there's purpose, and there's fulfillment in doing what you love to do.

I think everyone out here has kind of proven that, so if you're sitting on the couch or wherever you are right now and looking at your disability saying what do I do in life, I can't live the life I want to, no, you can, and if that's golf, we welcome you.

Q. We know a lot about football, but I know that you played golf before football. Can you tell us why golf was a first love of yours?

JAKE OLSON: Well, it is something that I really was taking



seriously as a little kid, and then obviously I found out I was going to lose my eyesight and didn't really know where that left me with golf, but it was something I was wanting to continue to try and target to do, just with the overarching goal that blindness wasn't going to rob me of the things that I loved doing.

So we put a lot of time and effort into golf and realized, hey, this is something we absolutely can do. It was a love of mine before and made the decision that blindness wasn't going to rob me of anything I love in life, and that included golf.

Q. Your dad is caddying for you?

JAKE OLSON: Yes, he is.

Q. Can you tell us about your relationship with him and what it was like out there today?

JAKE OLSON: Yeah, I mean, you can probably tell just by looking at his face, he cares more than anyone out here. He exemplifies a lot of love, and just being out here and putting that much effort into helping me, I think there's a lot of people out there that wish their dads would love and care just an ounce of how he treats me in that way, in that respect.

It is something very special.

Q. Everybody will see you as a blind golfer out there, but are there misconceptions that you want to debunk about people that watch you play golf?

JAKE OLSON: I don't know if there's any misconceptions. It is something that we put a lot of work into. I think especially the good shots when people are like, I don't know how you do that, well, it's repetition, repetition, repetition. If there's anyone -- I guess the only myth or whatever, misconception I want to say is that you look at someone like me, oh, I could never do that; no, you can. It just takes time and effort and a passion.

Q. Has golf been what you've put a lot of priority in since USC?

JAKE OLSON: Yeah, I tried to kind of keep it up obviously while being in college and being away, but yeah, definitely



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over the last three years I've put time and effort into it, and once I found out I was going to play in this tournament the last two months, spent a considerable amount of time putting a lot of effort into it.

Q. Have you used your platform to heighten awareness for what you go through?

JAKE OLSON: Yeah, absolutely. Not a lot of people have met blind people before, which is totally cool, but it is funny to kind of hear the questions, and there's not really a bad question, but it is cool to meet people who have never had that experience or to answer questions where people just have no clue. I think people set the bar real low, so even if I Tweet something, it's like, how are you typing this, bro. Just to share anything. Literally I think people are at the bare minimum of understanding how I do anything without sight.

Q. So you're here now, you won a national championship with the Blind Golf Association. You've been a college football player. What is the key to success, excellence in life? What do you think you really credit that to?

JAKE OLSON: Well, hard work. I don't really think anything comes easy in this life. If it does, you're probably getting scammed. You should check that.

But no, I mean, it is finding what you're passionate about, what you love to do, putting a tremendous amount of effort and hard work into it, and then letting that passion be contagious to others around you. If you let other people know that you're passionate about something and you want to work towards something, it is contagious. You get a good group around you that want to find that way to help you do what you want to do, that's where you find success, and that's what I've done with teammates, with business partners, with friends, with family. That's what I've kind of tried to do is just have my passion be contagious with what I want to succeed in this life.

Q. You and your dad have a lot of routines out there. What was a big breakthrough moment for you two in terms of figuring out how to do something that had been hard?

JAKE OLSON: You mean just in general?

Q. In golf.

JAKE OLSON: Well, it's a lot of trust. If one of you went out there, one of my friends -- I'll play with my friends and they'll try to set me up, and I feel a little uncomfortable, I don't know if this is done correctly, and you have a lot of

kind of distrust with just the process. I think really what a breakthrough with us is really just trust and knowing that he's got the club, he's got it firmly in his hands and I can just kind of do what I need to do, and there's no question when I'm sitting down there after he's lined me up that I'm in a good position to make a good shot. I'd just say it's building that trust like any other team.

Q. USC football, we've got a new coach, a lot of buzz around the program. What's the outlook for this year?

JAKE OLSON: Well, I tried to kind of temper my expectations and excitement at first, just a new coach and everything, but with all the recruits switching over and obviously all the guys we brought over from other teams, I think we're going to be pretty good. Our offense is going to be very fun to watch, and so we'll see whether the defense can step in when it needs to.

With that, I think 11 wins is not out of the realm of possibility at all, and I don't know where that puts us in the national championship or playoff conversation, but it's going to be fun, man. It's going to be -- USC is back.

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