

The 150th Open

Mixed Zone

Friday, 15 July 2022

Viktor Hovland



Q. Hasn't been your strongest leadup to this tournament. What's changed or what's clicking this week that maybe wasn't in the weeks prior?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I wish I could tell you. I kind of felt fine on the range and in the practise rounds before every tournament the last couple months, but it's in the tournament situation I feel like I haven't had a shot that I could really trust.

I feel like I could hit a halfway decent shot that could either curve left or it could curve right. So when you're standing out here on a couple of those shots -- like for example, 18, when the wind is off the right, you don't really want to start it OB and play with the wind, but it's also tough to play against the wind if you don't exactly know what kind of curve you're going to get.

So I think I've just been a little insecure, and obviously when you start to see the ball going both ways a little bit, it just creates some more tension. And I feel like right now I'm kind of back to hitting that lower fade off the tee when I'm in a spot where I just got to hit the fairway.

Q. The chipping here is so different than the chipping on the PGA TOUR. Do you like the super firm turf better?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I think I do. I normally don't have a lot of bounce in my wedge, my 60-degree. You don't have to wonder how the leading edge or the bounce is going to interact with the ground because it's just going to bounce up.

So for me, I think it helps me to just be a little bit more aggressive. Although I haven't really used my 60-degree too much around the greens here. It's either a bump and run with a less lofted club or I'm using a lot of putters around the greens.

Q. This picture of Carnoustie on Monday with your caddie, I think, what was the thinking behind that? It was a bit of an odd choice to go play another Open course?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Obviously missing the cut last week, I kind of had to fill in some time. Played 18 holes with -- I played 18 holes on Saturday and Sunday, so I feel like I'd kind of gotten a lot of work in before the week even started.

My caddie Shay Knight, he's been raving about Carnoustie, and it's one of his favourite golf courses in the world. I figured we may as well head over there and play some golf. It was a lot of fun. We probably played it as easy as it possibly could have.

Q. Did you take anything out of that round? Anything about the conditions or anything about links golf?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I mean, it was just kind of more for fun. That course is pretty interesting because obviously it's a hard golf course, but a lot of the bunkers kind of stop at 270, 280. So when there was no wind, I could kind of fly over a bunch of the bunkers.

So it didn't play very difficult. But I could see -- I was trying to picture, if there's a certain wind direction on a lot of those holes, there's not a lot of room behind or in between a lot of those bunkers. It was just a cool place and kind of recreating Jean van de Velde on the 18th hole.

Q. Hopefully not recreating it.

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Just looking at -- because, as this place, it's just a historical place. You kind of remember shots, and it's cool to be there in person.

Q. Any sort of score, like maybe just on the 18th? Did you do anything special?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: We finished in the dark. I couldn't really see the pin on 18, but I think I shot 4-under. I played pretty nice. So that gave me some confidence going into this week.

Q. Awesome. I heard here you had family and friends up in Aberdeen. Is that true? Is that just rumours?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Not that I'm aware of.

Q. There were some Norwegians up there last week.

Q. There were two young children, and they said -- I was just kidding.

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Oh, boy, you got me nervous there for a second. (Laughter).



Q. Can you just walk us through the 2nd hole?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I hit it in the left rough off the tee, and I had 125 metres to the pin. All that I was trying to do was just finish it 30 feet left of the pin and just take a putt going up and take my par and move on.

As soon as I hit it, the ball just kind of drifted off a little further right than I thought. I was a little concerned it was going to go too far right and end up where J.T. was. But it straightened out and somehow landed on that side slope softly and just trickled in. That was unbelievable.

Q. You got two rounds so far under your belt at The Old Course in The Open Championship. What do you feel is the right attitude when you get out on the course at this point?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I'm hitting a lot of great shots. I think you've just got to be aware that links golf isn't always fair. I hit a good drive on 12 yesterday, for example, that was stymied up in the bunker. You're kind of trying to hit it in that spot. Any day it might bounce over the bunker and go to the side, and you might make birdie.

You've just got to hit the shots that you need to hit, whether you get a bad bounce or not. That's going to happen, and it's all about how you get out of that situation and move on.

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