

The 152nd Open

Mixed Zone

Thursday, 18 July 2024

Nicolai Hojgaard



Q. How enjoyable was that?

NICOLAI HOJGAARD: It was a very enjoyable morning. I felt like we had decent conditions. You know it's going to be windy, so I felt like we had decent conditions and a very enjoyable day on the links with Keita and Adam.

Q. We spoke to Luke yesterday and he said he felt like one of his team could go and win this championship. Not a lot of people mentioned your name. That's not really fair, is it?

NICOLAI HOJGAARD: I don't care really. I don't care what the media says really. It's just about doing your own thing and commit to whatever you're doing, and I felt like I committed to my shots today. We're going to go out tomorrow and try and commit to the shots there and see where we end up.

It's very early to start making any claims about what's going to happen on Sunday because anything can happen on this course, and especially links golf, so we've got to stay present.

Q. How does it change your mindset when you come into the clubhouse in the lead at such a big event?

NICOLAI HOJGAARD: It's cool. It just shows the things we're working on pays off at times, but there's a lot of work to be done the next few days. It's about going out, being really calm, collected when you play links golf and accept what it throws at you.

I'm going to make some bogeys, potentially doubles out there the next few days, so go out, stay calm and try to get the best out of every day.

Q. Are you getting better at that?

NICOLAI HOJGAARD: I think so. It's one of the things I'm working hard on, so I'm definitely aware of it. At times I still think I'm a bit young and immature. But I feel like I'm doing a good job, and that's one of the key things, I think, to play good golf and links golf and in general.

Q. You've had a lot of success in your career already anyway, but when we talked to Bob MacIntyre about Rome and what that meant, the fact you were part of it, as well, how much

did it do for you being in that team and coming out on top?

NICOLAI HOJGAARD: I mean, for me after Rome I just realised what the best players in the world were doing and talked to them, picked their brain on certain things. I know we really had to get together and perform in Rome, but I also asked them about their career and what they're doing so what I can learn from them, and I felt like the rest of the season I just was very clear on what I had to do, and I was a really good finish.

Rome was a huge part of last year, and definitely going forward. It was the best week of my life, and I'd love to be there again.

Q. You can make it the second best week of your life this week, couldn't you?

NICOLAI HOJGAARD: I think it would be hard to beat Rome.

Q. Really? Surely, come on.

NICOLAI HOJGAARD: I can't say anything. I haven't done it.

Q. How difficult is it to play six holes with one wind and then six holes it another wind? Does that screw with you? How do you manage that?

NICOLAI HOJGAARD: Yeah, it can be a little bit tricky. On the way out, you just try to hold the face off a little bit, push it out in the wind, and then coming in you've got to have a strong face. I definitely missed a few shots right today after playing the front nine, early on the back nine, but I just feel like you've just got to stay present every time you have a shot because you've got focused and committed to whatever you're doing, especially when it's windy. You've got all those damn bunkers there that's going to swallow some balls, and it's like, you've just got to stay present out there. I feel like if you do that, you're going to react to whatever is in front of you, and you just react to the wind basically when you're out there.

Q. You say staying present. What is the opposite of that? What do you find yourself thinking about when you're not staying present?

NICOLAI HOJGAARD: It's more result, thinking about a result or thinking about black and white, where do I finish and how do I want to perform and all that stuff that's just irrelevant



basically. It will come over time, and it's such a cliché to say, but you've just got to stay present whatever you're doing all the time.

Today I felt like I didn't realise we played that many holes. It just happened really fast. But I was just in it. That is just the key, I think, when we play. It's not just this week, but it's every week. Links golf you've got to stay in it a little bit more.

Q. Is there a direction of wind that you find particularly annoying and one you like playing into? Some pros say they like when wind is coming from right to left. Do you have a preference?

NICOLAI HOJGAARD: I think the majority of right-handed players love a little bit of wind off the right. You can push it a little bit. But I like practising a left-to-right wind. It does something good for my swing.

I don't mind the wind. There's just definitely certain shots, certain holes that dictate something, and when you've got hard wind off the left at times and when it gets really hard, it can be tricky to manage. I feel like sometimes it's a little bit easier to manage a right wind.

But I mean, I wish we could play all holes downwind, but that's not how it is.

Q. It seems like there's been some missed short putts across the field today. Is it the speed of the greens that's been tricky with those?

NICOLAI HOJGAARD: Yeah, I think it is. Those crosswinds are just tricky when you're short putting. You feel like you don't want to be too aggressive with the pace and leave yourself a three- or four-footer after. I just think it's the wind that makes it tricky for the majority of the players, and you've just got to see a couple roll in and then you get confidence. But you're going to see a lot of putts missed and you're going to see a lot of putts holed this week. Also the greens got a pace where you can be aggressive. You're probably going to see a good mix.

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