

# PGA Championship

Wednesday, May 14, 2025

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

Quail Hollow Club

## Viktor Hovland

### Press Conference



**Q. Viktor, you mentioned with all the swing changes you've been going through, after the win at Valspar, you were impressed you could get it to the wire, even impressed you could win under those circumstances. This week would you have that same level of surprise if you were to win?**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, there would definitely be some of that left in there because I'm still not entirely happy with where I'm at.

What I'm happy about is the progress that I've made since right before the Valspar, and even since the Valspar. I think I'm definitely trending in the right direction.

But there's still just some stuff left in there that just doesn't allow me to play to the level that I want to play with, play at.

At the Valspar, I proved to myself that with even worse ball-striking, I can still be competitive, and I think the tournament here last year was also another proof of that.

Yeah, I do beat myself down with kind of where I'm at technically, and it's not fun when you're out there trying to predict a certain golf shot and the ball flight does the opposite. But even despite that, I don't doubt my abilities to get the ball in the hole.

Yeah, we'll see what happens this week.

**Q. When you have a move or position in your swing that you know is the one you want to be in, but it just feels weird, what's the process for rewiring those feels? How do you make it feel a little better and eventually good?**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, that's a tough one. Feel is just so subjective. Feels change all the time. I can still rely on the same feels right now as I used to, but the feels now have changed.

I kind of -- I think I wire my brain to new feels. If I see that the ball is doing what I want it to do. If I'm seeing

objectively good results, it's easy to get over the weirdness of how it feels.

I do kind of try to separate what I feel and what the ball is objectively doing because that's ultimately what we're trying; we're trying to play good golf and -- yeah, so just trying to divorce that, but at the same time, relying on some of that because it is a feel game. If you can't equate your feels to a good shot, then that's also no good.

**Q. Is it just kind of a reps thing? Do you just see enough good results with a feel that it starts matching up eventually?**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Some of it is reps, but you have to get to the root cause of something.

I've just had a move in my golf swing for the past five, six years that's just been so effortless, and it's been very easy to predict. And now suddenly the last couple years it hasn't been doing that.

So I have to continue to kind of figure out what exactly is the mechanism or the way to train that old move back in there so I can predict where the ball is going to go again.

It's not necessarily a reps thing because you're just engraining the movement that you already have, even deeper. So you kind of have to deconstruct it in a way.

**Q. Did you just register today, and if so, where have you been since you left the tournament last week?**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I still haven't registered. So I'm about to do that after this press conference. I've just been practicing.

**Q. We've seen you grinding late out there a couple nights. Just want to know how you're feeling. What's one aspect you're focusing on this week going into it?**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, this week is a big driving week. The course is so long. Fairways are wet. You're going to have to drive it long and straight, and driving is usually the best part of my game. But recently, it's been

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tough for me.

You know, I try to go back to my old reliant fade off the tee, and when I do that because of just how the club is moving, it's just not allowing me to do that. And I'm hitting a lot of double-crosses, missing a lot to the left, which for me, I can kind of deal with an over-cut.

But when the ball is drawing to the left, and sometimes when it's not doing that, it's starting right and going right, it's a tough place for me to be.

I've just got to get to the bottom of that, and if I can get the ball consistently in the fairway off the tee, even though I don't feel amazing, my iron play has been pretty solid this year. So I can still get the ball in the hole.

**Q. When do you stop doing changes? Are you always working on some small or bigger changes?**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I mean, you're always changing something, whether you're doing it consciously or unconsciously. I think I've just been a little bit more vocal about it.

So people ask me all the time, Why are you always changing? You can ask any guy in the field here, "What are you working on this week?" And they're going to have an answer for you.

Obviously I would like the changes to be less complicated, but when I'm not in the place where I need to be, you have to make changes to get to the place where you want to be, and then you change less things.

I think I've been a little bit too flippant maybe in the past of exploring too many areas in trying to get better. But as I've alluded to in the past, the majority of times I've done that, I've actually gotten better. I am almost addicted in a way to try to get better because it's worked out so well for me in my career.

But in this place where I'm at, there's a couple key pieces that are preventing me from playing my best golf. I'm not content with playing the way I am right now. So I have to make changes. That's just the way it goes.

**Q. Last year you got really close; what would be that extra thing that you would need to get to the top that didn't work last year?**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I mean, you can frame it like that.

I frame kind of last year as a huge positive because I think

-- although I shouldn't have probably admitted that, either. But I almost didn't play last year, and I almost won the tournament. So it's like I look at that as a huge win. I almost won a major championship without feeling good about my game at all.

So I don't look at that as, like, man, I'm lacking a bunch of stuff. If I can get the rudimentary part of the game back to where it should be, I don't doubt my abilities to win a golf tournament.

So that's why I'm focusing solely on getting back to where I've been before, because I'm a lot more mature, I'm a lot more experienced, and I have more tools in my arsenal now to compete at these big events.

**Q. In terms of making changes, is there a point or a feeling that you'll get that will take playing the week of a green light to a red light?**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Say that one more time.

**Q. When you're making changes and you're trying to grab the feel and you're like, I don't know if I want to play this week or if I do, is there a point or a feeling where you say, it's not a green light this week to play?**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: It doesn't quite work like that.

There's some tournaments where -- major championships, you don't skip those events. But it gets to a point where like, man, it just doesn't feel like you're able to compete.

And if you're not able to compete, at least for me, I don't want to be out there and play. I'm not trying to just grind to barely make the cut. That's not fun.

I'd rather spend that week to try to get better because to play your best golf, you can't think about a bunch of mechanics. You have to go out there and let your unconscious swing just do what it's supposed to do.

But if that ball is going all over the place, that's tough. I'd rather be at home and try to figure that out and then when I feel ready, I'll play a tournament. That's just kind of how my mind works.

**Q. Looking at the course, the final stretch, the Green Mile is really difficult. What makes it that way?**

VIKTOR HOVLAND: It's just long. 16 is just a really long hole. But it's pretty generous off the tee, and even the green is pretty big.

But 17 is a really hard hole with the water all along the left



side, and if they have the tee boxes all the way back, you're hitting a 5- or a 4-iron, and even though you've got room to the right, there's a little slope down there that's a difficult up-and-down.

And then obviously 18 you can't hit it right, you can't hit it left, and even if you hit it in the fairway, it's a pretty difficult second shot, as well.

It just forces you to hit good shots. This course doesn't allow you to hide.

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