

Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions

Friday, January 20, 2023

Orlando, Florida, USA

Lake Nona Golf & Country Club

Maja Stark

Quick Quotes

Q. Here with Maja Stark after her second round at the Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions. Walk us through your round today. What was different out there on the course and how are you performing differently?

MAJA STARK: I think most of my putting was better, especially the first nine. Then it was kind of slow. But, yeah, I think the putting was the big thing because I think my irons weren't that good.

But I finally started making those ten footers, so that helped.

Q. How important is the putting out here? Others have said that's been the key for them today as well.

MAJA STARK: Very important. There are lots of mini breaks on the greens that you don't really see, lots of run-off areas, so, yeah, very important. You putt for them.

Q. You were one of the first here yesterday morning and certainly the last to leave. What all were you working on and that's a lot grinding for the first event of the year?

MAJA STARK: Yeah. I mean, I made a goal to practice six hours of putting a week, and I didn't really realize how much more that is than I usually do.

So, that's great for me, and I feel like it pays off, especially with confidence-wise, yeah.

Q. So a lot of players have transition struggles, whether they're coming out of college or off the Epson Tour or coming from Europe. You seem to have just jumped right in. Seem to be having no trouble at all. What can you attribute that to?

MAJA STARK: I think I've struggled. Maybe you don't see that. (Laughter.) I guess you don't.



I don't know. I feel like I'm taking it one step at a time I guess. I have no idea.

Q. And has there been anything about adjusting to the golf courses that you have found more or less difficult?

MAJA STARK: Not really. We played a lot of courses like in this college. They were a bit shorter, but hopefully I've started hitting further than I did in college.

So, yeah, pretty normal.

Q. I remember seeing you at Pelican. It had been a long year where you had played all over the globe. What it like to start this year and have a probably more settled in schedule? Is that calming?

MAJA STARK: It is. Yeah, it's great to have this category and finally know that there is nowhere else to move really. On the European Tour I had to schedule in LPGA qualifiers and stuff like that, and then switching schedule, too, when I got this category.

So it's very nice. I'm still trying not to do too much and that's difficult, but I think I have a good schedule set now.

Q. Did you take a little time off after that long run?

MAJA STARK: I took three days. I had too much motivation so I just went to the golf course. Then I got sick so I had to take a bit of time off.

Q. What did you do in those three days?

MAJA STARK: Cried. No, I'm kidding.

Q. I was like, for real?

MAJA STARK: I was just waiting. I was like, can I go now? Can I go to the course now?

Q. Wow.

MAJA STARK: Yeah, because I was just so excited to start playing again.



Q. So you mentioned your goal of six hours of putting. What other goals have you set for this year? Solheim Cup?

MAJA STARK: Top 20 on the WAGR. Why did I say WAGR. On the Rolex Rankings, and a major.

Q. Win a major?

MAJA STARK: Uh-huh.

Q. What will your schedule be like going into the first half of the year? What are you playing in?

MAJA STARK: I am playing in LET next, the one in Morocco, and then I do Thailand, Singapore, two weeks off, Arizona, California, and then two weeks again. So I have a pretty good rest-to-tournament ratio.

Q. Have you always loved golf this much or are you loving it now more than ever?

MAJA STARK: I'm probably loving it now more than ever. I just told my caddie, I love this day. He goes, yeah, I mean, he said he had to call my mom, has to call my mom and ask what happened to Maja. She's not throwing clubs. She's being kind of fun. Not too mad.

Yeah, I don't know what is happened. I don't know.

Q. When did you feel that change?

MAJA STARK: Yesterday. (Laughter.) I don't know. I turned 23 during the off-season, so maybe that extra year helped.

Q. When did you last throw a club?

MAJA STARK: Throw a club?

Q. Uh-huh. And what club was it?

MAJA STARK: CME, first a 60- degree and next hole after I threw a hybrid.

Q. Everybody talks about finding motivation after a hard time. I think it worked for you. I remember it was very frustrating at the Muirfield last year. A tough finish. After that you won in Ireland and it's been -- like so what happened now?

MAJA STARK: I don't know. Honestly, on the Monday when we got to Ireland I was just trying to get back to normal. I mean, I think I sat for probably two hours in the restaurant at the golf club crying to my mental coach. Just

like, I don't know, I couldn't explain it.

I just so disappointed. We were getting nowhere, so he said maybe just take this day to recover and get back. He said, what do you need right now? I said I need to hang out with friends. So I made sure I played my practice rounds with people I like and then just slowly started getting more comfortable.

I mean, I cried so much that like my ribs got locked, like they were so strained. I've never cried that much in my life, so that was pretty interesting. I think it was good because I didn't have the energy to do my chicken wing that I usually do so, I think my technique got better honestly.

Q. Talk about the new putting regimen. What's the most at one time you spend putting?

MAJA STARK: Probably like one and a half hours at camp last week. Yeah. But, I mean. It was fine.

Q. Were you with the Swedish team at camp?

MAJA STARK: Yeah. It was mixed ladies amateurs and some Epson Tour pros, LET pros, and LPGA pros.

Q. Did you have a goal -- wait where was the camp?

MAJA STARK: Phoenix.

Q. Did you have a goal of not throwing clubs or just naturally happening?

MAJA STARK: I think it's just naturally happening because I'm a more happy person.

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