

LIV Golf Las Vegas

Saturday, 10 February, 2024

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Las Vegas Country Club

Smash GC

Brooks Koepka

Graeme McDowell

Talor Gooch

Jason Kokrak

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Let's welcome the winners of LIV Golf Las Vegas, Smash GC. We are joined by Talor Gooch, Graeme McDowell, Captain Brooks Koepka and Jason Kokrak. You guys obviously had a big mix-up in the off-season with your roster and come out hot right out of the gate winning this one. Brooks, tell us a little bit about this team dynamic.

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, that was the plan, to bring in two guys that have experience, that know how to win, and to be in this situation where I feel like we're competing every week.

Last week we just didn't have a good Sunday. That happens, though. We had a chance to compete. Obviously learned something, and then to come back and G-Mac to play the way he did today was spectacular. Talor had a chance to win and J played phenomenal. He had another chance to win right there. I love the way the team played. I love this team. I'm very excited for the future.

Q. G-Mac, your first podium with LIV Golf. Tell us how it feels.

GRAEME McDOWELL: Yeah, they keep handing me the trophy because I've never had one before. No, obviously proud to be part of this unit. I appreciate Brooks putting the trust in me to have me on the roster this year. Sundays are always difficult at any event. There's an expectation level that you have for yourself.

But with four scores to count here on LIV on Sundays this year, the expectation levels for the whole team, you want to play well for your guys. There's a lot of extra pressure out there. I think it's a phenomenal format.



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I think what people don't realize at home, what we have here in LIV, the team dynamic is so important. The people you surround yourself with, you're preparing together, you're playing for each other. Being with these guys just kind of lit the fire for me, and that's really what I needed at this point in my career, and I still feel like I'm good enough to win golf tournaments, and that's the key for me.

Today personally was a big day. I kind of need that, that little bit of belief in myself as we move into the season because we want to be on the podium many, many times. I think the expectation levels are very high for Smash GC this season.

Q. There was only three teams that were at even par or under par today. Both Talor and Jason, you guys had a chance at winning it today. Tell us a little bit about your rounds, the conditions out there, and why you think Smash was able to get a 10-under for the team.

TALOR GOOCH: Like Brooks said, we had a chance last Sunday to kind of do the same thing, and it just didn't click. That's the good thing about having these four guys on the team is we know any given Sunday if we have a chance we can run away with a tournament.

For me, I actually didn't hit it that great today, but I made a few putts out there, so the putter got hot at the right time, and it's just kind of helped propel us to the win.

JASON KOKRAK: Yeah, I think the same thing happened to me. To start off the round, I didn't get off to a particularly good start. Just didn't hit anything close. Had a couple little knee-knockers from four or five feet, and that breeze was kind of tough. Just like Talor, I got a couple putts to fall right at the right time. I think we all made a few birdies coming in, and that kind of solidified everything.

I went for it on 18, but that's the way it was, and I would have only gotten to 11, but nonetheless, it was a fun day out there, and it was more fun to play it alongside these guys.

Q. How is Smash GC celebrating tonight, Brooks?

BROOKS KOEPKA: I'll figure that out. I haven't really



thought about that. Probably just -- I'd love to reflect here right when we get done with this, all four of us, everybody that's a part of the team, the caddies, just go in there and reflect on this and enjoy the win. We'll have some fun, no doubt about that. We're in a great spot for it.

Q. Talor, I think you're pretty much the only guy that's won with three different teams. How does that feel or what does that mean?

TALOR GOOCH: I think I'm the only guy that's been with three different teams, too.

JASON KOKRAK: It means he's really good at golf.

TALOR GOOCH: It's great. It's what I've talked about throughout the off-season. I feel like I'm in a place with these guys, like I'm excited for the future. I'm excited for what the next few years looks like, and I'm excited for what this year looks like. I think we've got a good squad.

I came here most importantly to get with a team that I feel we could build for the future and continue to grow, and to be around Brooks every day, he's one of the greatest over the last 10 years. I know being around these guys and a guy who's won majors, another guy who's won a major, I know being around these guys is going to push me to become better.

It's super cool to get a win. It's nice to get it this early, as well.

Q. G-Mac, what were you able to do to shoot a 65 out there in tough conditions where there weren't many low scores out there today?

GRAEME McDOWELL: I've been living in Florida for about 15 years, but thankfully I still remember how to play in the wind. The game has really been trending for the last six months. I kind of alluded to it earlier, the belief level. It's that little X-factor that's hard to find. You can't coach that. You can't learn that. You just have to go out there and kind of get it done.

Being around this squad and, like I say, the accountability level and the work rate, the culture, I think all of those things kind of just drives us all forward, and like I said, at this point in my career, I want to be held accountable. I want to push myself and see what I have left in the tank.

Like I say, I feel like today was a big day, and as we continue moving forward into the season, there's going to be lots of situations on Sundays, but we can get this done.

Looking forward to more of the same.

Q. Brooks, you made these moves before we announced four counting scores on Sunday. Now that we have that, just how much more important or how much of an X-factor is it for you guys, especially with the depth of your roster now?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, doing the off-season moves before the four scores counted -- I thought it was great having three, but then I think it actually turned to our benefit.

Look, we've got a lot of firepower, a lot of guys on this team that know how to win, know how to play golf. You just look at it today. Great players play well in tough conditions. That's what G-Mac did today.

I'm beyond proud of him and these guys having a chance to win. That's all you can ask for. Basically three guys with a chance to win on a Sunday is always a good thing.

Q. Jason, were you looking much at the leaderboard, especially the way the team was performing throughout the day?

JASON KOKRAK: Well, I kind of noticed throughout, maybe halfway through, that we were second, third, and then we were down a couple, then we were up a couple. I think we all made birdies at the right time. As Brooks said, good players, good teams play well under pressure, and I looked up at the leaderboard and we were eight up. I kind of knew that we had something going. I think we finished it off in style.

Q. What was the vibe like today in Vegas with the Super Bowl crowd in town, to play in an environment like this? Did you guys enjoy it?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, it's always fun anytime you get in front of a bunch of people and they're excited. Look, it's a great town, especially this weekend. I'm glad everybody came out. There was a nice little turnout today, and they were loud, so that's always a good thing.

Q. Would you guys like to see this become a tradition where you play a tournament in the Super Bowl city that week, maybe New Orleans next year at this time?

BROOKS KOEPKA: Yeah, sure. That's fine with me.

GRAEME McDOWELL: Fine by us.

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