

Men's Olympic Golf Competition

Friday, 30 July 2021

Saitama City, Saitama, Japan

Kasumigaseki Country Club

Carlos Ortiz

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We'll start with questions. Carlos, excellent first and second round find you right in the thick of things here as we enter Saturday. If you could, just talk through maybe what you learned a little bit about this golf course now that you've played two days of competition.

CARLOS ORTIZ: I've learned that it's much easier from the fairway. I think when you're in the fairway you're able to be aggressive with the greens being so soft and the greens being this perfect it's great to once you start getting the right reads, it's easy to make putts. I feel like I'm in good position and I like where I stand.

THE MODERATOR: Some questions?

Q. You've talked about the stage in the village this week. What's the coolest thing you've done?

CARLOS ORTIZ: I don't know, just everything, the whole experience, being able to be surrounded by so many athletes, eating in, you go inside the dining halls and it's like 20,000 people around you. It's just the whole experience, being able to sleep on like these little condos, sharing the room with -- I'm sharing with a boxer. The other day he finish his fight and he's like, I'm waking up at 4:00 a.m., he's coming back at 11:00 p.m., getting in the ice bath, waking up everybody and then we come out and he's like, I'm so sorry, I'm still running on adrenaline, I'm just trying to calm down, sorry if I wake you up. You wouldn't get that anywhere else. It's fun, I loved it so far.

Q. The reason why a lot of guys didn't do it is logistically have you found it difficult logistically?

CARLOS ORTIZ: No, I mean it's like an hour and 15 minute drive. The vans are comfortable. I think the hotels are still like an hour away. I mean, it's okay. You take the time to relax, nap, talk. It's fine. I don't mind it. I think it really outweighs, being at the village and not being at the village outweighs that maybe extra 20, 30 minutes you're going to be in the car.

Q. The 6th fairway was so wet from the rain that they decided to move the tee up, which worked out in your favor. Can you talk about that hole?

CARLOS ORTIZ: Yeah, it was a great hole. I made an eagle so obviously it worked out for me. It was just a perfect fade driver for me. I've had a hard time hitting the shot that I like hitting that fade and for some reason that just looked perfect and I went ahead and hit a great drive and my caddie gave me a great read and I made 2. It's always nice to make eagles.

Q. You've been, you've won you've been in this position before, does it feel any different to be in a last group on Saturday at the Olympics compared with another tournament?

CARLOS ORTIZ: I don't think so. It's just a tournament. Obviously first two days you're trying to put yourself in the best position, I think I've done that, the tournament really starts probably tomorrow, that's where you want to start making your run. I'm in a great position and I feel like if I can hit a bit more fairways I can be pretty aggressive.

Q. I want to go back to the question about the village. Because of the strict COVID restriction are you having any difficulty?

CARLOS ORTIZ: No, I think they have done a great job. Obviously we all have to adapt to the world we're living in right now. They have done a great job on still putting everybody together but at the same time putting in enough restrictions where people are safe. They're making everybody wear masks all times. Dining rooms everybody is individual seating with glass cover. I mean I feel safe, I feel great. The gym is -- I've been to the gym and it's everybody is wearing masks, enough space, there's a lot of people cleaning everything right after you finish working out. I think they have done a fantastic job.

Q. Can you tell me a little bit about food? What's the best so far?

CARLOS ORTIZ: They have everything. Like when I say



everything it's everything. Noodles, sushi, Mexican, pizza, burgers, I mean whatever, you name it, they have it. To be honest with you, for the amount of food they have to make, it's great food. I have loved it, I've eaten something different every day and it's great.

Q. It looks likely you'll probably be in the last group. Do you think that will feel any different to being in the last group in a TOUR event? And playing alongside Xander, is that something you relish?

CARLOS ORTIZ: No, I mean it's the same you're in the mix of things, obviously it feels, there's a little bit that comes with that but it's great. Xander is a great guy I'm sure we'll have fun. I'm really looking forward to it.

Q. You mentioned your boxer roommate. Is he a golfer, is he interested?

CARLOS ORTIZ: No, I don't think he has any idea about golf. But he's fighting about 10 p.m. tonight so hopefully he wins and he doesn't come, you know, a little bit less excited than last time, so he don't wake up everybody in the apartment.

THE MODERATOR: You don't want him to come home mad.

CARLOS ORTIZ: No, no. I mean, he's been playing loud music every day. He's like, Do you like it? Yes, I love it. Keep playing your music.

THE MODERATOR: Anything you want to do, we like it.

CARLOS ORTIZ: Yeah.

Q. What's his name?

CARLOS ORTIZ: Rogelio. He's fighting -- I think if he wins today he's secure like a bronze medal.

Q. Would Mexico be more excited about a medal in boxing or golf?

CARLOS ORTIZ: Honestly, I think they're excited about any kind of medal. That's the beauty of these games. I don't think it matters what sport or how you look or what you're doing, it matters of putting the flag up there and getting a medal for your country and that's the beauty of these games.

Q. He's your roommate?

CARLOS ORTIZ: Yeah. You enter, it's like a little bit of a table and three chairs and then there's two bathrooms and

four rooms. I'm staying with my caddie Mikey, he's staying by himself and then two of his coaches in one room and another coach in another room.

Q. Who do you have with you this week?

CARLOS ORTIZ: Have I Mikey my caddie, the national coach, I grew up, he manages that, so he comes as the coach from Mexico and then Ramon Bescansa, he's the putting coach for me and Abraham, so it just made sense to bring him along.

Q. The last thing, the golf course, what do you make of it so far, it doesn't seem, you mentioned the rough and the fairways, that's obvious, but it doesn't seem like a course where it's, it looks like it's hard to make a double bogey unless you really screw up.

CARLOS ORTIZ: Don't ever say it's hard, I always respect that word, but, yeah, I mean if you're in the fairway you can be aggressive, so if you're hitting in the rough you try to get it back in the fairway where you can be aggressive again. So I've been pretty patient, I haven't hit it as straight as I normally hit it and that's why I still have a great chance. If I can find more fairways the next two days I think I'll be in great position.

Q. What would it be like if you were a kid right now watching you, someone growing up in Mexico seeing someone that could win, possibly win a medal. What would that be like?

CARLOS ORTIZ: That would be great. We we're talking about it the other day, I mean, that's the beauty of these games, I say it again, because I remember, I never followed weightlifting, right, but I remember this girl that won a gold medal for Mexico like 10 years ago and I still remember her. I never followed weightlifting but I remember seeing that competition because she won a gold medal and I remember her name. And I think that's why everybody gets excited you're representing a country and being from Mexico we don't get really a lot of medals it's huge when you can have an accomplishment like that.

THE MODERATOR: How important was the par on 18 to get that up-and-down?

CARLOS ORTIZ: Oh, it's great. It's always nice to finish with a good save. The food tastes better after the round, let's put it that way.

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