

LIV Golf Mexico City

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Mexico City, Mexico

Club de Golf Chapultepec

Cleeks GC

Victor Perez

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Victor, welcome to the media center, great round, 9-under, first place. Four birdies to end the round. Can you take us through that stretch, please?

VICTOR PEREZ: Yeah. Obviously very happy to finish with four birdies. First hole, probably got a little bit lucky because I think it rolled through the bunker on the left and then got up-and-down for birdie. The second hole, drove it on and two-putted for birdie. Third hole, hit a great pitching wedge on that really small shelf on the left, two, three feet, so it's nice to have a short putt.

Then the fourth, hit a 3-wood a bit on the left, as well. I think it just covered the tree and then made it far enough down to have a gap wedge and hit that one stiff, as well. So it was nice to not have to deal with long putts at the end.

Q. Your rookie season here at LIV, already in contention. What does it feel to be in contention?

VICTOR PEREZ: I don't know if we can call it contention because it's only the first round. I think it's easy to get carried away and think, oh, look at me kind of mentality. But we've only done 25 percent of the way, so I think it's about going back, having a good rest, come back tomorrow, playing 18 holes, having rest, and then see where we are by the weekend.

Q. Do you remember the last time you had 11 birdies in a row?

VICTOR PEREZ: I actually don't. I don't remember. I had it on the Challenge Tour, but that was way back, and maybe on the DP World Tour once, but no, not often.

Q. Did you feel like this may have been coming because obviously you played well in South Africa, that was your best finish since joining LIV. Did you kind of feel like you had some momentum coming off of that?

VICTOR PEREZ: Yeah, I think it's definitely a different atmosphere, different vibe. It's about getting more comfortable, and I think maybe the first event I was really struggling with the energy of the place and the music. I was almost too amped up on the first day and really struggled and it almost got worse through the week. So it wasn't good.

Yeah, the second day, the second event in Adelaide was another 360 from the night golf to then Adelaide. I thought I found my feet a little bit in Hong Kong, which was decent. Singapore was a little bit more difficult, and then had a decent week in South Africa. So it's going in the right direction, which is nice.

Q. Also, you had a 400-yard drive at the 11th. What's it like to hit a drive 400 yards?

VICTOR PEREZ: Yeah, I don't know, to be honest. I just kind of hit it and it goes where it goes, to be honest. I think I was more surprised about the third because I hit the drive on a nice line, but in the practice round we were quite a bit short from the green, maybe 30 yards short and then pitching, and we looked and there was a ball on the green, and I was a bit surprised. But the course got a little bit bouncier, a bit drier as the day went on, so it'll be interesting to see how it keeps drying the next three days until Sunday.

Q. Obviously you had seven birdies to start the first part of the round and you had those two bogeys back-to-back. When you're playing so well in a round and you have a couple of those stumbles, is it easy to just forget those as kind of like blips on the screen? Then obviously you finished well.

VICTOR PEREZ: I wouldn't say it's easy, but I think on a course like this, it's going to give you a lot of opportunity, but at the same time, I think I was just listening to what Ian was saying just before me. I think it's a course where you might miss a short putt, you might hit a decent drive, it might roll just into the trees and you might make a bogey

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out of nothing, so I think you have to keep that in the back of your mind, that it's not going to be perfectly fair, and sometimes on the 18th I'd hit it over the green and it plugged into the back bunker on the downslope, and I had no shot. I had to go sideways and actually made a really good bogey. But it's one of those, if it's on the flat, you're probably thinking you're going to make par, and all of a sudden you have 50 feet for par and you think you might make double.

I think it's one of those, you just have to take it as it goes and know it's part of 72 holes. I think it's sometimes easy to be hyper focused and think, look at this. But out of 72 holes it's probably going to even out for everyone.

Q. How did you feel playing with Mexico City altitude and what's your opinion on this course?

VICTOR PEREZ: I was here in 2020 when the WGC was still an event, so I had a memory about the course, which helped, because all these courses are new for me, being my first year on the league. It was actually quite nice to go to somewhere that I had played before.

But the altitude, it was nice because I had a good week in South Africa that had altitude, as well, so I could use that as a bit of a reference because I think historically I have never been that good at altitude. So I was happy.

But yeah, Mexico City has been great. The city is amazing. We're very fortunate to stay where we stay and be able to go to really nice restaurants, and the team atmosphere makes it that much more fun, that you have really good moments with the team, and we're really well looked after. So it's been a really good week so far.

Q. How motivated are you to get to tomorrow to get a feel and try to maintain your first position in this tournament?

VICTOR PEREZ: I don't know. If you have the answer, I'll take it. I think it's easy maybe when you play really well to maybe get a bit defensive the second day. I think Rory was talking about it last week at Augusta, how when you have such a big lead after two days -- I'm not in anywhere near the same position that he was in, but says you still want to play with the front foot and try to make birdies as if nothing happened. It's really easy, I think on a course like this, as well, to start hitting some irons off the tee and be a bit more conservative, and you can make it really difficult for yourself.

I think, yeah, play with the same strategy on the front foot and try to make as many birdies as I can.

Q. Jon Rahm is second just behind you; do you prefer not to think about it or to feel pressure from a player that has had wins during this tour?

VICTOR PEREZ: Yeah, I've known Jon through the majors and the DP World events and stuff, so he's obviously playing fantastic on the league. He's had some wins, and he's obviously one of the marquee players on the league.

Ultimately I think you're going to have to beat those guys. Whether you have to play with them on Friday, you're most likely going to have to play with them at some point. I think he's had one finish outside of the top 10 in his entire LIV career, which pretty much means he's been in the final few groups every time.

So you kind of know you're going to have to play with Jon or Bryson or some of the top players at some point. Yeah, whether it happens on Friday or Sunday, it's going to happen anyway, so there's no need to think it's going to be any more or less pressure.

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