

LIV Golf Virginia

Thursday, 7 May, 2026

Potomac Falls, Virginia, USA

Trump National DC

Ripper GC

Lucas Herbert

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Lucas, well played today, 8-under 64, currently in the lead. Please just take us through the round, how you felt about the course, particularly a course that is viewed as being quite a challenging test. You seemed to get after it pretty well today.

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, thank you. Yeah, I felt great. Obviously played great out there. Didn't miss too many shots.

I'll be honest, I hadn't seen the front nine until today. Sort of been pretty sick early in the week and only got to play the front nine of the Pro-Am yesterday. Today was my first assessment on the whole golf course. Like you said, it's very impressive.

I don't know there's many better tournament venues on a piece of land that's essentially flat, aside from the 1st and the 18th there, and basically no trees in play. Within the U.S. anyway, I haven't seen too many better tournament venues. It's in phenomenal condition. It's a real treat to come here this week where all the players are very grateful to be here at the Trump course.

Yeah, it's nice to play well on a good golf course.

Q. You started the season with three top 10s, including two team wins obviously. Last two events, you didn't have the results that you were looking for, but what can a start like today do for your confidence this stage in the season?

LUCAS HERBERT: I don't know that my expectations could have been any lower than what they were today, having not seen the golf course, feeling pretty under the weather, and struggling with a back issue for a couple of weeks and struggling with my game definitely the last few events.

I think over the last 12 months I've developed some habits that I wasn't happy with, and I'm just sort of starting to get my teeth into fixing those. Yeah, I think my goal was to try

and feel like I made some progress on those this week. Strangely, here I am sitting here in front of you with a two-shot lead after the first round.

Q. How often is it that you're entering a professional tournament having not played the course at all heading into the opening round?

LUCAS HERBERT: I'd say it's rare now on LIV with the schedule the way it is. We quite a lot more often are afforded the time to be able to get out here and prepare properly for each event. I think, had I not been under the weather pretty badly on Tuesday, I would have done that.

It definitely wasn't a lack of interest in being out here that stopped me. I couldn't tell you the last time I hadn't played at least nine holes. Well, I don't think I've ever played the course blind. I've at least played nine holes. I think maybe back in my days playing on the PGA TOUR we might have done it.

To me, it feels like I'm giving up a big advantage. It's a big disadvantage really to have not played the course before you head out there. It's not something I would do very often, but in a way it felt like maybe a little bit of a positive today because I -- my caddie can give me some lines off tees, and I can occasionally go a little rogue from them if I know the course and feel a little more comfortable left and right of those lines, whereas today I had to stick to those pretty strictly because I didn't know where I was going.

Q. Lucas, there's a U.S. Open spot on the line this week. I think you're actually projected now in that third spot. Have you thought about that? Is that something that you've -- you know, kind of keeping tabs on this week?

LUCAS HERBERT: I think I heard it announced on the putting green today that it was after this event that the cutoff was going to be for that spot. For about two seconds, I wondered whether a win would be enough to do that.



Other than that, no. I got to where I am today pretty much not really caring where I was on the leaderboard, just trying to make progress in my game and my golf swing and being in a good frame of mind hitting shots.

I think I'm going to try to stick to that for the next three days because it seemed to work so far. I think there's a lot of players in the media recently who said that good play fixes everything. So I'll try and take care of the good play, and I'll see where it gets me.

Q. Going back to what you said about relying on your caddie for all the shots. Now that you've seen the course, do you think you might stray a little bit the next three rounds? Are you determined to just like whatever he says, you're going to do?

LUCAS HERBERT: I think there's just little things like -- there might have been a pin near a runoff today where he's like, oh, it can be a little bit dicey over there. Then you play it, and you're like, oh, it's actually not as bad as I thought. So there's maybe a couple little things like that around greens, where it's more a matter of opinion as to whether -- he can't look at a shot and be like, oh, Herby will like that or Herby won't. He's kind of guessing a little bit.

That would be the only thing that would change. He's an unbelievable caddie. He's known every single line off of every tee we've played, not only this week but every other week. It's probably a lesson to me that I should listen to him and stick with what he's got planned for me more often than I do.

Q. I have to ask you one last question. Obviously Leish lives a few hours away from here. I'm sure -- I assume you've visited him at Virginia a few times. Have you ever cut his yard?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, we played a charity day, the Begin Again Foundation Day on Monday. I think it was my third time playing that event. Yeah, we've been up there and visited him there and seen how his life looks.

Obviously hung out with his family, played a variety of sports in his backyard. I don't think I have the qualifications to mow Leish's backyard. Yeah, you've got to be a lot more qualified than me anyway to get on the back of a mower and push that around his backyard because it's -- yeah, it doesn't get much better than the hallowed turf of Leish's backyard.

Q. Lucas, you led in strokes gained approach today. Does that feel like that's the best iron play you've had in a long time?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah. It's a tricky one to almost judge because I just didn't -- it wasn't like I felt like I'm flushing it today, I can aim at anything. I was -- I genuinely was really, really struggling with my game earlier in the week and working pretty hard on a lot of stuff, and I think I did a really good job executing that today. But in no way was I confident in doing it.

I think if you look back at the way I played, yeah, I executed the shots really, really well. Did I have a lot of confidence in them? No, I think I'm going to take a lot of confidence out of today. Potentially as well, I think I was a little more conservative with targets given the state of my game and probably not having the confidence to hit it into the little corners that the pins often are tucked into.

Yeah, I feel like there's a lot of voices in my corner probably telling me to learn from this one.

Q. Leish talked about how he was comfortable around the greens because they're so fast. Being Australian, do you feel the same way?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, it's funny. There's a familiarity of the greens. Even though we don't get rough anywhere near this thick in Australia, I would say there's a little bit of grain in the grass even though it's a bent winter grass kind of type of grass on the greens. There's still a little bit of grain in it, which is not something I grew up with either. We didn't really have any grain around the greens playing in the Sandbelt in Melbourne.

Even though there's that, there's still a familiarity there. I think the greens are starting to firm up today. There was a little bit of rain in the Pro-Am yesterday that softened them. I think by the weekend they'll start drying up. Maybe that's the familiarity there.

I was joking with G-Mac and Kenny, his caddie, today that I didn't get my first pitch mark until I was 22 because the golf course is so firm down in Australia. That's maybe where it is.

I know the boys talked earlier, whether it was last week or earlier this week about I think we won here last time in 2023. I wasn't on the team, but I think the Rippers won here or they might have been -- were they Ripper or Punch back then? I think Ripper won back in 2023, and the boys all said, great golf course. It will suit up really, really well.

There's something about this place that I really, really like, and it's quite familiar.

Q. You have a world class short game. You're always up there in putting. The last few events prior to this

one, you're kind of struggling putting. Do you think that's used to the speed of the greens and what you're used to and maybe it was too soft?

LUCAS HERBERT: Yeah, I kind of went to the LAB Golf side of things at the end of last year, and that's been a bit of a process to get right. I think it's some real value in it. Today is a good example of that. I felt like I was able to start the ball online really, really consistently from all ranges.

I don't have any deal with them or anything. I'm not trying to sell their putters. This might sound like a sales pitch, but they're not a putter you can pick up on a Tuesday on the putting green and start putting in the tournament. They take a bit of adjusting. But when you get adjusted to them, I think they're really, really good.

That process has taken a while. They have a lot of options with the way you can design the alignment lines and different colors on everything, and it's taken a few goes to get it exactly right to get to what I need. I feel like I'm now at a point that I'm pretty comfortable with what I'm using on the greens.

I was able to get pretty external today and really feel like I was getting the ball started online rather than worry about the sort of stroke I was making.

Q. The faster the greens, the more important it is to get it started on the right line. Did you feel like that was the case? Did you feel like you had to get it started and the green would take it from there because they were so firm?

LUCAS HERBERT: Definitely. They were really true greens. It didn't feel like we had any head scratchers out there when it comes to reading them. They were really, really true and really good quality surface. Even throughout the day, they didn't deteriorate at all with the field going through them.

It's a real tip of the cap to the greens staff here and everyone involved with getting -- the whole golf course, getting it set up the way it has for this event. It's a real treat for us to play here this week.

Q. You've spoken about this before in other markets that we've visited around the world, but for those that are still just becoming familiar with LIV Golf's team concept, can you share what it means, what this experience being on a team means to you, whether it's on the course, off the course, personally, professionally?

LUCAS HERBERT: It's tricky to answer as a consumer because I'm not a consumer, I'm part of it. Being a part of it, I can see some of the feedback online that it might come across as seeming fake, but it's not. It really is genuine.

We really enjoy traveling together, getting dinners together, playing practice rounds together, feeding off each other for advice, feeding off each other for -- you see guys on the course playing -- seeing Elvis today, I saw he was at 3-under at one point. I saw Leish was out there at 6-under. You kind of do the maths in your head working out where everyone is based on what the team score is. It's kind of, when you're out there playing, the other three on the team, they're the only other scorers you actually really care about.

I mean, it's been an unbelievable experience, I think, the last three years for me from a person being involved in it. The amount that I've been able to learn off the other -- definitely -- I mean, the other four guys obviously, had Jonesy on the team for my first couple years, and then Elvis coming in this year.

The amount that's benefited my games, and I know at times it doesn't look like it with the results I've had the last couple of weeks, but I know internally I've become a better player the last three years, and I know that's because of the experience being in the team aspect. It's the conversations we've had over dinner. It's the conversations we've had on planes going to the next event. It's just invaluable.

I think there will be a point in the future where I have a result, I have a win somewhere that I'll be able to really credit to the experience I've had being on the Rippers.

On top of that as well, going back to Australia and seeing the impact we can have on golf back there, seeing how many kids are turning up, whether it be to the tournaments, whether it be to the clinics we've been playing, whether it be to some of the smaller events that some of us are able to get back and play.

Leish going back and playing some events in WA. I've played the New South Wales Open a couple of times. Seeing the kids with the Ripper hats on, it really feels like you're making a difference.

It really, despite all the negative things that you're consistently seeing on social media all the time from different outlets, that's the sort of stuff that really makes it feel like it's worth all that.

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