

# LIV Golf Hong Kong

Sunday, 10 March, 2024

Fanling, Hong Kong

Hong Kong Golf Club

## Fireballs GC

### Abraham Ancer

#### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Let's welcome our LIV Golf Hong Kong champion, Abe Ancer from Fireballs GC. Congrats. It's your first LIV Golf individual title here in Hong Kong. A bit of a grind out there today but got the job done on the first playoff hole. Can you sum up your round today and the week as a whole.

ABRAHAM ANCER: Yeah, I think you said it perfectly. It was definitely a grind. I made it a lot more stressful than I envisioned it. I didn't have my best ball-striking. It was very polar opposite of the first two rounds. Off the tee and my fairway and second shots wasn't quite there. But I was really happy. Mentally I dug deep. I had to. That round could have definitely been going south very, very quickly.

I'm really proud of that. I'm really proud of how I felt mentally and how I fought the whole round not having my best stuff. I knew it was going to be tough. There's some big-time names right behind me, and I knew there was going to be a couple of really low rounds out there, like PC. I knew I had to make some birdies coming in or have some good stuff coming in.

Unfortunately didn't have any birdies coming in, but it was good enough to get in a playoff, and then I hit two good-quality golf shots there to finish it off, and it felt nice. It felt really good because that was a very stressful round.

**Q. The fans in Hong Kong have been awesome this week. Can you describe the atmosphere out there, and what's this week been like for you?**

ABRAHAM ANCER: It was incredible. Even when we were getting the trophy, it was pouring rain outside, and everybody was out there, which has been really nice. Everybody was extremely supportive.

Every hole I felt like there was great energy. Today was pretty packed out there, and it was exciting. It was a privilege feeling those nerves throughout the round. That's kind of the way I looked at it. Tried to channel that into something positive.



I'm really happy that I'm here talking to you right now.

**Q. Abe, it's never easy to win, even with a five-shot lead, is it?**

ABRAHAM ANCER: It's not. I knew it was not going to be easy. I had to obviously hit the ball the way I hit the ball the first two days to maybe say easy, but it was never going to be like that. It was tough. The rain was on and off. It was a little chilly.

I thought the golf course played a lot tougher than it did in the first two rounds. The pin placements were really tough, as well.

I mean, definitely it was not easy. That was a very stressful round.

**Q. Take us through the bunker shot at 9. Seemed to maybe settle you down a little bit. Would that be correct?**

ABRAHAM ANCER: Yeah, I just kept putting my ball in just the wrong spots throughout the front nine. I had some chances on the par-5 there, I guess hole 3, hit a bad chip, then I had a nasty horseshoe lip-out there. That's all you can do, hit a good putt, and then it's off your hands.

It was a pretty rocky front nine, and that bunker shot was not easy. It's one of the shots that you have to commit completely to making an aggressive swing, and it came out perfectly, and it was probably about two, three feet from the hole. That settled me in, then making birdie on 10.

I was like, here we go. That's where in the previous two days is when I kind of caught fire and then made a lot of birdies coming in. Then on 11 I hit a horrible shot on the second shot; hit it in the bunker. I'm like, what are you doing. I mean, I'm telling myself, all right, here we go, let's make some good swings coming in, make some birdies, and then I hit that shot. I'm like, man. Then thankfully I got that up-and-down, which was nice. Made a nice swing on the next and didn't make the putt.

I just kept telling myself, you were pretty much flawless the first two days. There's some stuff that was going to come



up in the third round. It just happens to be kind of piling up. Just battle through.

That's why I'm saying mentally I'm really happy the way I kind of managed it.

**Q. I think it was 15 you found the burn. What was your decision off the tee? How did --**

ABRAHAM ANCER: I know, my caddie was also pretty mad about it, too, to himself. But I've hit a 3-wood every day, and I'm going to the middle of the fairway, to the right side, and the ball wasn't really going because it was a little cold and rainy. It was mainly me. I feel like maybe my caddie wanted to throttle me back, but he didn't really say it. I was like, no, it's 3-wood. I saw where pin placement was. I didn't want to have a long iron into that pin. It was a really tough pin. I felt like I needed to make some birdies.

That was more on me. Just didn't hit a good shot. I pulled it, obviously. I was trying to go 15 yards right of that line, maybe even more, 20 yards. I pulled it, and it went in there.

Made the right decision to not play it from there because I could have made par, but I could have made triple.

I think Benji did a good job there just to really not even -- say hey, let's go back here, have a putt at par. If not, bogey is not that bad.

I'm not proud of that hole, but it's just how it goes.

**Q. What does this win mean in the scheme of things for you? Obviously against a very high-caliber field, and your first taste of success here at LIV individually.**

ABRAHAM ANCER: It feels incredible because I've worked so hard these previous two years, and I haven't been able to -- I feel like I haven't played to my potential in the past two years. Maybe I put too much pressure on myself. It was tough to pinpoint what it was because I was practicing harder than I ever have, and I was not seeing the results.

Mentally it was tough. That's why today was really big for me I felt like mentally to be able to get it done with a tough round, not hitting it my best and feeling the pressure of all these great players right behind me.

It is a lot. It gives me a lot of confidence. But it also kind of eases me that all the hard work that I've put in these last two years, it paid off today. I'm extremely happy.

**Q. You spoke for the last two days about how you try**

**to play games with your mind, try to think of scenarios that are not actually real, and you put yourself as far behind as possible. Have you done that all through your career, or is that something new that you have started doing?**

ABRAHAM ANCER: There's some instances where I have. I feel like in this situation where I go to the golf course, where stats say that I should be good at it, I haven't done a good job before. So that's why I felt like this week it was important to just not think about it that way and just play golf, go about my routine and not think that I should be a really good golfer in this golf course. I just wanted to play some golf and have fun with it.

I did, I felt a lot better. Obviously not today, but the first two days it showed that I wasn't thinking about being perfect and just playing some golf, and then just let the stats just show what they're supposed to on this kind of golf course.

I like playing mind games with myself. Growing up, I remember a lot of people -- when they tell you, don't think about where not to hit it, like oh, there's water there. So growing up as a little kid, I would always be over the ball and look at the trouble and be like, don't hit it in the water, like on purpose, and actually execute the shot and try to hit a good shot.

I did that over and over. That way if that thought comes into my mind, I wouldn't like freak out and be like, oh, God, I'm going to hit it in the water. Maybe that helped this week. I don't know. But I remember as a kid doing that a lot and throughout high school and college.

**Q. When we were talking on Thursday, you said that the one thing that you've been really disappointed with is that you have not done really well on LIV Golf so far. How proud are you of yourself now?**

ABRAHAM ANCER: Yeah, like I said previously, I'm really proud. This victory, it feels amazing just because I feel like these last two years I worked really hard and I was not seeing the results. It was tough.

I felt like, I don't know what's going on, I feel like I'm putting in the work and I'm not seeing the results. Then I go play like the Pan-American Games and I played really well and I won there and I was like, why can I not do that when I'm playing on LIV.

I did the same in the Asian Tour event and played really good. I guess I was just putting too much pressure on myself without even really thinking about it. Like I said, it feels really nice to lift the trophy this week in a really cool



city that is Hong Kong.

**Q. Now that you've got that monkey off your back, does that make you a more dangerous player do you think?**

ABRAHAM ANCER: I wouldn't say more dangerous. I feel like I'm just getting to still know myself out here. Today was really important, I think, to really know where I'm at mentally, where my game doesn't feel my best.

I feel like years prior, even if I didn't have my best stuff, I'd figure out a way to post a good number. These past few years, I wasn't doing that. If I was not hitting it good, I was not posting a good number.

Yeah, today definitely helped. It gives confidence. But I've got a long ways to go, and I've got to keep grinding.

**Q. When you stood on the 18th tee in the playoff, how hard is it to talk yourself out of chasing a shot?**

ABRAHAM ANCER: Well, I just kept telling myself that I've hit all good shots on that tee ball, which is a really tough tee ball, so I just kept picturing that shot I hit the previous days, and thankfully it came out perfect.

Then that second shot, I think that second shot was even more important than the tee ball just because I haven't hit one good iron shot all day, and I knew I wanted to pull it off. My caddie kind of pumped me up. It's like, all right, it's time to hit the shot of the day, and it came out perfect. I couldn't be happier with how I played that playoff.

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