

# LIV Golf Promotions

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Lecanto, Florida, USA

Black Diamond Ranch

## Chase Koepka

### Press Conference

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THE MODERATOR: All right, Chase Koepka, welcome to LIV Golf Promotions 2026. You're certainly familiar to a lot of LIV golf fans. If you wouldn't mind taking us back to 2022, 2023, looking back, what was that experience like for you those first two years of LIV?

CHASE KOEPKA: It was really, really cool. I think being able to compete with the guys, so many guys that have won major championships and were at the highest levels of golf, I think that was the coolest thing for me to be able to learn from all those guys.

Unfortunately I didn't play as well as I would've liked. Had some really cool moments, which include that hole-in-one definitely. But it was a lot of growing from me, and I feel like if I get back out there I will be in a lot better shape for the '26 season.

#### **Q. How has the past experience with LIV maybe helped shape the way you're approaching this return opportunity?**

CHASE KOEPKA: Not really sure. I hadn't really thought about that. What I do know is being able to be around that environment, I know what it's like. Being able to handle myself, you know, playing against -- you know, in some big crowds, I think especially like you go down to Australia; playing in front of 100,000 fans, that was something I've never done before.

So being around fans and the excitement there was definitely a steppingstone that I kind of got used to as well myself. And traveling all over the world. I've done it for so many years playing in Europe and all around the world, so I think that part of it I'll definitely -- I'm getting more and more used to, especially playing on the Asian Tour this past year.

Yeah, it's just such an amazing opportunity this week not only for myself but all the rest of the guys here. And not only is there the three spots back on LIV but there is spots



for the International Series. I know that doesn't really have a full card in Asia, doesn't really involve me, but there is a lot of other guys that that's a huge motivation for them, even if they fall just short of that Top 3, so...

#### **Q. So just on what you just said, your overall thoughts on the International Series and the opportunity that it offers players to compete at a higher level.**

CHASE KOEPKA: Yeah, definitely. It's the Asian Tour's elevated events. I mean, they've done a good job of ramping those up. I mean, the quality of players that when you go to those International Series events keep getting better and better.

I mean, also, too, the fact that we had spots into the Masters as well. There were a couple events that we had spots into The Open Championship as well, too.

I mean, playing in the majors is the best of the best, and having those opportunities through the International Series I think is -- it's the coolest thing in the world to be able to know if you win one of those, you're getting in. I think even in Macao this year it was Top 3 this got in The Open spots, and that's so cool, to be able to play your way into majors through the Asian Tour and the International Series.

I think that's what you want. You want to be able to kind of keep stepping up and playing in majors is the ultimate goal, and being able to do that through the Asian Tour is awesome.

#### **Q. I know you have been on a bit of a journey the past couple years and battling back from some injury. Take us through what that's been like and the state of your game at this point today.**

CHASE KOEPKA: Yeah, 2024 was definitely rough, but once I had surgery for nerve damage and didn't end up going through the shoulder surgery because I had enough time luckily to rehab that and do that.

But the nerve damage was just causing me a lot of problems. I wasn't sleeping very well. When you're not sleeping very well there is not a whole a lot else going on. Just kept bothering my shoulder, so I needed to get that



fixed.

It was just a long, drawn out process. It was hard to even to figure out what that problem was. I knew my shoulder wasn't in a very good spot there for a while, and a lot of doctors took a look and were like, we don't know what this other pain is.

That was the hardest bit, when doctors are telling you we don't know what's going on. Luckily Dr. Elattrache out in LA who has done numerous athletes and been involved in that. I was very fortunate to be able to talk with him and have him look at everything and point me in the right direction.

And he was right, so...

And then after that, it was about another four, five months before I even started just hitting some wedges. Really only played maybe four, five rounds before my first Asian Tour event last year in the Philippines. I was very rusty. Then the next week, finished top 10 in India on one the probably hardest golf courses in the world. Then it was kind of up and down the rest of the year from there.

But it was really mainly my putting that wasn't up to standard; ball striking-wise everything has been feeling really good the more I've been playing. There was a long stretch at the end of the year I think I played 14 out of 16 weeks, something like that, and body held up. I was kind of nervous about that long stretch because I was only doing one-, two-week stretches there for a while.

Yeah, it was nice to see everything held up and started playing better the longer I was out there. So feel in good shape right now. That's what I'm looking forward to this week.

Been out here on property a few times and got to start from the first round, got 72 holes, and hopefully get those Top 3 spots.

**Q. What is your take on the course and the venue out here this week for the competition?**

CHASE KOEPKA: Yeah, it's in really good shape. I haven't played the Ranch course before. Only played the Corey course here, but very -- it's a really good golf course. There is some wider tee shots. They visually kind of play -- they look tight but they're a little wider on some of the holes, and then the tight tee shots are really tight out here. A lot of slopes if you miss the greens.

It's going to be challenging if you miss greens out here. Greens are kind of speeding up. They're in really good

shape. You can make a lot of putts out here if you're hitting greens.

This is a pretty typical Florida golf course for this area. I've played a lot around here. I went to college only an hour in 15 from here and we played quite a bit in this area. I'm used to this type of golf.

**Q. On that, you got the local ties. University of South Florida Bulls. Does that help with just maybe comfort or familiarity being back in the area and knowing that this is a pretty cool unique opportunity?**

CHASE KOEPKA: Yeah, definitely. I mean, the USF ties, I know there will a lot of people rooting for me this week being around here. Fortunate enough we got to win two conference championships out here my junior and senior year when we played, so a lot of good memories from there.

And then I think the other time I was out here I caddied for Brooks and I think we went 37 holes and got him through U.S. Open qualifying out here.

So there has been a lot of happy drives after the final round out of this place, and look forward to doing that one more time.

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