

CME Group Tour Championship

Thursday, November 16, 2023

Naples, Florida, USA

Tiburón Golf Club

Anna Nordqvist

Flash Interview

Q. All right, here with Anna Nordqvist after her first round at the CME Group Tour Championship. Anna, you got kicked off with a lot of birdies there on the front nine. Take me through the beginning of your round.

ANNA NORDQVIST: Yeah, it was quite windy early on. Hit a lot of good shots. Gilly has been on fire with the reads today, so we had quite a few looks inside 10, 15 feet, and it was nice to make a couple.

Overall just very steady. Just tried to keep calm out there. You know, work with the wind in my favor. Yeah, really proud of myself today.

Q. You've had some really good finishes. I know last year was a top 10 finish here at the CME Group Tour Championship. What is it you like about this golf course and event that you perform well here every year?

ANNA NORDQVIST: Well, I come here every year and I feel like this course doesn't suit me very well, so I don't know what it is. I got to play with the commissioner in the pro-am this week and she asked me, do you love this course? I said, well, maybe doesn't set up well for me, but I know I had a great round Sunday last year.

Overall, I mean, you get to hit a lot good shots. If you miss a little bit like you can take some of those run-offs. So overall I feel like it's a ball striking course and maybe that's why it suits me.

Q. I know you've had some really tough things happen outside the ropes. Can you just tell us how you're doing?

ANNA NORDQVIST: Without trying to cry, but I've been honest with everyone. I'm not doing very well. It's been a lot of the ups and downs just trying to fight.

Last Sunday I made a decision to go to Tampa. I could hit



three golf balls without being totally out of breath. So it's been a fight, but I wanted to come here, do it for myself, show that I'm a fighter.

At the end of the day I'm only human, and I'm going to take an extended time off after this. I haven't seen my family the last couple weeks because I've been in the U.S., but three more days and I get to see my dog again and, you know, try to rebuild.

Q. Was part of playing these last two events a way to get your mind off things? You thought maybe focusing on golf would help?

ANNA NORDQVIST: I feel like golf, I mean, this year has put a lot of things in perspective. Golf has never been the most important. I've always fought a lot for my family and building a family and doing the best I can.

And I think tough times definitely put golf in perspective. I'm fortunate to be out here. I had to earn my spot this week. It was nice to come back last week because everyone on tour has been so supportive and so loving.

You know, results doesn't really matter when your health is not there and every day seems to be a fight. I've gone through some really tough things lately, but also had a lot people there supporting me.

But at the end of the day, yeah, I'm going to have to do something because it's -- I'm border how much fight I have left in me.

Q. I want to make sure I understand this. You could only hit three golf balls without being out of breath; is that being overwhelmed?

ANNA NORDQVIST: Yeah, just being exhausted mentally and physically. I saw my coach. He was in Arizona on the Saturday before I left Sunday for Tampa. We were trying to have a lesson and I was hitting three balls and I was out of breath.

Two days earlier I tried to hit some and my head was spinning so much I was thinking I was fainting a couple times so I had to cut practice short.

The fact that I made it through four rounds last week, I was



very proud of myself and just felt like a victory teeing it up.

Q. Anna, you mentioned you've been a fighter, you've been through a lot throughout your career. What are you leaning on to help you get through the rest of this week?

ANNA NORDQVIST: I think my family and friends. Coming off 18, I saw Suzann Pettersen and Christian, two of my best friends. Been nice to have Gilly back. We worked really well for a couple years.

I haven't really had a caddie all year. It's nice to have a lot of support around me. I'm staying with this really lovely housing family that I've been knowing for a couple years now.

Yeah, just surrounded by a lot of love and Leona invited me to dinner on Monday. It's small things that creates some kind of normalcy in a very unnorml situation right now.

Q. What's the goal for this week? Why do you want to be out here?

ANNA NORDQVIST: I think knowing that I'm a fighter, and I never give up, I didn't want to wait until February to tee it up again. Felt like I needed it get back to work. Like you got to start somewhere.

So I think coming here, knowing that I had secured my spot early on and now I have been playing some great golf this year, so I think that was the thing.

Like just seeing everyone, surrounding myself with all the other players and caddies and everyone has been so supportive. I think that's exactly what I need right now. My whole family is in Sweden and I haven't had the opportunity to go back the last couple weeks. I think I'm leaning on everyone out here to just push me through.

Q. You have been brave and open about everything that's going on. Why is it so important to be open about what you've had going on?

ANNA NORDQVIST: I think I'm a very down to earth person and I think you got to be honest. It might not be sharing a lot of details and stuff, but I think I struggle with mental health on and off and I struggle with physically not being able to practice as much as I want.

So I feel like everyone is having different battles. You know, we all do our best, try to move on, but at the end of the day we're just normal people. This year, as tough as I try to stay, I'm just human.

It's been a lot of tears I'll tell you that.

Q. Pretty tough to shoot 7-under today. Just where does this round rank throughout the year just to put a good one like this together after sounds like last week?

ANNA NORDQVIST: Yeah, I'm proud of myself. Felt like just get to go the first tee this week was a victory me itself. Yeah, definitely proud of myself for keep putting and doing the best each day with what I have.

If I can be an inspiration to others to keep fighting, there is always things going on and as much as we want life to be smooth sailing, it's really not.

But I fell many times in life before and pride myself in getting back every single time. I'm going to keep pushing and a little bit of a break is going to do my good. I hope to be back feeling better next year.

Q. You mentioned some physical things that you were dealing with. Is this the carryover from what you dealt with before with the mono or something new?

ANNA NORDQVIST: No, I mean, ever since I got mono in 2017 I haven't ever really got back to my 100%. I'm just very sensitive, but also been out here for a long time. Professional sport is tough because you're pushing your body year after year to the limits.

I always loved to practice, but I'm finding my limits. I'm 36 years old. It's not like I'm young and recover really well. Just got to be smart about it.

Yeah, definitely mentally being exhausted, my mind is not there. Couple weeks ago I think I hit a nine-foot putt like six feet by and missed that. It's just tough when your head is not there. It's really hard to play. You just don't recognize yourself.

Q. One more question. The role Suzann has played, especially recently this year, just being a support system for you.

ANNA NORDQVIST: Yeah, Suzann and her husband, Christian, are two of my best friends. I miss them out here on tour. It's been hard ever since she retired because I always looked up to her and found a lot of inspiration and fire through her.

But they been so supportive. I'm really proud to be playing assist of the at Solheim Cup. Just seeing all her hard work and just get to see her around, so her coming out on 18

today meant a lot.

It's just nice because everyone is -- you know, she struggled too for a couple years. Seeing where she is now, being a mom, having two kids being a good role model, she's someone I look up to.

I'm very fortunate of that friendship.

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