

Men's Olympic Golf Competition

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Saitama City, Saitama, Japan

Kasumigaseki Country Club

Abraham Ancer

Carlos Ortiz

Press Conference



the rough it's a pretty brutal rough. So it's got a great mix, it's got trees that look a little bit like California, like San Francisco in a way, but I can't really pinpoint what it looks like, so that make it's pretty unique and I'm really looking forward to the challenge.

THE MODERATOR: We'll get started with questions.

Q. Mexico is obviously a very proud nation when it comes to the Olympic games. How proud are you both to be representing your country here in Tokyo 2020 and I'll start with Abraham.

ABRAHAM ANCER: I'm extremely proud to -- any chance we get an opportunity to represent our country is, it's something really special, something that we take very seriously and doing it is something for example like golf that is not one of the most common sports in Mexico is big, it's big for us. So being here, Carlos and myself, in Tokyo in such an incredible event is, it's really exciting. We're really, really proud to be here.

CARLOS ORTIZ: Yeah, I mean pretty much what he said. We have this chance of representing the country and obviously in a country where golf is not huge having an Olympics now and having a chance to win a medal would be huge to keep the sport growing in our country. So and it's great to have me and Abe representing Mexico this week and it's something that I have had as a goal since the last Olympics and I'm just really happy to be here.

Q. Curious what your first impression is of the course and if there's maybe a course on TOUR that you would compare it to.

ABRAHAM ANCER: Well, Carlos hasn't played it yet, I played nine holes yesterday. I had no idea what to expect. The golf course is in tremendous shape. They told me that they haven't played, nobody has really played here in a long time, so it's just pristine. The greens are rolling perfect. Hopefully the rains stays away so we can play the course however the superintendent and the team wants us to play. It's got tree lines, it has a good mix. I feel like the greens are really smooth bent grass, the ball rolls perfect. Zoysia fairways, so the ball sits up nicely. But if you hit it in

Q. Of all the sports in the Olympics, do you think golf is the hardest one to win a medal and if so why?

CARLOS ORTIZ: I mean it's hard to compare sports within each other and what's harder or not, but I mean, I mean golf is hard to win any week. Obviously here it more pressure and everything I'm sure it's going to be tough to win and it's going to take a lot to beat the best players in the world. So I mean I think to win any kind of medal in any sport it's a hard thing and it's a huge accomplishment.

ABRAHAM ANCER: Yeah, I never really thought about it like that. Like Carlos said, it's tough to win in golf in general. I mean usually you're playing against 144 or 145 players, maybe even more sometimes, this time I guess it's only 60 of us, so if there's a bigger chance to win a tournament, I guess it's here, but it's still you're playing against the best guys in the world and we're all hungry for a medal. So it's something that's really special, it's not like we play like this every year, it's kind of, it feels kind of look a major to me but with a whole different vibe. I can't really compare it with other really sports. I haven't really thought about it like that.

Q. As a kid what was the one sport that really got your attention and since golf wasn't in the program when you were a kid, what would have been your Olympic dream?

CARLOS ORTIZ: For me it was swimming and track and field. I mean that's like, yeah, swimming, that's something I really enjoy watching and track and field is something that I think everybody loves watching too.

ABRAHAM ANCER: Yeah, I grew up watching football, I guess soccer, as a Mexican that's just something that you grow up watching for sure and it was always something really exciting at the Olympics and the World Cup for me, it's something that you, I mean you cry whenever your



team loses, but also I really enjoy watching diving for some reason. I remember when I was a little kid watching diving was something that I never really missed, it was pretty cool.

Q. Would winning a major winning a medal any of the three medals be a bigger deal back home in Mexico?

ABRAHAM ANCER: I think maybe a medal just because the Olympics is something so well known in any country and maybe golf is not something that people will know what maybe -- I mean they will know what the Masters is or the U.S. Open but they wouldn't really know what it's all about. But the Olympics, when you tell somebody you won a gold medal, they know exactly what you're talking about. So I think a gold medal would be huge just for the people that don't know much about golf really.

CARLOS ORTIZ: Yeah, same. Definitely a gold medal or any kind of medal for Mexico would be much bigger because you're representing your country. When you're playing a major you're just playing for yourself, I mean you're representing your country too but you're playing for yourself. Here your playing for Mexico, so it would be way bigger winning a medal and I think it would help grow the game tremendously because you know how we know in Mexico golf is not a top sport, so it definitely would help to make it bigger and keep it growing.

Q. How many times have you been to Japan? Is this your first time and also with there are a lot of restrictions in terms of the COVID in place, but what are you looking forward to in terms of the visit to Japan?

CARLOS ORTIZ: I love the culture. It's my fourth time. I love the food. I love it here. I mean, obviously it's a shame that with all the restrictions we cannot really get in the city, go to different places to eat and all that stuff, you, I mean that's just not, it's something that is not up to us, it's the world we're living on right now and it's just a shame.

ABRAHAM ANCER: For me it's the second time, I was here a couple years ago for the Zozo Championship and I had no idea what I was, what to expect and I had a great time. I didn't realize how big golf was in Japan. And I remember being here on a Tuesday practice round it was raining side way, it was cold, and there were rows and rows of people watching us just hit balls on the range and chipping and it was incredible to see how big it was and how excited the fans were to have us play out here. And I'm a big fan of the food. I love having some dinners out here in Tokyo. I got to do that two years ago. Unfortunately we can't really do that this year, but I'm getting the full experience of the village and all that. I find it

fascinating seeing all these athletes from around the world, it's really, really cool. Obviously we would like to do a lot more stuff and get to see the city a little bit more, but it's okay, we're still getting a great chance to compete for a medal and get the full experience of the village.

Q. I may be wrong on this but I feel like you were in the first group in Chapultepec the first year you played. Did you tee off first the first year you played in the Mexico Championship?

ABRAHAM ANCER: Sure. Absolutely.

Q. Hoshino has got the first tee shot here and I'm trying to see if you can make any comparisons and secondly for either of you, do you get a sense that Hideki, especially given his Masters win, might be under a lot more pressure or tension or whatever trying to do it because it's in Japan?

ABRAHAM ANCER: Yeah, well I remember playing the WGC in Mexico when I was playing with, that was the first time I played with Tiger and I was extremely nervous. I don't think we were the first tee time or anything like that, but obviously it's a huge event and playing with my alongside my like idol growing up I was extremely nervous and but it was something that I really cherish and to now it has helped me a lot dealing with nerves or when I'm in a stressful situation. So I look back and I remember how I felt and what I did right and what I did wrong. It was just really cool. Something that I will always remember.

And Hideki being from here just winning the Masters, he may be the only one that has played this course before, I have no idea. But it's going to be really cool to play an Olympics in your home country in front of -- I wish we had some people watching us -- but still it will be really, really cool.

Q. You're here as a team but playing individually. Representing your country for an Olympics would maybe you enjoy a different format or best ball or team competition or is it right to keep the Olympic golf in the 72-hole individual play.

CARLOS ORTIZ: I think they could definitely do something like more where teams were involved even if we were playing individual and team, there's two guys from a lot of countries, so I think being the Olympics is something special and they should definitely do something special. I think the format can definitely be better and I think that would engage the country to be more involved and make it more about the country, not individual.

ABRAHAM ANCER: Yeah, I completely agree with that. I



feel like it's just, it would be so cool to feel like you can still play individually, which golf you can do that and also make it a team event. It would be so much cooler, I feel like. Obviously you have to figure out how to qualify maybe just have two guys from each country, even though one of your guys is not in the top 300 but still have a chance to have two guys on your team and just battle it out individually and as a team would be really exciting.

Q. Abe, you mentioned you're staying in the village, are you going to spend the whole week there and what's been kind of the coolest experience from there?

ABRAHAM ANCER: Yeah, well we're originally going to stay in a hotel, but the hotel was still about an hour away or so and dealing with like transportation and maybe can't really go out and eat anywhere, so we were like, man, this is the first time that I've ever been to a village and just to have everything there, have a state-of-the-art gym, right next to where you're staying, a great facility to eat and just get the full experience of it. It's been so cool just getting to talk to some of these athletes from around the world that are just so good at what they do that you don't really have the chance to do that ever. So it's been really cool. I've seen some guys that I watch played soccer in my home country that are from all over the world and just chatting with them it's been pretty cool. The only thing that it's really, it can be a little bit crazy is just the transportation, it takes about an hour and a half from the village to get here. So on Thursday whenever we have a tee time at 8:15 in the morning, I mean we got to wake up extremely early and just plan ahead. I normally like to get to my tee time two hours before to eat and work out or whatever and hit some balls. So that's the only down side of it, but I think it's the right move. I mean I just want to get the full experience.

Q. Would you describe the experience of staying at the Olympic village and what is it like in terms of the room, just experience of it, if you could go into its detail, that would be great.

CARLOS ORTIZ: I mean it's an experience. You walk in and you go through like a checkpoint. After that it's like you walk into a different world. It's a lot of people walking everywhere, I mean athletes everywhere, there is I don't know 20 buildings, 15 floors in each building. You can't believe the amount of people that are there. You walk into the I guess designing area and/or the food court and it's two floors and I mean there is -- I mean you can feed maybe 20,000 people at the same time or 50,000, I don't know how many people, I mean it's huge. The gym is the same thing. It's something incredible. Something I never really seen. When you go up to the room it's pretty cool seeing all the different flags in the buildings hanging out. You walk into the building and you see a lot of people from

your same country and everybody says hi, they're really friendly and in the rooms there's like, they're like apartments and there's like four bedrooms and two bathrooms and like for example I'm sharing with some boxers from Mexico, it's pretty cool you get to hang out with different athletes. I think Abe is hanging out with --

ABRAHAM ANCER: The equestrian team.

CARLOS ORTIZ: So it's something we don't really get to do and it's pretty cool to hang out with different people from different sports and be able to have that experience, it's unique.

ABRAHAM ANCER: For me it's just really cool to spend some times with maybe other athletes from my country that I would never maybe never meet. So just to get to know them and get to know about their discipline is really cool. I'm staying with the equestrian team and we actually had a lot of friends in common that I would have never guessed. So that's been really cool. And just how much pride there is in every country to show their colors, just walking around I mean at the gym, at the dinner, did he designing. It's just a city, it's a mini city within Tokyo that it's got everything we need. I mean there's a barber shop, there's a for girls to do their nails, I mean there's whatever you want, whatever you think of they have it. So it's really, really cool and convenient, like I said. I wish the golf course was right next to it, that would be amazing.

Q. With Gabby Lopez carrying the flag from Mexico, but also you touched on it earlier where golf is established in other countries it's not as established in Mexico. So having it in the Olympic games how will that help grow the game in Mexico and how important is it to see Gabby Lopez at the front of opening ceremonies carrying the flag?

CARLOS ORTIZ: That's huge. They're finally acknowledging that golf is an important sport. I think they realize that there is like big chance that there's two women that can win a medal and two men and that was huge. That was a huge step in the right direction and that was pretty cool watching Gabby carry that flag in the opening ceremony.

ABRAHAM ANCER: Yeah, just to see how emotional she was. She was extremely, extremely proud and just happy. There's a lot of work that she and us have really done throughout our lives to be in this position, so to put our country in a position to potentially win a medal have a chance to win a medal is something that we take a lot of pride and definitely helps to grow the game in Mexico. I feel like since Lorena Ochoa showed us kind of what is possible for a Mexican to achieve in the game of golf, I

think the game has grown so much and right now it's me and Carlos on the PGA TOUR and the Olympics but hopefully in the years to come we're going to be maybe four, five, six, seven and going forward it will be hopefully a lot more on the PGA TOUR and LPGA Tour as well.

Q. Curious if you could elaborate on how golf and equestrian can have kind of the same contacts and friends.

ABRAHAM ANCER: Well, one of the guys that is staying there is a little bit older than me but he has some ranches kind of close to where I grew up where he obviously has horses and hunting and a little bit of stuff and I know some of the guys that have visited his ranch and some of the -- he's from Mexico City, but some of his friends love golf and I know some of their friends there. So I was, I thought that was pretty cool because hi no idea who I was going to stay with or who were the guys. So we just have friends in common.

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