

Men's Olympic Golf Competition

Saturday, 3 August 2024

Paris, France

Le Golf National

Nicolai Hojgaard

Quick Quotes

Q. Nicolai, you matched the course record there after the birdies on 16, 17; that something that's crossing your mind stood on the 18th tee?

NICOLAI HØJGAARD: No, not at all. The only thing I was focusing on standing on 18th tee was I want to make a good swing. I've struggled a little bit on the finishing holes the last two days.

So for me today, it was a huge win for me to see myself hit fairways and hit two good iron shots into the last two and then when I walked to the 18th green, foxy said to me it might be for the course record. I had it in mind when I hit the putt and thought I hit the putt correctly. Just stifled me in the end but obviously pleased with the finish.

Q. Rasmus also has a course record here as well. Can I take you back; how many chats have you had?

NICOLAI HØJGAARD: We haven't really talked much about it. When we chat it could be about everything. We haven't really talked about Olympics or the way he played in '22. I was there in '22 when he was closing to winning here. So I saw it all, how he handled things and how the course was playing. It's playing pretty similar.

Cool to see that I convinced myself to play a really good round today and see myself hit good shots coming in after a couple of tough days.

Q. What clicked for you today? What was the difference from the first to days, do you feel?

NICOLAI HØJGAARD: I think I went out there just like there's something to lose, we are so far behind. We are going out, playing aggressive, trying to hit some good shots. I thought I gave myself good chances on the first three or four holes and was 1-under. So I felt like I was probably chasing a little bit.

Made a few birdies to start with. That makes the next few



PARIS 2024



holes easier and the way you can relax a little bit into the round. I was playing with more quality today, hitting the fairways and the greens, and that's the difference on this golf course, hitting fairways and giving yourself shots into the greens. I was in control today and it was pretty nice.

Q. Did you feel the pressure or the atmosphere was similar to anything that you had experienced?

NICOLAI HØJGAARD: Yeah, every time you get up there and you're in the week, it doesn't matter which tournament it is. You can always feel the nerves but that's what we practise and play for.

So it was pretty cool to see and good to convince myself again that I can do it down the stretch in the third round. But now it's a completely different thing tomorrow. We are going to go out, there's medal the on the line. Going to go out and try to do the same thing and stay patient. It's always slightly tough on a Sunday. We are in a perfect position after today's round.

Q. Does it feel similar to, say, the Masters or something else?

NICOLAI HØJGAARD: Yeah, a hums it doesn't matter which tournament it is. You're going to feel the nerves. It's going to be fun. That's part of it and if you don't like it, it's going to be a tough career and we absolutely love playing when it matters the most. Win or lose, it's what we all practise for.

Q. We don't know what the lead is going to be but whatever -- performing like that, you're in the mix, if you keep performing like that, aren't you?

NICOLAI HØJGAARD: I think so. I expect to be probably four or five behind when we finish today but I mean, we did cut the lead down to half of what it was yesterday. That's a mini-win. We are in with a chance tomorrow. If we get off to a good start, like today, we are in a good position.

Q. A few key moments today, you holed a chip on the fourth, on 16; that iron shot on 14. Was there one particular moment you thought, this is my day?

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NICOLAI HØJGAARD: The up-and-down on 9 was probably the game-changer a little bit. It's a tough one. You can easily make six out of that position. It's a tough pin, tough green.

After I rolled that one in, I felt like we have the whole back nine now. I played well on the back nine the first few holes. When that one went in, I felt I was in a really good position. I said to myself yesterday, going to be 5-under through ten and I had the whole back nine to produce good stuff. I was in that position today and hopefully we can get somewhere around that tomorrow as well to have a chance.

Q. There were lots of Danish fans, I'm sure you noticed, and some of them for a long time were deeply confused or go back to Thorbjørn. How aware were you of this situation with both of you?

NICOLAI HØJGAARD: I didn't look much at leaderboards. When I got to the back nine, threes a few more. I saw Thor hit a good shot into 1 and made birdie. Obviously he got off to a good start. I saw him in the fairway on 3 and that's when I thought Thor is playing pretty well. I'm happy for him as well and we are both in the mix tomorrow.

Q. In general, the team dynamic, Thomas Björn is part of the team. How beneficial is his experience and knowledge of the course in particular?

NICOLAI HØJGAARD: It's huge. We are having a great time. It's important to have a good time, as well. But he's a guy who has been a big part of my golf career and a big part of Thorbjørn's, as well.

So to have him here, and he's obviously a huge character to have around. He was very successful in 2018. Yeah, it's good to have him around. He brings some good stuff to the table and yeah, it's just pretty cool to play a good round in front of.

Q. Does he have an official title or just "Thomas Björn"?

NICOLAI HØJGAARD: He's our team captain. He's our team captain this week.

Q. The last four holes, sounds like everything will happen the last four holes tomorrow, too. How difficult is it whether you're going well or holding it together, the last four holes, how hard are they and how much do they play in your head?

NICOLAI HØJGAARD: It's a tough stretch of golf. We've

seen a lot of birdies on those holes this week. I felt like more than usual. But we haven't had much wind, so even the tucked pins and soft greens, you can still go at them. But those four holes can be three or power birdies but can also be a few double-bogeys. That's how the course is playing.

So the start and finish are very tricky. Just trying to stay patient tomorrow. Keep the ball in play and on the greens. Even 30-footers have a chance. I think that's the way to go about it. Play aggressive when you can. Play disciplined when you have to and then hopefully it all ends up perfect tomorrow.

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