

PGA Championship

Saturday, May 18, 2024

Louisville, Kentucky, USA

Valhalla Golf Club

Viktor Hovland

Quick Quotes

THE MODERATOR: Viktor Hovland is with us at the 106th PGA Championship.

Q. Viktor, second year in a row you'll go into tomorrow with a great chance to win. What can you pull out of last year that you can apply tomorrow?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I think just kind of staying patient. Last year felt like I did a really good job of obviously chasing down Brooks, but I didn't let that change my strategy throughout the round.

Some of the pins that I probably last year I would have gone for, I kind of played smarter, even though early on Brooks had a little bit of a lead last year. Just kind of kept tracking along, not making too many mistakes, and when I made a couple putts, I kind of inched myself closer and closer and closer.

I think this year was a little different scenario because there's so many guys on the leaderboard there. So you kind of have to get something going early or you have to make some birdies out there to shoot a low one and separate yourself if the conditions are going to be closer to today for tomorrow.

Yeah, it will probably be a little different, but you've still got to pick the right game plan and execute.

Q. Will you be a little bit more aggressive tomorrow with how soft the greens are, knowing that it's probably going to take something low to get the W?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I don't know about more aggressive, but there are certain pins that are go pins and certain ones that are not. This golf course has a combination of some easy holes that you can be very aggressive on, and then the harder holes when they tuck the pins, you've just got to try to get your car and get out of there.

But obviously the winner of this tournament is going to make a couple of birdies on those holes, as well, but that's probably not going to come from stuffing a 5-iron in there.



It's going to come from rolling in a 25-footer or something like that.

We're still going to be patient and play smart, and hopefully we get a few putts going in early and kind of ride that momentum.

Q. You're obviously one of the best golfers in the world, but are you surprised at all with how well this week has gone to this point?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: I'm surprised in the sense that -- just how far away I felt last week. But I'm not surprised in the way that I'm here because, like, I never doubted my abilities. It was just kind of my machinery was not working very well.

But as soon as I get the machine kind of somewhere on track, I can play. Like there's nothing wrong with me mentally or -- like I never doubted I couldn't play golf anymore. It's just like the technique was not good enough to compete.

But now we're moving in the right direction. So I already saw it was better a few days ago right before I was playing the tournament. I thought, we can maybe do some damage this week.

But this has exceeded all expectations. That's for sure.

Q. Is that particularly satisfying feeling knowing that it can stand up out here that quickly?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah. I mean, that's pretty cool.

When I went to see Joe earlier in the week, we had dinner, and I said, you don't look very concerned, and he had kind of pinpointed a feel that as soon as I kind of kept working on that, it just got better immediately. And I thought this was potentially going to be a little bit of a project and maybe take six, eight weeks before I would see kind of immediate improvement.

Yeah, that was kind of best-case scenario right there.



Q. How important is it to be right in the mix, right in the thick of things going into the final round of a major? And I'm wondering what with the potential of a fifth career major mean to you, your family and friends back home, as well?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, it's just exciting. Obviously these are -- this is one of the big four that we try to win. It's cool history, cool trophy. Everything about it is super special. It's a great field. You just want to be a part of having a name on that trophy.

My life is going to be pretty good if I don't win tomorrow, and I'm going to have a few more chances after this, as well. All I'm going to do is just show up, do the best I can, and we'll see how it goes.

Q. Earlier in the week Justin Thomas talked about how this course in particular produced bunched leaderboards. I wonder from your standpoint how exciting is that for a player, and if at all you change how you approach the final round knowing there are eight players within two strokes of the lead right now?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I think just the greens being soft and having Zoysia around the greens, you can -- like it's hard to separate yourself. You're going to have to make a bunch of birdies and roll a bunch of putts in. Because if you miss in certain spots, guys seem to be able to spin it out of the bunker and spin it out of the fairway, so you can kind of get away with some bad shots.

But if you catch fire, you can shoot a low score, which a couple of guys have done, but it's hard to do that every single day, so that's why I think you see the bunched scores.

Yeah, when there's that many guys close to the leaderboard, you have to just be in the frame of mind that, okay, I'm going to have to roll some putts in and be not aggressive in terms of course management.

You have to kind of err on the aggressive side, but more aggressive in the mindset and committing to the shots of not being scared, not trying to bail out, and just kind of committing to the plan, and yeah, just not back out.

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