

John Deere Classic

Wednesday, July 2, 2025

TPC Deere Run

Silvis, Illinois, USA

Jackson Koivun

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right, good morning. We would like to welcome Jackson Koivun to the interview room here at the 2025 John Deere Classic. Jackson, No. 1 ranked amateur making your tournament debut this week. Talk a little bit about how you're feeling and expectations you have for yourself.

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, no, it's great to be here. Great to be in the Quad Cities. Feeling good going into this event. Golf course is great. They do a stellar job out here.

Not trying to have too many expectations. Just trying to go out there and have fun and play well.

Q. We were talking a little bit about this before. Your dad grew up here in Moline. What's it like being back in the Quad Cities?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, a sense of familiarity here. We got a little bit of family still left in these areas, so it's nice to be able to come back. Obviously my dad grew up here, so he's got a lot of friends from high school days here, so hopefully I'll get a little nice crowd around here.

Q. Are you familiar with the history of amateurs and sponsor's exemptions here at John Deere? Jordan Spieth is a poster child for that, for turning that into something really great. He was a sponsor's exemption in 2012; came back and won in 2013. Obviously Luke had a great run last year. How does that enter your thinking as you take the first tee?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, obviously it's really cool to have a bunch of sponsor's exemptions and amateurs play well here. It just shows at the doable. Just got to keep that in the back of my mind and trust my game and myself.

Q. You have your card, PGA TOUR accelerated, whenever you want to say I'm pro. What are your plans? What is your thinking? Finish school or go back next year obviously?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, definitely going back next year



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but not really sure what I'm going to do from there. Just excited to go back for junior year for Auburn, and see how senior year goes, if I want to stay or I want to go.

Q. Luke was extremely -- he said the junior game and college game when he came in here last year really left him feeling very prepared for being out here and competing. Do you feel like the sky is the limit?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, for sure. I think college golf is in such a good spot where it's just furthering and preparing guys to come out here and compete on a week-to-week basis. That's something I'm very happy to be a part of and definitely a part of my reason to stay for another year.

Q. The three youngsters, sponsor exemptions, top amateurs, Walker Cuppers, what is your guys' relationship? Do you hang out together? Are you friends? Are you competitors? Friendly competitors? What's the relationship with you three?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, we're all really good friends. That's definitely something that's cool. We definitely compete against each other a lot, but it's definitely friendly competition.

Me and La Sasso, we live about 20 minutes from each other in North Carolina so we play a lot of golf together. Ben is an awesome dude. We've played a lot of tournaments together and going back even into junior golf.

So there is definitely a sense of camaraderie there and we're all really looking forward to the Walker Cup and this week of course.

Q. These events when you get them, how do they or do they even help prepare you for a competition such as Walker Cup?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, for sure. You just got to keep -- I like to go into these events with an open mind, trying to take in as much knowledge as I can and how I can get better.

If I can just keep getting one percent better every day, learn something new out here from one of the professionals, it's definitely just going to help me get better and help me compete at places like Walker Cup.



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Q. You barely missed cut at the U.S. Open. Can you talk about what you learned from Oakmont?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, that golf course was pretty hard. No, it was really good event. Really cool. Just a lot to learn there.

Obviously stings a little bit to miss the cut by one, but it just shows there is still work to be done, little things here and there I can do better. Maybe if I can do the little things better, pre-tournament routine, that type of stuff, I can maybe shave half a shot off a round and make that cut.

Q. You have one of the more accomplished college careers already: Haskins Award winner, Nicklaus Award, SEC Player of the Year. Talk about like the biggest difference that you notice between being out here on the TOUR with the world's best versus playing college golf?

JACKSON KOIVUN: They just prepare so well, in my opinion. Obviously everyone out here hits it so good. Everyone out here has the capability to shoot 62. They prepare well. They're resting, recovering, all that stuff. That's something I need to get a little better at.

They're a diligent with their work on and off the golf course, and that's admirable and something I can definitely learn from.

Q. What's your schedule look like now? Have some more sponsor's exemptions coming up this summer?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, so I'm playing the ISCO Championship next week, which is another great event. Just happy to be able to play these back to back. Just trying to learn a little more what it feels like to play back-to-back weeks out here.

After that I'm currently in the Western Amateur and the U.S. Amateur, so still got some amateur golf to play, which is awesome. Those events are incredible and really looking forward to those.

Q. Speaking of preparation, have you had a recognizance trip to Cypress Point yet? If so, what are your impressions? If not, what are your expectations?

JACKSON KOIVUN: I have not made a trip yet. We actually played there last year in a tournament though, so it's an unbelievable golf course. 15, 16, 17 are probably three of the best holes in golf. Just such a cool spot.

I think we're going out there beginning of August or right

before to play a couple rounds, so really looking forward to that.

Q. You talked about coming out here and learning some things. Is there anybody, any TOUR guys, anybody out here who has taken you under their wing and helped you with any advice, any tips?

JACKSON KOIVUN: I'm fortunate enough to have met a lot of really, really good people out here at this point. They are all super kind and welcoming and helpful.

When I'm back home Auburn I play a little bit of golf with Russell Henley. He's helped a good bit here and there. He's been playing some unbelievable golf, so he's definitely someone I can learn from.

Just guys I meet out here, play practice rounds with are super nice and helpful. Little things I can pick up here and there are great.

Q. TOUR seems to be getting younger and younger. Aldrich wins last week, all of the 20 somethings who are winning or TOUR now. Are you guys conspiring to take over here in the next five years or what's going on?

JACKSON KOIVUN: (Smiling.) No, it's definitely cool to see all the young guys coming out. It shows we can do it. It shows just how golf has kind of changed in the past few years. I mean, I look at junior golfers and I'm like, wow, these kids are really good. (Laughter.) Even though I was a junior golfer three years ago.

It's crazy the leap they've made. I don't know if that's what they're putting in the water or something, but it's crazy.

Q. What do you think of the course so far, and in terms of being successful out here how confident are you that your game can fit a course like this?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, the golf course is great. When you come to the John Deere they definitely pride themselves in the grass, and it definitely shows off. Everything is in perfect condition.

I don't think we're going to get any rain, maybe a little bit on the weekend, so I think the course will be playing really, really good. Looking forward to that. I feel like my game suits this golf course pretty well. I mean, years past you just need to make a lot of birdies out here to play well, so if you can get that putter hot I'll feel pretty good about myself.

Q. How much family do you think will come out here and watch you play?

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JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, I have no clue. I've been told a couple people are coming out. I am excited to see what the first tee looks like tomorrow.

Q. Growing up as a kid, how much time did you spend in this area?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Didn't spend too much time. I think two trips out here before now. My dad definitely has a lot of ties out here.

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