

John Deere Classic

Wednesday, July 2, 2025

TPC Deere Run

Silvis, Illinois, USA

Max Homa

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right, we are joined with Max Homa here at John Deere Classic. Max, making your third start and first since 2017. What's it like to be back?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, it's nice. I've always really liked this golf course so feels weird that it's been this long, but happy to be back. Course is in amazing shape. Obviously great people here.

So yeah, probably been too long but glad to be here. Looking forward to the week.

Q. Just got done with your pro-am. What have you seen, changes of the course, and what have you liked and remembered, brought up memories from years past?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, the greens are faster and firmer than I remember. Usually I know this place is quite a birdie fest. I will say that with the pace of the greens and with just a little bit of bounce to them, might play a little bit different.

But for the most part, looks pretty similar. Just in very, very good shape. I don't remember it being in this good of shape, so cool to come to a really good layout and see that it's, you know, in that kind of -- where the fairways will roll a little bit, everything is lush but there are some cool little low areas to pitch around.

Like I said, when the greens are like this, really good shape and really fast, it adds a nice wrinkle to a somewhat benign tee-to-green course. I think you got to keep the ball below the hole out here for sure this week.

Q. Mentioned the birdies are out there this week. Is that typically weeks you like, weeks where scoring can go low and opportunities are out there?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, typically I haven't been super successful on courses that the winning score is too low, like in the 20s. So definitely kind of a different challenge for me. I've always played better when the winning score was somewhere between 8- and 15-under.



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But I still like playing. Just the mindset is a little bit different.

Q. You sound excited though. Do you feel like you're in a good place heading into this week with where your game is?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, my game isn't particularly sharp. Obviously haven't played well this year or great lately either. You know, pieces of my game feel awesome. Just in general, I haven't played sharp enough, especially a week like last week where beating up the par-5s and there is just a lot of birdies to be had.

Hit a lot of greens; just didn't get a lot close. Ball hasn't really been going in from 20 or so feet, so it's been kind of a grind. You never know. Everybody out here is so good, you can get hot any four days. Hopefully this one is those four days.

Q. I asked Rickie this yesterday. You've developed as one of the fan favorites on TOUR. You'll have a nice following. Kids looking for autographs today. Does that help you knowing people out there supporting you?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, just one of those things I've been super lucky with, especially with the kids. Just puts things in perspective. I haven't had a very fun year and a half, but when you get a bunch of kids coming up excited to get your name on their hat, at least it makes you feel good inside. Even if you made a bogey, it's definitely something that kind of gives a nice reality check.

So like I said, I've just been super lucky with the support I've had for a while now. It's fun to come to a place I haven't been for a while and get to meet a lot of those people and feel the love and support here.

Q. Everybody out here struggles at some point, other than maybe Tiger Woods and Scottie Scheffler. Do you look at the fickleness of the game as you go through this stretch? Does it help you kind of keep perspective and realize it can come as quick as it went?

MAX HOMA: I guess it's probably an important thing to



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keep in the back of your mind, but I don't think anybody out here is -- you're not just sitting here saying, oh, it'll eventually click. You probably have some kind of like panic meter of trying to get better.

I guess the balance is trying to recognize progress even if it's not as fast as you would want it to be. So kind of trying to look at little wins here and there, whether it's a good driving week, good driving day, good round, something like that, and looking at that as progress, instead of being so anal that you get to get back to winning and top 10ing every week that you used to.

It's a tough balance. I don't think anybody out here is struggling and thinking it's a fickle game; I'll have it soon. It seems to go a lot faster than it comes back.

Q. Have you talked to Mike Kim about that period of time where he just couldn't make a cut and now all of a sudden he's showing up on leaderboards frequently and seems to have it back in order?

MAX HOMA: No, I have not.

Q. Have you talked to anybody? Do you guys chat about the states of your game and how it comes -- you can put it back together?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, you know, played nine holes with Jason Day yesterday. We talked about a lot of things. He's always a breath of fresh air out here. He's a wealth of knowledge. Justin Thomas has been like the greatest friend you could ever ask for through all of this. Collin Morikawa, too. Just talks to me all the time. On his off weeks he'll check in on me, how it's going. He did it all last week.

So I have the utmost respect for him. I owe him a ton just giving his time and the fact that he really cares. So that has been really helpful.

Obviously I'm lucky I've got an amazing wife, but it is nice to hear it from people who kind of have gone through -- not gone through it, but just that play the game. It's hard to explain at times why something feeling bad is so disruptive.

Obviously you get to listen to a two-time major champion, he's won a ton of golf tournaments out here. It's very fortunate to have somebody like that to lean on.

Q. With all the birdie opportunities on a course like this, how does that help you find your game?

MAX HOMA: I don't know. I've actually played better on the hard ones this year. I think because everybody is

struggling, and my biggest struggle this season has been the long clubs. I've still ironed it pretty well, especially the last I would say two, three months. I would say it's been back to what I'm used to.

So when it's really hard and a lot of people aren't making birdies, I can use the rest of my golf game to not get blown out I guess. Just lose by a lot; not a runaway.

So when it's a course like this it's a bit tricky. I need to find a way to manage off the tee and the long stuff and be a little more passive.

You know, there is like a hole like No. 10 today. We potentially could have got there. It is a really small green, but just looking at that it's going to be a three-shot hole. Let's play to our strengths. The wedge game has been really good.

I probably have to almost tone it back to then see -- to use what I've been good at, and, yeah, hopefully this sparks something.

The fairways aren't really tiny here. There are a couple tricky one, but for the most part I think you can probably scrape it around and use the iron game. Yeah, maybe it can spark a little bit of something.

It's not something I really focus on a week like this. I am just trying to get the ball in the hole. If it looks ugly, if it feels ugly, but I make a lot of birdies, I'll be good with that and I'll have to go back to work the next week. The goal is just to score this week for sure.

Q. Max, how do you deal with a week like this? You say you come in not playing your best golf, but you come in here as one of the marquee names in the field. Does that dichotomy put extra pressure on you? Does it affect you at all? Do you worry about being one of the marquee names, one of the drawing cards in this field?

MAX HOMA: I wouldn't say I worry about it. It has been a bummer to come to some cool places where you feel a lot of support and not be there for four days. I would be lying if said it doesn't affect you a little bit.

I'm not out there thinking I'm a marquee guy. You want to play well when you're playing in front of a lot of people. You would like to put on a great show. We are entertainers by trade, so you want to go entertain. So it would be nice to do that and excel in front of people that come out and buy a ticket to watch you hit a golf ball around. It would be nice if I could do that for them.



But, yeah, not walking around there thinking all these people are here for me. It's not exactly like on the front of my -- front portion of my brain.

Q. Speaking of some of the times you played well this year, you shot 64 on Friday at Quail Hollow; you were 12th at the Masters. When you look at those weeks and days, how does the breakdown work of analyzing that and knowing what you did well and how do you bring that into other weeks?

MAX HOMA: Yeah, it's tricky. Augusta I played horrendous but that golf course in some odd way, if you know it really well, which I feel like I kind of got last year when I played well, I was very disciplined in the leaves and using the rest of my golf game to keep myself in it.

Hit it very poorly that week off the tee. Thought my way around the place really well.

Quail Hollow, having one great day was awesome, but I drove it well. I don't know what I take from that exactly. What I will say is I tend to come to places like this where the scores are really low and you almost get lazy in your course management.

I think the one shining light of like the way my game is coming to a place like this is hopefully I'll put a little bit more thought into leaves and you don't need to be on every green in regulation, avoid bogeys, sprinkle in birdies, and just kind of watch that go.

I think sometimes we play -- like last week for me I played knowing the scores were low, and any time you miss a par-5 fairway, you're bummed out.

So I need to do a better job of that. That's what I would take from Augusta. As poorly as I played and decently as I scored, it's a unique golf course, much different than this. There is something to be learned from that.

Q. Do you ever just walk away from the game just to kind of get your mind right? I know when you're younger and trying to establish yourself it's probably a hard thing to do. Now that you're a little bit older, got a balance, a structure, do you find more value in just getting away? And what led to the question was hearing you talk about Justin and Jason and how much they have done for you and helped you. A lot of people when they want to get away from work they go play golf. Do you have stuff you enjoy doing away from the game that helps you keep a balance?

MAX HOMA: Well, obviously spending time with my feel. That always helps. It's hard to really get away from the

game in the middle of the season. We don't have loads of time off. I thought about skipping a bunch of events in the beginning of the summer, but I just don't think I have that in me.

It's hard to get away from it. It's on your mind. Not gonna lie, I'm looking forward to whenever I'm done this year and just trying to get away from it. Someone asked me the other day the difference between this and when I played poorly in 2017. One is the golf is a lot closer than it was then. The lack of anonymity is a bit hard. Everywhere I go someone is talking to me about golf.

That's obviously a great thing. Like I said, I am really lucky. It's just hard to go do much. Used to really like going to sports bars and watching games with my friends and that's just not exactly a safe haven anymore.

It's hard. I don't think that's a good thing. I would like to. I've been looking up new hobbies, so hopefully when I get home next week I'll get into something.

Comes with the territory. Doesn't deter from the progression of golf. It just makes it a bit harder to feel refreshed has been I think the hardest part of this year. I haven't done a good job of it myself.

Going to try to make some things up at home and have some hobbies and do things that are not golf that bring me joy. Golf, you're just so tied into results. Once you go down that path it's hard to stop, so it's not like tons of fun. I want to find something that's fun that I feel like I can get better at.

Q. Like what?

MAX HOMA: I don't know. I was thinking about getting into cooking. When you have a two and a half year old, make a lot more meals than I was for myself. Like to get better at that. Treat my wife to not my typical home cooked meal. Something a little bit better. I think I might get into that.

Thought about getting into fishing. That seems peaceful and no one can bother me out there.

So, yeah, I don't know. Might workshop it. I got some ideas. Give a couple things a go and see how it goes out.

Q. What is your typical home cooked meal?

MAX HOMA: I can grill a little bit. I can make a decent sauce for pasta. But I'm not super great at it. Fortunately my son eats chicken tenders so he probably thinks I'm a great cook.

Q. Max, you talk about the anonymity, getting away from everything. Did that factor into you stepping away from social media where you had connected with so many fans over the years?

MAX HOMA: Oh, no. The reason for that was just the vitriol you read online. It has become a safe haven for people who are angry themselves. It is quite absurd what people -- how comfortable people feel writing awful things.

I stepped away a lot also from Instagram, but I feel like that's been a bit less crazy; although still not great, so I take my breaks from that.

Yeah, I just -- if you wouldn't chose to sit around a table with somebody being that mean, you would always get up if you were there and someone was being rude to you. You would ask them to leave or you would leave.

Twitter or X is an awful, awful place. It took me a while to catch onto how impactful that can be and how much of a waste of energy. I miss the connection with the fans, but nothing comes without, I mean, just so much hate and anger. There is a lot of love in there, too but unfortunately it really does get overwhelmed with the -- you ca have one really bad one.

I don't know if it's the gambling world or whatnot. I'm happy they can do it but it seems fun as hell in golf, but you get people -- people say some bad, bad things. People tell you you should die on the internet.

Has nothing to do with not contacting people. I would love to connect with people, but I'd love to do it in person. I have yet to meet somebody in person that has anything even remotely mean. Yeah, it's a safe haven for assholes, for lack of a better term. Sorry PGA TOUR.

Q. Have you sensed a difference in yourself since you backed off?

MAX HOMA: Here and there you just realize how much you don't need it. You know, I got a lot of my sports info and at times I miss that, but I find out eventually. Like when Luka got traded to the Lakers I had no idea, but I got 12 text messages within the first five minutes.

That's the thing. When you first step away from it you feel like you're missing something, but you start to realize that you're missing absolutely nothing. I think that was the -- I wish I would've done it earlier. Like I said a big part of the getting all the support from people has been through the social media and connecting with people. I've met some awesome people through the internet, but just think it's

become more of a -- far more negative than positive.

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