

John Deere Classic

Wednesday, July 1, 2026

TPC Deere Run

Silvis, Illinois, USA

Jackson Koivun

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right, we would like to welcome Jackson Koivun at the interview room at the John Deere Classic. Jackson, you're making your professional debut this week. Just talk about your excitement being here and expectations you have for yourself.

JACKSON KOIVUN: Being in Moline again is great. It was one of my favorite tournaments last year and happy to be back in the Quad Cities.

Support from the fans is really, really strong and golf course is in such great shape, so happy to be back.

THE MODERATOR: In your last start you earned co-low amateur honors at the U.S. Open. How do you feel your game is trending heading into this week?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Game feels great. Shinnecock was definitely an experience, and just happy to walk away as a co-low medalist with Ryder. It was just a great test for the future and just prepping myself for what is to come.

THE MODERATOR: And would love to hear some comments about just how great the PGA TOUR U program has been for you, how great it is to finish college and be able to transition straight into the professional golf as a member.

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, PGA TOUR U is something I'm forever grateful for, just giving me an opportunity to play out here on the PGA TOUR. And it's just given so many guys of my class and future and past classes opportunities to come out here and compete and actually have a pathway to the PGA TOUR.

THE MODERATOR: Open up to questions.

Q. I know last year you had debated coming out as pro or going back to Auburn, which you went back and won the national championship. As you prepared for the first tournament as a professional, mindset, anything change, anything different as now money, other things are on the line for you?



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JACKSON KOIVUN: Not really. Just trying to come out here and have fun. I'm comfortable and happy where I'm at in my golf game and what I've done so far, and just trying to keep the ball rolling.

Q. Does it feel different this year than last year playing as an amateur?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Honestly I'm a little more comfortable just being here before. And, you know, there is obviously the whole professional aspect of it, but like I said, I'm just happy to be here and just excited to go play some golf.

Q. What was the biggest takeaway from your experience here last year? What did you learn during this event last year?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Got to make a lot of birdies. (Laughter.) No, the golf course is great. It definitely suits my golf game.

And just coming back for other year, you know, just build off some experiences from last year, how I can just gradually keep playing this course better and better and hopefully try and get in contention on Sunday.

Q. Are you expecting it to be about the same atmosphere considering your local connections this year as you had last year, or do you think that has kind of worn off a little bit?

JACKSON KOIVUN: I'm not sure. I'm just excited to see the crowds. I got a pretty good pairing this first two days, so don't really know what to expect. I'm sure it'll be fun.

Q. Just curious, a lot of people -- you know, in college you have a team, you have coaches, you have a lot of people around you. Some players can talk about how the PGA TOUR can get lonely. How do you plan to handle that and what's your mindset in that regard?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, there is definitely some truth to that. College is so much fun and you have six to eight really, really close friends you're playing and competing with every day.

Out here it's -- you're definitely by yourself. You have your

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select friends, but you're still playing against each other and playing for a job.

Definitely felt that a little bit last summer, but I think I'll feel a little bit more now; just mentally getting ready to accept that this is your life now and just trying to enjoy it every step of the way.

Q. I know you only played here once, but have you got out on the front nine this week?

JACKSON KOIVUN: I have, yes.

Q. What did you think of No. 4?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Good hole. Definitely plays a lot more difficult. It's definitely different off the tee and creates the second shot, which is a lot longer and you kind of have to be a little thoughtful about where your miss is, especially off the tee. For a guy like me, I can't carry that far right bunker; not sure a ton of people can.

Then you can definitely run into that left bunker, so definitely having a good plan off that tee and try and keep the ball in the fairway all four days to attack that green.

Q. Can you tell us a little bit how the Malbon sponsorship came to be.

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, I just always kind of liked their stuff. They've just been so great to me so far and they definitely have a very wide variety of products they offer.

We're just trying to find where I fit in there and keeping pretty calm right now, but, you know, they have just been so great.

Q. You had some ties you mentioned to the area with your dad being a University of Iowa alum. Talk about that and how that helped ease the transition from amateur to professional this week.

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, my ties to Moline are definitely deep. My dad grew up in this area, and we have a lot of the family, friends, and the Moline people are just so nice and caring.

Yeah, I'm just excited for the week.

Q. What finally brought your decision over the top to turn professional now? You could have waited another year, played more in college, but you made the move. What's the final determination on why?

JACKSON KOIVUN: At the end of the day my dream

growing up was to play on the PGA TOUR. I had that opportunity after my sophomore year and wasn't quite ready.

After last summer it was kind of like it was just time. It was just a feeling. Just had the opportunity and took it, because like I said it's been my dream my entire life. Now I can go do it.

Q. Did you have counsel to help you make that decision? If so, who?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, I talked to plenty of people, professionals, agent, coaches, pretty much everyone; parents especially.

But at the end of the day like I take in what they said and their opinions, but I felt like I was ready.

Q. How did you decide John Deere Classic was going to be the tournament to turn pro?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, I mean, obviously the ties here are huge, and I wanted to play U.S. Open as an amateur and at that kind of took RBC out of the question.

That kind of left me with the John Deere Classic. Just I'm really excited to call this my pro debut.

Q. In pro golf we've seen a lot of prodigies so to say, guys who have had incredible amateur career, junior amateur careers, college careers come through. Some turn into stars and some of them fade way. How do you handle that pressure of kind of being the guy when you -- right when you show up on the TOUR?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Just try not to think about it. Obviously I'm thankful for people that think of me like that, but it's a new chapter and it's a different lifestyle, so just trying to ease into it, accept failure if it comes, and figure out how to play golf on the PGA TOUR.

Q. Does last year's success here change your approach this week?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Not really. I mean, I know I can come out here and play well, and I'm just going to go try to play my best and just enjoy every minute of it. It's just such a fun event. Obviously I played well here last year, but, yeah.

Q. What do you think it will be like on the first tee tomorrow morning bright and early?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Hopefully a little cooler. No, I mean,



definitely feel a little bit of nerves, but I've always told myself if I'm not feeling nerves it means I don't care.

I'm definitely going to feel a little bit of nerves, but I'm just going to be very, very excited to tee off.

Q. Have you gotten any advice or talked to any more seasoned veteran pros about making adjustments in your first season on TOUR?

JACKSON KOIVUN: I've talked to a couple in the past but, yeah, they just tell me it's definitely different and just to not try to rush into it too much and just enjoy it.

Q. The last time we saw you you were at Shinnecock Hills, a place where par is a very good score on most holes. How does your mentality flip on a golf course now where 20-under par will be needed to get you into contention?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, like you said, Shinnecock par was a great score, and it just changes with conditions and mindset. Like it's a lot more gettable holes out here and you definitely have your tough holes, but at the end of the day you just need to play smart, or that's kind of my mindset, play smart and aggressive to where I can be and just kind of take what the golf course gives me.

Q. What do you do to clear your head? XBox? PlayStation?

JACKSON KOIVUN: To clear my head? Maybe take a nap. I don't know. But, no, I don't really play too many video games. Maybe scroll on my phone a little bit, get away from everything. Find a YouTube video I enjoy.

Nothing too crazy.

Q. Scrolling on your phone does not get you away from everything. How do you find quiet to think about your game?

JACKSON KOIVUN: You know, off the golf course I try not to think about my game that much because then I'll just kind of spiral in what I can do better.

But, yeah, I don't know. Just kind of sit, hang with friends, talk with my parents, my coach.

That's about it.

Q. With the connections to this area, are there any people or places that you enjoy going that put you at ease and leads to success on the course?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, my dad's good friend, a guy name Jimmy McLoughlin, we've gone and I've stayed with him the past couple nights. We're moving to a hotel now, but we'll spend some afternoons out there and enjoy the company and the outdoor area.

Q. One of the things I heard at the Travelers, I believe it was Viktor Hovland talked about being kind to himself on the course. When things go bad, give yourself a break. How do you handle adversity and try to make that a short situation?

JACKSON KOIVUN: Yeah, I mean, that's very smart because it's very easy to get angry and upset at your self and kind of snowball into making more mistakes.

I kind of let myself get angry and just try to give myself about ten seconds and then move on to the next one. Just because you hit a bad shot the first one doesn't mean you can't go hit a great shot the next time.

THE MODERATOR: All right, Jackson, thank you for the time. Good luck this week.

JACKSON KOIVUN: Thank you.

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