

The Memorial Tournament Presented By Workday

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Dublin, Ohio, USA

Muirfield Village

Viktor Hovland

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome defending champion, Viktor Hovland, into the interview room here at The Memorial Tournament presented by Workday.

Viktor, looking back at last year, this was the first of three wins for you that culminated with the FedExCup title. What do you remember about that week and how much did it mean to you for the rest of the season?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I remember that back nine was pretty cool last year. What stands out to me is how I played 16, 17, 18 last year. I recently watched it back a couple of days ago, and I think at one point during the third round, I was maybe seven shots back and, yeah, that was just a really cool kind of -- not a lesson, but just kind of reemphasizing the point that, especially at a hard golf course like this, you never know, you shouldn't -- not give up, but you still have a chance if you finish strong or you get on a heater or something like that. So that was just cool to watch.

THE MODERATOR: Most recently we saw you at the PGA Championship. What are you taking away from that performance and into this week?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I was super proud about that week. After not playing very good golf the first few months of the year, it was nice to turn something around and what was really cool to see was as soon as I found a shot that I knew where the ball was going and I could get myself around the golf course, I was immediately up in contention. That was really cool to see that it wasn't going to be a project that was going to take two, three months. It was a nice little feel that got me to hit the ball better immediately.

THE MODERATOR: All right. We'll take some questions out here.

Q. The form that you found at PGA, have you found that to be repeatable now that you've gone home and practiced as you prepare for this week?



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VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I've kept working on kind of the same stuff the last couple weeks. It was nice to have some good weather at home and just kept playing a lot, practicing, and felt like my game's getting better every single day, which is great. So coming in with, yeah, some confidence and knowing that I can start the ball left and fade it.

Q. As you now started working with Joe again, does the relationship feel like it did last year when you were working? Is it different? Is it improved? How has that changed now that you're back working with him?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, it feels the same. Talking about the same stuff and working along the same lines. We're getting some good work done and I'm pretty pumped to play the rest of the summer.

Q. Does it help coming back to an event like this where you have the success last year when maybe it hasn't gone well this year, but you bring back some good memories when you step on the grounds?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Sure, that helps, but this golf course doesn't care about your memories or good vibes. It's going to punish you and bring you down if you miss it on the wrong sides. I think it's one of the hardest courses we play all year, so you definitely have to bring your A game, whether you're defending champion or not.

Q. Have you had a chance to get back and see 16 yet this week?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Played nine holes yesterday, so I got to see it. Yeah, it definitely looks different, a little wider on the right side. It looked like they flattened it out, took away the front right bunker, made the right bunker a little bit bigger. It's pretty deep, so even though it's -- you're going to see a lot of guys in that right bunker. I think for the back right pin, that's a very tough bunker shot. Obviously all the right pins are going to be pretty tough.

Yeah, it's still a hard hole, but at least now it feels like with the angle, you can hit a good shot and kind of run it on or around the green, so I think it's good.



Q. Do you know where you stand in terms of playing in the Olympics? It looks like you're in a good position to qualify. Have you made any decisions relating to that?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I'm planning on playing.

Q. How excited are you for that opportunity? It's, of course, a different type of competition.

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I'm pretty pumped. Playing in the Olympics in Tokyo was pretty fun, even though it was during COVID and no fans out there, and it felt a little bit weird, but we at least got to stay in the Olympic village and get a part of the experience, so that was fun, and I'm pretty pumped to do it again. I've never been to Le Golf National, which they're playing it at. I've heard lots of good stuff about the golf course and obviously watching the Ryder Cup there a few years ago, it looks like a great spot and, yeah, hoping for some hardware for team Norway.

Q. Couple of questions for you. You talked about watching your victory here last year. How often do you watch your wins?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Not very often. Sometimes I do. If I'm bored or -- like, the last couple months I've definitely looked at some stuff, but more for just swing-wise. Like, I'll screen-record on my phone if I see a good angle on TV and just look, Oh, it looks like I was doing this more or whatever it might be.

So I have a pretty big catalog of just golf swings from last year, from 2020, 2021, so it's just kind of nice to have that stored on my phone. But, yeah, occasionally it's nice to kind of relive some of those moment.

Q. And then last year, of course, you walked off of 18 and you got to shake hands with Mr. Nicklaus. How special was that moment for you?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, it's pretty cool. Obviously, coming here for a couple years I've gotten to see Jack and see him other places as well, so it wasn't like the first time I met him. But, yeah, being around a guy like that who has accomplished so much, that's pretty cool, and so to win his tournament here in Columbus, it's pretty special.

Q. You've talked about your work with Dodo and kind of the stats aspect of it. I'm just wondering -- I know he helped you, saw you were short-siding yourself too much or something like that. I'm just wondering how often you get out on the course and it's difficult to say, well, I can go attack that pin or, like, have an intuition that maybe goes against what the data is saying and

how kind of you manage that when you're on a course and you feel like, no, I can fit that in there or I can do this when maybe the data would suggest something else?

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Yeah, I think the data is mostly there to help you, and for -- let's call it maybe 90 percent of decisions, it's very clearcut. It's, okay, hit driver, it's you can go for this pin or it's middle of the green here, whatever it might be, and the decisions where it's in between and it's not so clearcut, that's when I kind of rely on, okay, what's the situation at hand, do I need a birdie, do I need a par, do I need to play offense or defense, or sometimes you just feel like you're going to hit a good shot and sometimes that is kind of enough override the data a little bit.

But obviously, I try to make the best decisions possible, especially, I think, at a golf course like this, you definitely are going to get punished if you get a little greedy and go outside of what the right play is. You can kind of get away with that on easier golf courses.

Q. You've always been one to tinker a little bit with the swing in the game, wondering if the experience over the last couple of months and the success that you found going back to Joe maybe lends you to be a little bit more patient with your self.

VIKTOR HOVLAND: That's probably a good observation and good lesson that I've drawn from the past few months. But I also think, like, looking back, I've given this some thought, I'm a completely different player than I was when I first came out here, and every single thing that I've done since turning pro has led me to become a better player. Like I got a longer driver, I fastened my back swing, I got a little bit stronger in the gym, I started doing AimPoint on greens, whatever it might be, like every single thing that I've done has helped me to play better golf. So I don't think I need to completely throw the baby out with the bath water, but definitely have to maybe spend a little bit more time and make sure that if I'm going to go in a different direction it's maybe a little bit more planned out, or need more data supporting that decision. But, yeah, probably, I mean, the classic saying, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." I mean, you need a very good and valid reason to try to change something if it's already working, but I do kind of think my track record speaks for itself.

THE MODERATOR: All right, Viktor, thank you very much for your time and best of luck this week.

VIKTOR HOVLAND: Thank you.

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