

Sony Open in Hawaii

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Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Waialae Country Club

Adrien Dumont de Chassart

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome Adrien Dumont de Chassart to the Sony Open in Hawai'i who just received the to '23 Korn Ferry TOUR Rookie of the Year Award. How does it feel to have received this award from a peer, from Nick Hardy?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: It feels amazing. Like I said, I didn't even know that they had an award for the Rookie of the Year on the Korn Ferry, but I'm very excited, and I'm proud of what I did last year.

It's cool to know that this was voted by other players, so it's great to see they recognize me as the Rookie of the Year.

Q. What made the transition through PGA TOUR University, getting that status on the Korn Ferry TOUR, and getting off to such a great start. How did you make it look so effortless?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: It wasn't that easy. It's a grind out there. But it was really nice to know players that I knew from college that were playing on the Korn Ferry TOUR, get to play practice rounds, ask questions, and just kind of get a feel for the Korn Ferry.

Obviously I spent five years in college, got some experience. Coach Small I think really helped me with the transition, too. Just stick to who you are, just play the game the right way, and when you're playing well, just take advantage of it.

Q. Looking ahead to your first start as a PGA TOUR member this week, what are you looking forward to this week at the Sony Open in Hawai'i?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: I'm just excited to compete against the best players in the world. It's been over two months now, and I just can't wait to get out there and do my best.

Q. What was your first press conference?



ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: It was in Belgium. It gave me some experience.

Q. Why did you spend five years in college?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: Because I loved it there, and I felt like I wasn't ready after four years. With COVID happening, I felt like I only had three years, and it went by so quick. You only go to college once, and I just wanted to stay an extra year.

Q. Did you actually graduate with a degree?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: I did. I did.

Q. Major?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: Business management.

Q. Did you set any expectations for yourself when you turned pro last year?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: I mean, I did, but when you join in the middle of the season, it's never easy to set up goals that could be realistic. I think my goal for that year was to just keep my card on the Korn Ferry, finish in the top 75 and maybe get my card on the PGA TOUR through final stage of Q-school, and then after my win that first tournament, that kind of changed everything.

That goal after that win was just to try to get my card on the PGA TOUR, and I was playing well at the right time and kind of secured my card really quickly.

Q. Winning is hard; we've known that forever. But when you do it quickly, does it feel easier than it actually is?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: No, it actually doesn't. I think I was very happy to be there, to be a pro. I had a great finishing holes in Thornblade, and it just went my way, and the week after I lost in a playoff it didn't go my way.



Even in college I won a few times, but it was still hard to win. I think any level you are, it's not easy to win because there's always some players that are going to be hot that week.

But I'm just excited to be here, and I know that it's going to be hard here, too, as well.

Q. Since getting your card from the Korn Ferry TOUR, it's been a few months. How have you spent the few months that kind of highlights this off-season?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: I mean, it's been great. I really enjoyed my time off because I've been going at it since January so it was great to put the clubs down for a little bit, just reboot and relax.

But then once you know that you're going to be on the PGA TOUR, you kind of get a move on quick and just focus on next year and what can I do to be better.

I'm not really in the past anymore, I'm just focused on this year.

Q. What did you do to try to become better? Were there any areas of your game you worked on specifically or just general maintenance?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: I made a few adjustments in my swing, worked with my coach closely about those few changes. Went in the gym for a little bit just to kind of get stronger, get more flexible, and I feel like I was doing a good job at it. And then I got sick about a week ago, so I feel like I kind of lost most of that strength because I got really sick.

Now it's better, and I feel like I'm slowly getting stronger again, which is good. But yeah, just being more flexible, getting stronger, and just making a few adjustments in my swing that can help me this year on the PGA TOUR.

Q. What's one example of an adjustment that you made?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: Yeah, I just kind of had bad tendencies in my downswing, kind of getting a little too much over the top. Really kind of struggled with my wedging. Couldn't really hit the ball flight that I wanted to.

So now I'm just trying to get a little more shallow.

Q. Why does Belgium have such a good pipeline of players getting out here?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: I don't know. I think we're just excited to play. There's not that many players back home. But when you see players like Nicolas Colsaerts, Pieters, Detry play at a high level, I think that's a dream that every kid back home wants to accomplish one day.

I don't want to say that the courses and the conditioning of the courses back home is not as good as here, but when you go from being a junior golfer in Belgium to college, it's a different world, right?

The courses that we play are 100 times tougher, in better condition, and I think players like myself, Detry, Pieters, you just get so excited, you want to practice all day long, and you got to realize that there's a lot of really good players over here, too, and you're just excited to be able to play against better players.

Q. Did you end up at Illinois mostly because of those guys?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: Yeah, for sure. I remember when I was 14 playing with Thomas Detry, just a round while he was still in college, and he said that he loved the program, loved Coach Small, and I thought, okay, if I can go there, I'm going to try to be there.

Q. How did you get started in the game?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: I lived a mile away from a golf course, so my dad and my brother always brought me with me when I was very young, and that's how I get started.

Q. What's the name of that golf course?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: La Bruyere Golf Club.

Q. I'm curious on the golf development side, not your game, but what was your first trip playing or competing outside Belgium? What was your first experience with golf outside of home?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: That's a really good question. Maybe it was when I was around 11 or 12. They used to have something for teams under 12 years old, so I was part of the national team in Belgium, and I got to play against the national team of the Netherlands under 12, so it was like a match play thing that you do just to kind of get out and compete and meet different people.

That's how I think I got started playing outside Belgium.



Q. So Holland was your first big tournament?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: I think, yeah. For golf, right? Yeah. I don't remember exactly because I got to travel a lot being a junior golfer, but that's probably one of the first trips, yeah.

Q. First time to either the UK or America, what was it?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: That's when I was 15, I played in The Spirit, which I loved it. It was my first experience in the States. I think that kind of made me want to come to the States even more after that experience.

Q. How did you guys do?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: Actually not bad. We were in second after the first round, which is good. It's a team game, right, with the girls and guys, and I think my guy that I was playing with was also like 16 years old, so we were like the youngest team out there.

But we didn't finish too well the last two days.

It was all about the experience, just to play against college players, and Whispering Pines was awesome.

Q. As a guy who was into golf early, who was your first golfing idol?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: Colsaerts. He was, I think, the only guy playing on the DP World Tour back then, and he was known as the bomber, hitting long drives.

Q. He still is.

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: Yeah. I think for sure Nicolas Colsaerts.

Q. Do you remember that Ryder Cup?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: I do. I don't know if I watched it live, but I remember watching highlights, and seeing him beat Tiger Woods was really awesome.

Then I actually watched his highlights a couple months ago because he shot like 10-under by himself. I think Westwood was in awe of what Colsaerts did that day.

Q. Have you played any sort of tournament between October and now?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: No. I played in one Monday Q, and that's about it. I wish I would have played more, but it didn't really fit in the schedule.

Q. How many approximately rounds of golf would you say you've played since then?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: Probably around 20 maybe. I've played mainly at TPC and then when I went home I played a little bit, as well.

Q. Which TPC?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: Sawgrass.

Q. Was the Monday Q for a fall event?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: Yeah, it was for the RSM. It's right when I was going through -- working on my swing. It was good to go out and play but I did not have a good day, but did learn a lot from it, which was good.

Q. How long were you home in Belgium for?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: For four days, and then my family always goes to Portugal for one week at the end of the year because the weather is not great at that time of the year so we always like to try to go to Portugal for one week and enjoy the good weather and play a little golf.

Q. People say rookies who get out on TOUR and struggle a bit, that sometimes you can fall in the trap of -- there's a lot of information, there's a lot of things, a lot of sensory overload information out here and sometimes guys can have a little adjustment to get into the rhythm and stay true to what got them there. Is that something you've thought of and talked to people about, and what's your take on the trap that people can fall into?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: I've heard that, and I've thought about it a lot. I know that I got here with the game that I've had last year, the last few years. Obviously you don't want to change too many stuff when you come here.

I just feel like I had a great year last year, and I've realized that I got to play really good golf in kind of softer conditions, so when the courses get firmer, greens get firmer, that's where I get to struggle a little bit, and that's why I needed to make some adjustment.

In kind of looking at the bigger picture, the goal is to win majors, and I feel like it's okay -- I feel like my game was good enough to come here and compete, but if I want to get to the next level, there's some adjustment that I'm going to have to make, and that can be hard at first

because it takes some time to adjust, but I feel like I really have to try, and if I don't try, I'll never know.

We'll see how that goes, but I feel very excited about the future.

Q. Bomber, great putter, what's the real strength of your game?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: I thought I was a bomber when I was back in Belgium, but once I moved here, everyone hits it far. I'd like to say I'm more on the average.

I've got a good short game. I think that's one of my strengths in general.

I feel like in college I was really good at grinding. I didn't always have my best, but I'd always find a way to shoot a good score.

Q. You mentioned what your goals were last year. What about this year?

ADRIEN DUMONT DE CHASSART: My goal for this year is just to win one PGA TOUR. The earlier the better, that way I can get in those elevated tournaments. That's for sure my goal, win one PGA TOUR.

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