

WM Phoenix Open

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Scottsdale, Arizona, USA

TPC Scottsdale

Frankie Capan III

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome Frankie Capan to the interview room here at the WM Phoenix Open. Frankie, in your rookie season on TOUR, this is very much a hometown event for you. What's it like to be in the WM Phoenix Open in your rookie season on TOUR?

FRANKIE CAPAN III: Yeah, it's very unique. I've been on the other side of the ropes at least five or six times, and I enjoy being on this side a little bit more. But it's just fun to kind of look back on some of the memories I have coming to this event as a junior and amateur golfer and really just can't thank Matt Mooney and Chance Cozby enough for the opportunity and really just looking forward to getting this week started.

Q. Minnesota is your home state, but you went to high school here in Phoenix; can you tell us a little bit about that?

FRANKIE CAPAN III: Yeah, so I was originally born in Minnesota, but from a young age, I split time between Minnesota and here, and actually pretty much grew up 15 minutes up the road from here.

I'm very comfortable around this golf course and just kind of been in this area a lot. Actually graduated from high school probably 20 minutes west of here. It's always fun to come back home and staying with my parents this week, so it's nice to have some home-cooked meals and sleep in my own bed.

Q. Are there any moments that really stick out to you about your time either as a fan, and were you a standard bearer at this tournament once?

FRANKIE CAPAN III: I was, yes. I think it was either 2011 or 2012 I was able to be the standard bearer for Bill Haas, Phil Mickelson and Bubba Watson. That's one that's very memorable for me.

But I think for me, my two sisters and I, we competed in the Itty-Bitty Open I think when I was five or six, so I have some flashbacks of that, as well, even at such a young

age.

Yeah, just a lot of -- I remember some guys hitting certain shots. Those kind of are branded into my brain. Just a lot of unique experiences around this golf course.

Q. Talk about the transition from the Korn Ferry TOUR to the PGA TOUR and your experience thus far on TOUR.

FRANKIE CAPAN III: Yeah, it's been great. It's been, I think, very busy, just going from Hawai'i and then over to California for a couple weeks, getting to know three different golf courses at the American Express and then two different golf courses for Farmers Insurance Open.

It's been a great experience so far. Been able to play the weekend in all three events that I've played. I would say it's been a good start, but looking forward to just kind of stacking up some more experience and getting our name up there as much as possible.

Q. I was wondering if you can recall either the first time you played in front of fans or the first time you were struck by people being out to watch you play golf and what that was like.

FRANKIE CAPAN III: That's a good question. I'd have to think about it for a little bit. Having played Korn Ferry TOUR for two years, we don't nearly get as many fans out there.

I would say probably my first U.S. Open at LACC was one of the times where I thought, wow, this is really cool, I'm hitting golf shots with thousands of people watching. I would say that's probably the first time that I was able to do my craft in front of a lot of people.

This week, I was chatting with my dad a little bit about it, and been fortunate enough to play the last two U.S. Opens, Pinehurst and LACC, and the amount of people even on a Wednesday is pretty similar to some of the crowds we get out there on Friday, Saturday, Sunday.

I think it's going to be a great experience for me. Definitely



kind of newer territory, but I'm just looking forward to getting the week started.

Q. When you kind of reflected in the off-season last year, looked back, what's your process in terms of evaluating a year and making a roadmap for what you need to do to improve the next year, and is there anything you pinpointed for this year, like I want to get better in this stat or this thing this season on the PGA TOUR?

FRANKIE CAPAN III: Are you talking kind of Korn Ferry season last year to this year?

Q. Yeah.

FRANKIE CAPAN III: Yeah, I think I had to -- I definitely took some time off after last year. Definitely felt like a lot of golf for me, playing seven weeks in a row, and then really just one week off and then -- the end of the year for me, I was pretty tired and got kind of mentally exhausted. I felt like I was playing really well, and my game was very sharp to having a top 20, a win, and then a top 5 at the final event. But I think mentally I was pretty shot. So it was nice just to take some time off.

I think the biggest thing I learned from last year is I actually looked at my stats from my first year on Korn Ferry to the second year, and they really weren't that much different, even though one year I finished 51st and the next year I finished third. I think the biggest thing that I took away was just kind of believing in myself, that I have the game to compete at whatever level that may be, and really just believing in myself, trusting my game, and not getting too far ahead of myself really, just trying to stay as present as I can in each moment and get the most out of that.

Q. What helps you stay present? Are there any techniques or tactics you use to do that?

FRANKIE CAPAN III: I think it's pretty easy to just think into the future as opposed to just focusing, like I said, kind of on the present moment. Like right now, just chatting with you, that's really all I'm focused on.

I think one thing is my faith I think helps a little bit with that. I think for me, at the end of the day -- I don't know. I think I've just found that the more present I am, the better results I get out of whatever it is I'm doing, and no matter what I'm doing, I want to be the best I possibly can at whatever it is.

So being able to be 100 percent present in whatever scenario it is has just kind of lended itself to the best for me.

Q. Since this is your rookie season, pre-tournament do you enjoy picking the brains of different players during practice rounds, or are you kind of like you want to try and figure out your own rhythm within this new realm?

FRANKIE CAPAN III: Yeah, I think everyone has their own process about how they do things. I was lucky enough to have a great group yesterday in the practice round. I played with Max Homa and Wyndham Clark. As much as I want to respect their space and time and kind of what they're doing, it's the same for me, too, I like to do certain things, get certain numbers, hit certain shots on the course, but I was chatting with Max a little bit on 17 kind of how he likes to play 17, depending on some of the pin positions. I know they get a tucked back left one, and that one seems to be a little dicey, especially as the week goes on. It gets a little crispy and firm.

I do like to pick their brain as much as I can, but I also want to respect their time, and I'm also pretty focused and have a very experienced caddie, which helps a lot. If I'm not able to ask them something I wanted to, I can always ask my caddie or go over whatever it is with him. He's been around this place probably -- I don't know, 60 times, so it's nice to have him in my back pocket.

Q. In the past, sponsor exemptions at events have had to write a letter. Did you do one for this week?

FRANKIE CAPAN III: I did.

Q. Was there anything that you were really -- I don't want to say proud, but in a way you were proud that you got to write about something in your background that maybe sparked their attention?

FRANKIE CAPAN III: Yes. I talked with Mr. Mooney and Mr. Cozby, and I think Mr. Cozby emailed me after he received the letter, and he said, this is the first time I've ever received a four-page letter for a sponsor's exemption. For me, that was kind of cool. But I didn't try and add unnecessary information. I just kind of wanted them to learn a little bit about me and my past.

One of the things that I enjoyed writing about was just my experience in high school playing here. I was lucky to shoot a 59 to close out my high school career my senior year, so I kind of let him know that.

So much of my golf career started really up the road at a course like DC Ranch. I just wanted to highlight that a little, and then just all the relationships that my family and I have formed in the valley. Other than that, mainly just kind of updating him a little bit about how the last couple years

have gone for me and just given him a little bit of insight into my golf career so far.

Q. Your mom used to caddie for you for a significant chunk of your career. What sort of conversations have you had with her this week leading up to this tournament?

FRANKIE CAPAN III: This week actually not much. I haven't seen her a ton. She's been great, though. She cooked me breakfast yesterday and some dinner last night, as well.

But no, nothing too crazy. I actually don't think she's even been to the course this week.

Q. When you say DC Ranch is where things kind of formed for you, just with having grown up in Minnesota, why there? What happened there?

FRANKIE CAPAN III: Yeah, so in I think it was 2002 or 2003, my parents, our family started coming down here to the valley to spend some more time, and at that point I was -- I think I would have been three or four years old. My dad already knew I loved golf and just loved being outside, loved hanging out with him. So we joined there and were members there. So that's kind of how I was able to practice there throughout the winter and whenever we were here.

Q. When you talk about being a standard bearer and doing the Itty-Bitty Open, have you felt already, even in the practice round yesterday, kind of a surreal nature to being inside the ropes playing this week in this tournament?

FRANKIE CAPAN III: Yeah, there definitely is -- it's very special.

I was able to play in the 3M Open not this past summer but the summer before, and it's very unique being in a place that you've spent so much of your life playing in a PGA TOUR event right up the road. It's very unique.

But I wouldn't say there's -- there hasn't really been any kind of pinch-me moments. I think the more experience I've gotten playing out on the PGA TOUR, a couple U.S. Opens, the more those fade away a little bit, and it's more just I'm really excited to compete against some of the best players in the world at a place that I feel like I know pretty well but have also spent a lot of time.

Q. How does what this crowd is going to feel like, especially on a back nine, how does that suit you, and what do you think it's going to be like?

FRANKIE CAPAN III: I think for me, I like to entertain people. I enjoy when a lot of people are watching me. I think yesterday on 16, I actually made birdie on 16, and I know the stands weren't nearly as full as what they're going to be come Friday, Saturday, Sunday, but kind of making that walk, going up on to the tee box, looking around is very cool.

I have a lot of confidence in my game and what I'm able to do with the golf ball to where I think at the end of the day we're all really just entertainers. I think that's -- this weekend might be a little different. That's probably not why 500,000, 700,000 people are here. But for most golf tournaments, that's really what it is; it's entertainment.

I think that's sometimes where I thrive.

Q. The 59, was that here at this course?

FRANKIE CAPAN III: It was not, no. It was in Tucson.

Q. What course?

FRANKIE CAPAN III: I don't know. I actually forgot the name. I could look it up, though. They used to play, I think, a senior event there. There's two courses. If you text me, I'll let you know later.

Q. The Itty-Bitty Open, what's that? What do you remember from that?

FRANKIE CAPAN III: Basically you have two caddies -- we had two caddies, but it was my two sisters, and I think you play with like plastic clubs, and it's the tournament I'm pretty sure just up the road, and if you finish well, they have some sort of ceremony or things you get to do here this week. So I'll have to do some more research on that.

But I do remember kind of the photos, and it's just a little golf tournament.

Q. Is that at a nearby course?

FRANKIE CAPAN III: I think so. It was 20 years ago.

Q. Is there going to be a Vikings jersey coming out on 16 perhaps?

FRANKIE CAPAN III: Perhaps, yeah. We'll have to see.

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